

INSPECTION REPORT

LONG MEADOW SCHOOL

Shenley Brook End

LEA area: Milton Keynes

Unique reference number: 132787

Headteacher: Anne Bark

Reporting inspector: Chris Rhodes
16408

Dates of inspection: 13 - 16 January 2003

Inspection number: 249001

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First and Middle
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 (no Year 7 until September 2003)
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Garthwaite Crescent Shenley Brook End Milton Keynes
Postcode:	MK5 7AX
Telephone number:	01908 508678
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Christopher Bond
Date of previous inspection:	N/A

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
16408	Chris Rhodes	Registered inspector	History Information and communication technology Religious education	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? a) The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
9519	Sue Pritchard	Lay inspector		How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils?
19765	Pauleen Shannon	Team inspector	Science Geography Foundation stage	How well is the school led and managed?
18116	Christopher Taylor	Team inspector	Mathematics Art Design and technology Educational inclusion Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
15236	Morag Thorpe	Team inspector	English Music Physical education English as an additional language	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Long Meadow School is a new, popular and growing school in Shenley Brook End in Milton Keynes, which opened in September 2001. There are 325 pupils aged between four and 11 on roll, which is large in comparison with most primary schools. The pupils come from a wide variety of backgrounds. An average percentage is entitled to free meals. Approximately one in every six pupils has special educational needs, mainly moderate learning difficulties. This is below the national average. Four pupils, whose educational needs are severe, complex or persistent, are given the protection of a statement of special educational needs. Many pupils have attended at least two other schools and several have attended more. The majority of pupils are of white British origin but about a quarter come from a range of minority ethnic and linguistic backgrounds. One in ten pupils use English as an additional language. Attainment on entry is below expected levels.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Long Meadow is already a very good school with the clear potential and commitment for continued success. Pupils make good progress in all classes. Standards in English, mathematics and science are in line with national averages in Year 2 and Year 6. The quality of teaching is good, and leadership and management are excellent. The school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- The headteacher and key staff have excellent leadership and management skills.
- Teaching is good in all parts of the school and sometimes very good or excellent.
- Pupils in all classes and of all abilities make good progress and learn effectively. They like school, try hard and generally behave well. Children get a flying start in the Early Years.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good, and is excellent for those given the protection of a statement. All pupils are included in all the school's activities.
- The school cares very effectively for all aspects of pupils' welfare. There are very good systems for measuring and recording pupils' progress.
- Links with parents are very strong.

What could be improved

- Standards are below average in writing.¹

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

This is the school's first inspection.

STANDARDS

The school first opened in September 2001 when the oldest pupils were then in Year 5. The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2, based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with	
	all schools	similar schools
	2002	2002
Reading	D	C
Writing	D	D
Mathematics	D	C

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

¹ This has already been identified by the school in its Improvement Plan.

Standards in national tests in Year 2 in 2002 were below average. The test results were close to those attained in schools taking pupils from similar backgrounds, especially when the many changes of school experienced by the Long Meadow pupils are taken into account. Standards in writing were just below those found in similar schools.

Current standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with the national averages for English, mathematics and science. They are below average in aspects of writing. Standards in information and communication technology [ICT], history, geography, art and design, music and physical education are at expected levels in both Year 2 and Year 6. Standards in religious education are in line with the expectations of the local agreed syllabus in Year 2 and above them in Year 6. Standards in design and technology are close to national expectations in Year 2 but are higher in Year 6. Some individual pupils achieve higher than average standards in all subjects. The current Year 5 is on course to achieve higher overall standards than the present Year 6. Challenging targets have been set for 2003 and 2004.

Pupils' achievement in relation to their starting points is good because they are keen to learn and are well taught. Children in the Early Years are making good progress in all aspects of their education, but are only likely to achieve nationally expected levels in physical and creative development because many find it difficult to communicate accurately when they first start school. Pupils' books and the school's detailed records show that pupils throughout the school, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language, have made good progress during the four terms, or less, that they have been at Long Meadow.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good attitudes. Most pupils are attentive, willing to learn and keen to take part in activities in and out of lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Most pupils behave courteously. Those with behavioural difficulties are very well managed and very rarely disrupt the learning of others.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are very good, particularly between staff and pupils. Pupils respond well to opportunities to show that they are mature and responsible. Boys and girls relate very well to each other.
Attendance	Good. Pupils like school and have good records of attendance and punctuality.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is good in all parts of the school. Approximately four out of every five lessons seen were judged good or better, and no unsatisfactory teaching was observed during the inspection. Six of the 61 lessons observed were excellent. The teaching of English and mathematics is good overall. Literacy and numeracy skills are well taught and pupils use them effectively in other subjects.

Basic skills are well taught in all subjects in all parts of the school. Some pupils are very demanding, but staff are very good at managing their behaviour. Teachers use lesson time effectively and materials are carefully prepared and ready for use. Staff in the Early Years classes are particularly skilled in measuring how well the children are doing, and using the information to plan later work. Teaching assistants in all classes work closely with teachers and make a very important contribution to pupils' learning through their quiet interventions and skilful leading of group work. Pupils with special educational needs, or those with English as an additional language, respond very positively to the additional guidance they receive from support or specialist staff. Teachers plan thoroughly but some do not consistently organise group work so that pupils of different ability are given written work at the correct level of difficulty. Teachers always explain what the lessons are to be about, but some of the language used when the explanations are written on the board is too difficult for some pupils to understand, and they do not always know how their success will be judged.

The quality of learning is also good because pupils respond positively to the good or better teaching. Their interest levels are high, and they enjoy the intellectual or creative challenges in their work. Pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language make good progress because their needs are clearly identified and appropriate resources are allocated to them.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum is broad and balanced, and is extended through a very good range of extra-curricular activities. The local community has made a valuable contribution to the development of the school. All pupils are included in all its activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Teaching assistants are used very effectively. Although some pupils have challenging behaviour, teachers and staff deal with them very well and avoid disruption to the rest of the class.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Very good. The significant number of pupils for whom English is an additional language benefit from the very effective support and the staff's awareness of their abilities and needs. They make good progress with some achieving high standards in English and other subjects.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for moral and social development is very good. There is a good range of opportunities for pupils to develop their social skills and teachers are very good role models. Provision for spiritual and cultural development is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very well. Pupils' behaviour and attendance are monitored and managed very efficiently. The school assesses attainment and progress very thoroughly. Tests are used effectively. Pupils' progress is followed over time and extra support given if required. There is a very positive approach to promoting racial harmony.

Links with parents are very good. Parents make a very important contribution to children's learning at school and at home.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Leadership by headteacher and key staff is excellent. The headteacher provides inspirational leadership. She and the deputy headteacher work together very well and support the staff closely. There is a very strong team spirit. The aims of the school are very evident in its daily life. Subject leaders are developing their roles effectively.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors fulfil their responsibilities very well. They know the school's strengths and weaknesses, and have played a full part of the creation of this successful school. They are well organised and take pride in the progress the school has made since it opened. They visit the school regularly, which helps them to recognise pupils' learning needs and keeps them up to date when deciding priorities.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school evaluates its own performance effectively, using all the data available. Identified needs are linked to priorities in the school improvement plan.
The strategic use of resources	Good, especially in the deployment of teachers and support staff.

The school is well staffed with teachers and support staff. The very spacious accommodation is used effectively. The site manager and cleaning contractor maintain the building to a high standard. Office staff are very efficient and approachable. The school and governing body tackled the issues around last term's flood and evacuation very effectively so that pupils' learning was not disrupted. The headteacher, governing body and staff are good at getting the best value when purchasing goods or services.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children are very happy in school • Parents feel able to ask questions or talk about a problem • Children are expected to work hard • The school is well led and managed • The good teaching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of information for parents • The range of activities outside lessons • Homework

Inspectors agree with parents' very positive views of the school. The range and availability of information for parents, especially about the curriculum, is better than that found in many schools. The range of extra-curricular activities is good, and the school is unusual because clubs are open to the youngest children. The use of homework is better than is found in many schools.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The baseline assessments, made at the beginning of the school year, indicate that the majority of children start in Early Years with levels of attainment that are below those expected for their age. Standards are well below the expected levels for communication, language and literacy, mathematical awareness and social development. There is, however, a wide span of ability. A significant minority of pupils are at expected levels and some are above. Provision for all the different ability groups is very good. The consistently good quality of teaching enables children to make good and very good progress towards their early learning goals, and most are on line to achieve the expected levels for creative and physical development by the end of the school year. Some individual children will reach all the expected levels for their age.
2. National Curriculum standards are judged in Year 2 and Year 6 because these are the ends of the two key stages in primary education. The pupils in Year 2 who took the 2002 tests had only been in the school for just over two terms. Several had already attended more than one other school. There was no Year 6 in 2002 to take the National Curriculum tests. Challenging targets have been set for Year 6 in 2003 and 2004.
3. **Current standards in English, mathematics and science** in Year 2 are in line with national averages. Standards in reading and mathematics are at this time higher than those attained in the National Curriculum tests in Year 2 in 2002. Standards in writing are below average, as they were in the tests last summer. The school is fully aware of the situation and has put in place an effective programme of extra support for the pupils who need additional help. The 2002 National Curriculum test results were close to those attained in schools taking pupils from similar backgrounds, especially when the many changes of school experienced by Long Meadow pupils are taken into account. Standards in writing were just below those found in similar schools. Teachers' assessments of standards in science in Year 2 in 2002 indicated that pupils reached above average levels of attainment. There were more boys than girls in the year group, and they achieved better overall results in reading and writing than the girls.
4. Current standards in English, mathematics and science are also in line with national averages in Year 6. Writing is the weakest area. Approximately two-thirds of the class attended at least two other schools before transferring to Long Meadow and a third have joined during the period since the school opened four terms ago. One in four pupils in the class have special educational needs and one in five use English as an additional language. The current Year 5 is on course to achieve higher overall standards than the present Year 6.
5. **Achievement** is measured by comparing how much pupils improve as they move from class to class. The school keeps very detailed records but these can illustrate only the progress pupils have made over the past four terms. The records and pupils' books show good progress in all classes, and pupils themselves report that they are doing better, referring to current and past work to explain why. A strong feature is the way potentially under-achieving pupils are identified and are given the extra support they need. Pupils' good progress links closely to the good teaching seen throughout the school and to their positive attitudes to learning.
6. **Standards** in history, geography, information and communication technology [ICT], art and design, music and physical education are in line with expected levels in Year 2 and in Year 6. Standards in design and technology are close to the levels indicated in the local agreed syllabus in Year 2 and are above them in Year 6. Standards in religious education are close to expected levels in Year 2 and are above them in Year 6. Some pupils achieve higher levels in all subjects.
7. Teachers make good use of **literacy and numeracy** in other aspects of the broader curriculum. Pupils are expected to scan and read texts in history lessons, for example, with the same care as they would in English. Writing in science, history and geography is informative. It does not always reflect pupils' actual ability in those subjects because some find it difficult to express themselves in writing, or the written tasks do not always give higher attaining pupils enough opportunities to investigate on their own. Pupils use the skills learned in mathematics lessons to measure temperature in science lessons, use electronic sensors and record their findings in a computer-based data bank.

8. Pupils with **special educational needs** make good progress towards the achievement of their targets in all classes because the level of provision is very good, and their needs are identified and assessed early in their school careers. Teachers and teaching assistants are very skilled in teaching basic literacy and numeracy skills, and in making sure that all pupils feel part of the whole lesson. Very good examples were seen when younger pupils with mobility difficulties made good progress in running and moving in a physical education lesson, and when an older pupil who finds attending school very difficult wrote a moving poem about his feelings. The consistently sensitive, patient but firm support given to all pupils results in increased confidence and self-esteem, and in higher achievement. Pupils who have made sufficient progress are moved to reduced levels of support or are taken off the special educational needs register. The attainment of pupils who have **English as an additional language** matches that of other pupils with similar academic abilities. Pupils are well supported by careful planning and teachers ensure that they are placed in groups where they will receive and be able to give support.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Relationships are very good and pupils respect their teachers. They feel safe, secure and valued, have good attitudes to learning and behave well. This, combined with the good provision for their personal development, creates a very effective environment in which to learn and to achieve.
10. Most pupils show **an enthusiasm for learning** and a willingness to adapt to school routines from the moment they join the school. They learn to keep school rules quickly, seeing them as fair and reasonable. They are eager to take part in new experiences and make new friends. Pupils arrive cheerfully in the morning, keen and ready to get down to their work. They are encouraged into further learning by an enriching programme of extra-curricular activities. Pupils develop an enthusiastic and independent approach to life, as set out in the school's declared aims.
11. Pupils listen quietly to the teachers and to one another in most lessons, respecting other people's views and responding positively to the support and guidance they receive. They are interested in the activities they are set, and co-operate well in pairs and groups. There are frequent instances in lessons where supportive and constructive relationships enable pupils to work at their best. Examples of this were seen in ICT lessons, when pupils shared workstations and enjoyed learning together, and in a Year 6 religious education lesson, when pupils shared very different views about their belief in God without fear of ridicule or negative comment.
12. Pupils' **behaviour** is good. In the year before the inspection, two pupils were excluded temporarily but the school has not found it necessary to resort to the ultimate sanction of permanent exclusion. Pupils generally behave well. Most disagreements are short-lived and sorted out between the pupils themselves. No incidents of bullying were witnessed by inspectors, neither was there any evidence of racial or other tension amongst individuals or between groups. Teachers are vigilant about the need to look out for pupils who show signs of being bullied or who are bullying another child. Detailed records show that all incidents are investigated and dealt with swiftly. This results in pupils who are settled, secure and confident, and who see it as their duty to seek help from an adult for someone who is injured, unwell or unhappy.
13. Most pupils behave sensibly in and around the school. Some show signs of boredom towards the end of a long lunch playtime, resorting to activities that are not stopped soon enough, such as pushing or pulling at each other. However, in lessons and assemblies, the school's very well planned behaviour management strategies help and guide those pupils who sometimes find it difficult to concentrate or conform. These pupils learn from the many who behave well and from the strong emphasis the school has placed on pupils being helpful and kind to one another. There are shared, social expectations that pupils recognise and encourage others to meet. These very good, supportive relationships are effective in helping to encourage the positive attitudes and the overall good behaviour evident in school.
14. Pupils with **special educational needs** are willing and co-operative, and work well in their class groups. Pupils with English as an additional language have similarly positive attitudes to school. The school has been successful in creating a harmonious community where pupils get along very well irrespective of differences in culture or attainment. These very good relationships do much to enhance the learning opportunities of all pupils.
15. Pupils respond well to opportunities to show that they are **mature and responsible**. They seek responsibility, for example, by becoming members of the school council, by helping set out the hall, distributing resources in lessons or serving refreshments to parents and guests. Pupils applaud others for doing their best in assemblies. They are often good at identifying the factors that may be limiting

their progress in lessons. In a very well taught numeracy lesson in Year 4, for example, pupils were quick to realise that they needed to be alert and attentive right from the start in order to make the best progress in their learning. By following the democratic processes in the school council, pupils realise a sense of pride and achievement in bringing forward their own considered opinions and the suggestions made by others. For example, they have been thinking hard about how the school might keep all pupils happily occupied during the lunchtime period. These experiences help pupils to learn how to know the right thing to do and how to resolve difficulties. The general view of the good number of parents who replied to the questionnaire and/or attended the meeting before the inspection was that their children had grown in maturity and independence during their time in school.

16. The standard of **attendance** and punctuality is good, especially taking into account the high rate of pupil mobility. A significant majority of those pupils who are absent without good reason come from families who have taken leave of absence over and above the agreed ten-day limit for a holiday during term time. Pupils arrive in good time for school, allowing a calm and well-ordered start to their day.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

17. The quality of teaching is good, as seen in lessons throughout the school, teachers' preparation and records, their assessments and knowledge of their subjects and the pupils. Approximately four out of every five lessons seen during the inspection were good or better, and no unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Six of the lessons were excellent. The standard of teaching in English, mathematics and science, and in all other subjects, is almost always good or better. The quality of teaching that develops the youngest children's personal, social and emotional skills is particularly good. Not enough science or design and technology lessons were seen in Years 1 and 2, or in geography across the school, to make a secure judgement about the quality of teaching in those subjects. Basic literacy and numeracy skills are well taught in most classes, as was seen, for example, when Year 4 started their English lesson with a brisk 'warm up' exercise on the use of adjectives and in the first few minutes of rigorous mental arithmetic at the start of mathematics lessons.
18. In the best examples, the quality of teaching was outstanding. Excellent teaching is found in all parts of the school. An Early Years class, for example, made very good progress in developing their physical skills by running, jumping and moving safely in a variety of inventive ways. The teacher's particular skills were her own enthusiasm, her ability to involve all children including the reluctant, and her many assessments of exactly what was needed next in order for the pupils to make very good progress. The lesson challenged the children, was great fun and very safe. Similar very high standards were seen in a Year 6 music lesson. The teacher's excellent relationships with the class and her very high expectations of what they could achieve meant that they were able to compose and perform an imaginative musical accompaniment to Lewis Carroll's poem about the Jabberwock within the 45 minute lesson. Pupils' learning was also very good because the whole class had been intellectually and creatively stimulated, and had had such fun in planning and presenting their performance.
19. Good teaching was seen in many lessons because teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the subjects, teach basic skills very effectively, plan thoroughly and expect the pupils to work hard. Lessons move forward at a good pace because materials are carefully prepared and ready for use, the pupils are keen to learn, and get on with their work without a fuss. Relationships are very good, and teachers and support staff have developed particular skills in managing pupils' behaviour. Several pupils find being part of a large group very challenging, and 'test' the rules on a regular basis. Staff are fully prepared for this, and manage these pupils very well, encouraging them to think about the consequences of their actions, and firmly and patiently getting them back to their work. The work of the rest of the class is rarely disrupted.
20. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed during the inspection but there were a number of occasions when the pupils did not learn as well as they might because the planning for independent or group work did not take sufficient account of the different levels of ability found within the class. Teachers always explain what the lessons are to be about, but some of the vocabulary used when these are written on the board is too difficult for pupils to understand, and they do not always know how their success will be judged. Teachers are developing an appropriate range of ways to use ICT within their lessons.
21. Teachers are well informed about the needs of all their pupils, and receive the support and training they need to make classroom learning effective. Appropriate work is prepared for pupils with **special educational needs** and care is taken to set realistic but challenging targets in Individual Education Plans [IEP]. Teachers are very skilled in working with support staff. They have formed strong teams

based on mutual respect. They work well together and share information effectively. Teachers identify pupils who have particular strengths in all areas of the curriculum including literacy and numeracy, but their planning does not always enable these pupils to go straight to challenging work without having to complete simpler exercises.

22. Pupils learning **English as an additional language** are well supported by teachers' careful planning based on rigorous assessment of their progress. They target their learning well and also ensure that pupils of similar abilities work together. The success of these strategies is seen in the school's National Curriculum test results and in class lessons where pupils with English as an additional language achieve as well as their peers. Teachers also provide good support with any aspect of the work that they consider particularly challenging for pupils for whom English is an additional language.
23. **The quality of learning** is also good because pupils respond positively to the good or better teaching. Their interest levels are high and they enjoy learning new skills. Pupils generally concentrate hard and enjoy their work. Some groups leave the classroom with a member of the support team to work elsewhere. Occasionally a group returns too late to be part of the final part of the lesson, or an individual pupil misses key teaching to read to a member of the support team. This affects the overall quality of their learning and can be frustrating. However, several staff are aware of the problem and take great care to make sure that the returning pupil is quickly brought up to date on what has happened in their absence.

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

24. The curriculum is good overall with some very good aspects. It is broad, balanced and relevant, complies with statutory requirements, and reflects the aims and objectives of the school. The time allocations for most subjects are close to national averages. Modern foreign languages are part of the curriculum: French in Year 6 and Spanish as a voluntary club activity. Inspectors talked to pupils about their lessons, but the subject was not included formally in the inspection. The school provides effectively for pupils' personal development and curriculum planning is good. Opportunities are provided for pupils to develop academically, physically and aesthetically, as well as in social skills. Appropriate arrangements are in place for sex education and to make pupils aware of the dangers of drug misuse. There were no significant differences in the opportunities offered to boys and girls.
25. As the school is new, policies are still being developed for some subjects. However, there are appropriate schemes of work for all areas of the National Curriculum, based on schemes developed by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. The quality of teachers' planning derived from this is generally good. Teaching is most successful when the work is planned to match pupils' abilities. In some classes there were insufficient planned opportunities to develop the higher attaining pupils. Planning for pupils with special needs is good overall. Teachers in parallel year classes work and plan very effectively together.
26. A good, well-planned programme of **personal, social and health education** has been developed over the last year. Pupils are encouraged to take part in sporting activities and discover the benefit of regular exercise. Aspects of citizenship, healthy living, sex education and the dangers of drug abuse are taught in a meaningful way through drama and discussion, in stages appropriate to the age and maturity of the child. These lessons are used effectively to support pupils' personal development, further their self-esteem, and develop their understanding of relationships and awareness of other peoples' feelings. Pupils' accomplishments and achievements in their work are recognised in assemblies and displays in classrooms, engaging pupils' emotions and a keenness to emulate others. Parents value the fact that the school recognises and reports their children's personal achievements. Some of the older pupils, having had access to their reports, confirmed that the school had formed an accurate picture of their individual qualities.
27. Pupils have equal access to the full range of opportunities for achievement. The school aims to be fully inclusive and succeeds very well. It goes to considerable lengths to ensure that the curriculum is well matched and accessible to all pupils for whom **English is an additional language**. Care is taken to ensure that they are as closely involved as other pupils in the school in visits and extra-curricular activities. This provision ensures that they are very well included in all activities. Provision for pupils with **special educational needs** is very good. Their work is prepared at appropriate levels of difficulty, and they are given high quality support by the assistants within the classroom or in withdrawal groups. Class teachers make initial assessments, but parents or support assistants may express their concern,

which the teacher then follows up. If the class teacher needs further help, the special needs co-ordinator will provide support or make contact with the relevant authorities. This system works effectively and children with difficulties are picked up early in their school career. Regular assessments and reviews then take place, at least twice a term, sometimes as often as every fortnight. Because of the high quality of the provision, children with special educational needs make good progress across the school; some progress well enough to be taken off the special educational needs register.

28. The school uses the **National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies** effectively. The arrangements for teaching literacy skills are good, particularly the emphasis on speaking and listening. Literacy skills are used well across the whole curriculum but, as the school has already identified, writing is one area where further development and more curriculum time are needed. Provision for developing numeracy skills is good, but opportunities to develop the skills of higher attaining pupils towards the top end of the school are limited. The school has organised much of its information and communication technology facilities into a computer suite, with additional computers in all classrooms. This has enabled teachers to raise the quality and increase the application of the ICT curriculum. An effective programme of personal, social and health education is provided, with the use of 'circle time' when pupils can discuss personal or sensitive issues in an atmosphere of trust.
29. The school offers a very good range of **extra-curricular activities** including netball, hockey, choirs, cookery and an art club and visits to museums, the locality and places of cultural interest. A large number of pupils participate in these clubs, including those in the youngest classes, and get great enjoyment from them. During the inspection, a visit from a theatre group provided a very good stimulus for pupils in Year 1 to 3. The damage caused by recent flooding has delayed the school's development of the full potential of its grounds for formal study. It is in the process of developing the play areas and the outdoor provision for pupils in the Early Years classes. **Homework** is set in all classes and is used effectively to extend learning. It is clearly planned and ranges from the younger pupils taking home reading books to work extending a range of subjects for pupils up to the age of eleven.
30. Links with the **local community** are very good. The school has links with other local primary and secondary schools. Pupils come in from the latter on work experience. At the time of the inspection, there was a student training to be a teacher on placement in the school. There are plans to provide placements for trainee nursery nurses in the near future. The school has received a grant through the local education authority to develop outside facilities with the help of a nationally known artist.
31. The school promotes pupils' **spiritual development** effectively. Teachers place a strong emphasis on helping pupils to think for themselves, and to consider how and why things happen as they do. Pupils have regular opportunities to join in prayer, to sing, reflect and feel positive about themselves in assemblies. Other aspects of pupils' spiritual development are promoted through the school's emphasis upon religious festivals, like the celebrations of light in winter in Diwali and the peace and joy of Christmas. Non-religious and yet spiritual experiences in such subjects as English, where pupils try to use meaningful descriptive language, or geography where they try to imagine the sights and sounds of far off places, help to encourage expressive and creative feelings amongst pupils of all ages.
32. The provision for the pupils' **moral development** is very good. Teachers unfailingly recognise and encourage pupils' personal efforts throughout their time in school. Traditional family values form the basis for the school's policy on personal, social and health education. Pupils are given opportunities to think carefully about the type of behaviour that is harmful to health or relationships through discussion and role-play. The approach to disciplinary issues in school is very positive. If a pupil has done wrong, the emphasis is upon forgiveness and upon providing support so that she or he can do better in the future. Staff are consistently fair and firm in their dealings with pupils, sending out clear messages that there are boundaries that must not be overstepped. The headteacher and staff provide excellent role models, treating all members of the school community and visitors, with courtesy, consideration and respect.
33. Pupils' **social development** is also very good. Pupils very much enjoy the social aspect of school events and journeys. A very good range of school clubs, sports activities, and fund-raising events successfully promote the values of fair play, fellowship and teamwork. Contributing to the school council, or taking on the role of class helper, helps pupils to express their thoughts clearly and confidently whilst realising the need for good manners and goodwill towards others. Adults value each child and work effectively towards developing good social interaction and self-esteem. There are many opportunities in lessons for pupils to co-operate and collaborate effectively in pairs and small groups.

34. There is good provision for pupils' **cultural development**. Pupils are taught not only to understand and know the location of Indian and Caribbean places in geography lessons, but also to imagine, appreciate and value the lifestyles of the people who live there. Pupils reflect on the significance of poetry through cultural imagery and language in their study of texts in literacy lessons, and listen to and evaluate music from Africa, Asia and Britain. They enjoy the work of world-famous composers in assemblies and lessons. A sensitive recognition of the several faiths represented in the school enables pupils to share their cultural heritages as well as religious practices. The current history curriculum does not include enough references to the history of the several nations represented in the school. The school recognises this. School fetes and fairs encourage pupils to take part in traditional village games, and their participation in concerts and visits to churches and museums provide pupils with a good introduction to the cultural richness and variety of the world in which they live.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

35. The steps taken by the school to ensure the **welfare, health and safety** of pupils are very good. The school is undoubtedly a caring environment where the general welfare of pupils is catered for very effectively. Very good arrangements are in place to monitor and promote regular attendance and good behaviour. The procedures for child protection are very good and staff are clear about their responsibilities for children who may be at risk. Systems for assessing pupils' attainment and monitoring their academic progress are also very good.
36. Teachers implement a wide range of practices to eliminate potential risks to the safety and well-being of all. Pupils are trained to keep classrooms and corridors free of unnecessary clutter, teachers are careful to ensure that lesson activities are without risk and there are good procedures for dealing with injuries and administering first aid. All staff know what to do in an emergency and are aware of the extent and type of aid and treatment they can give. There are good links with the medical practitioners and parents of pupils with specific medical conditions. Staff closely monitor sick and injured pupils and make every effort to contact the parents should there be any concerns. Accurate and detailed records are kept of all accidents and injuries. The school has been carefully designed to ensure that those with physical or mobility difficulties have easy access to all areas.
37. The school has very good procedures for child protection. Staff are mindful of the need to listen carefully to what pupils say and to be alert to any indication of neglect or abuse. There is an effective system of recording and communicating concerns. Teachers and all staff working with pupils are aware of these reporting procedures. The trusting relationships established within school help keep open vital lines of communication between children and adults.
38. Procedures to support pupils' **personal development** are good. A continuing dialogue with and sensitive approach to parents helps the school to have the right strategies in place to respond to their children's individual needs. The school is particularly successful in managing the transition of children from home to school and in settling in the many pupils whose education has been disrupted by at least one change of school. The school actively welcomes questions on its procedures and methods and answers them as fully as possible. By the time pupils join the school, in whatever class, they have a positive approach to the change.
39. Very good systems are in place **to promote positive behaviour**, with good procedures to monitor and eliminate any incidents of oppressive behaviour, bullying or racism. The school follows up all discovered and reported incidents by counselling the victim and working with the perpetrator and his/her parents. Pupils are given good opportunities to express their concerns by talking to an adult in school and are clear about the strategies to use if they feel in any way threatened. This has a positive effect on their attitude towards school and what it is doing to promote their well-being. The procedures also serve to reassure those who are in the process of making new friends and establishing new relationships. Pupils are consistently encouraged through individual and group discussion to show kindness and tolerance to others. In this respect, most pupils develop a sense of equality and fairness in their dealings with each other, helping them work and play collaboratively. These very good procedures have resulted in the good standard of behaviour in school.
40. The procedures for monitoring and promoting **attendance and punctuality** are very good. A member of staff monitors all latecomers, queries all unexplained absences and ensures that registers accurately reflect reasons for absence. Pupils compete for awards and certificates for good attendance. The educational welfare service works closely with the school and provides good support for individual families where attendance is an issue. The school actively discourages holidays in term time, advising

parents that these absences impede good progress and cause unnecessary disruption to pupils' learning. Not all heed the advice. All class attendance registers are completed on a series of bells. This makes parents and pupils very aware of the time they should be in school and ready for their lessons.

41. The school makes very good provision for assessing pupils' **attainment and progress**. Teachers' ongoing assessment of pupils' attainment is good, and marking in books is good overall. The children have tests on entry to the school and at the end of every year in other classes. The data gained from this is recorded and the progress of individual pupils is tracked so that teachers have a clear understanding of where they are academically and where they need to go next. In some cases, this leads to 'booster' classes being offered to help with the development of additional literacy and numeracy skills. The children have targets and are well aware of them. Assessment is used by teachers to give pupils extra support and to target particular activities, but is not yet used to refine the schemes of work or, in particular, to raise the level of challenge for higher attaining pupils. The assessment of pupils who have special educational needs or for whom English is an additional language is rigorous, and the results are used effectively to plan the next stages of learning for pupils and to provide additional support and resources where necessary. Pupils with English as an additional language, for example, are assessed termly in order to monitor and ensure their progress.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

42. The school's partnership with parents promotes very effective links between home and school. Parents find the staff approachable and easy to work with and, as a result, feel comfortable about contributing to their children's learning in and out of school. The overall quality of information available to parents is good, and the way in which it is made available and communicated to parents is very good. The school has a range of methods to monitor the level of parental involvement and interest in its work. This gives the staff time to deal with an emerging concern before it becomes a complaint. The school has successfully involved parents in maintaining the good standard of behaviour and good rate of attendance at school.
43. The vast majority of parents responding to the questionnaire, and those spoken to during the course of the inspection, were very positive about the school, its work and what it provides for their children. They had very few complaints and were extremely pleased by the way in which the school was led and managed, by the approachability of the staff and the fact that their children like school. The inspection evidence supports their very positive views on these and most other aspects of the school. Some parents had concerns about the quality of information, homework and the range of opportunities outside of lessons. Inspectors are able to reassure parents that the quality of provision is better than found in many schools.
44. The overall quality of the **information** available to parents from the school is good. The end-of-year reports are well received by parents. The sections on the pupils' personal progress are very good and help to clarify any mismatch of perception between home and school. The reports contain helpful targets to show what each pupil needs to do to improve both academically and personally. The summarised sections also show whether a pupil's attendance has affected his or her progress, which is a very effective way of reinforcing the need for children to attend school regularly. The whole document forms a good basis for a constructive dialogue with teachers. The **prospectus** provides parents with a good introduction to the school's aims, expectations and teaching methods. It is a valuable reference point on school procedures. The detailed and friendly curriculum information leaflets for each year group, the written information given in the prospectus, the end-of-year reports and the monthly newsletters help parents work with their children at home and make better use of their time in school.
45. The school finds a number of ways to keep all parents informed about its events and activities, primarily through newsletters but also through flyers, notice boards and timely, verbal reminders from staff. Parents have no qualms about approaching teachers and are happy to come in and discuss the progress of their children, whether or not there is a problem. Teachers make themselves available to parents before and after school, and parents make good use of these opportunities and respond very well to the open and friendly attitude of the staff.
46. Parents have very good opportunities to enter into a two-way dialogue with the school about their children's academic and personal progress. Their views are sought and taken into consideration through questionnaires and consultation evenings –for example, a suggestion made by parents on improving the behaviour policy was taken up and incorporated in the reward system. Almost all parents

take advantage of the opportunities that the regular parent/teacher consultation evenings provide to discuss any factors that may be limiting their children's progress. The school actively encourages parents to contribute an assessment of their children's progress in order for a constructive discussion to take place. Parents are given opportunities to comment on the value of these sessions and instigate further one-to-one discussion if need be. Parents of pupils with special educational needs have additional opportunities to work in partnership with the school and to understand the individual steps their children need to take to help them progress. There are very effective home/school partnerships with parents of pupils for whom English is an additional language. The wide range of helpful newsletters and curricular guidance can be translated into the main language of the home where necessary.

47. Parents are very keen to see their children do well. A significant number come into the school as willing and active volunteers, helping with reading practice, after-school activities, and fundraising or on pupils' visits out of school. Parents arrive in high numbers at occasions that directly involve their children such as concerts and consultation evenings. Their success in fundraising in such a short time is evidence of their interest and enthusiasm for the school. The events and activities of PALS (Parents/Friends at Long Meadow School), chaired by the enthusiastic and willing site manager, not only raises the profile of the school within the local community but also provides yet another route for parents to make their views known to teachers.
48. Many parents involve themselves with their children's learning by encouraging numeracy, reading, singing, spelling, music practice and independent research at home. The dedication of parents to their children's success is evident in the way they show interest in what their children learn, consult and co-operate with the staff and respond positively to the helpful information and the sincere welcome they receive from the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

49. **Leadership by the headteacher and key staff** is excellent. The headteacher provides inspirational leadership. She is dedicated to the success of the school, children and staff. The deputy headteacher is extremely effective in her own right and adds significantly to the drive and direction provided by the headteacher. The headteacher and deputy both share the same vision of creating an excellent school, with high standards, and where all children achieve their full potential. They complement each other very effectively in taking the school forward. They are approachable, and lead and support with humour and authority. Their ability to manage change, in some very testing circumstances, has been impressive. They have created a very strong team where everyone works well together.
50. The vision of the headteacher, governors and staff is clearly evident throughout the school. It is achieving its aim of 'looking forward, aiming high together'. There is a clear sense of purpose and commitment to high standards and excellence in all aspects of its work. The school and governors are committed to establishing a socially inclusive curriculum that values all pupils' contributions. The school's values are evident throughout the school with 'The Golden Rules' displayed in every learning area. Pupils are helped to be part of this vision through their participation in decision making in the school and class councils. Parents are also invited to help shape the direction of the school through the use of questionnaires, and value the way in which their suggestions are received.
51. The way the school responded to the very challenging circumstances of the flood in the autumn term, and the subsequent evacuation for two months, is a great tribute to the strengths of the headteacher, senior management team and governors. The headteacher's energy and vision ensured that the pupils' learning did not suffer and that staff were well supported.
52. The school is **managed very well on a day-to-day basis**. The whole school works together as a harmonious community. The headteacher's delegation of management responsibilities is good. Clear structures are in place across the school, with teams working effectively at all levels. Year group teams include support and teaching staff. All staff have job descriptions that outline clearly their roles and responsibilities. The deputy headteacher and senior management team work effectively together. They help the headteacher to meet the school's aims and maintain a close overview of the standards it achieves.

53. The year and subject leaders, many of whom are either new to the school or have recently taken responsibility for their subjects, have a clear understanding of their responsibilities and have begun to take on aspects of their monitoring roles. The use of partner teachers to support the curriculum leader works very well and ensures an overview of the learning needs of older and younger pupils.
54. Office staff are very welcoming and extremely efficient in their responsibilities. The school uses the new technology effectively to support office systems and to monitor standards and attendance. The senior midday supervisor manages her team well and ensures that the pupils are happy and safe. The site manager is an asset to the school. He is flexible and accommodating, and makes an excellent contribution to the atmosphere of the school. He keeps the building secure and well maintained. His 'Site Manager's Cup' encourages pupils to look after and take responsibility for their school. He is a positive role model for the pupils. The standard of cleaning provided by an outside contractor is high.
55. The management of the Early Years unit is very good. The team leader has established a positive atmosphere and strong team spirit. She consults with all staff and ensures that they participate fully in decision making. She has given tremendous support to the new staff joining the team who, as a result, have settled in quickly. She is well supported by dedicated and caring staff. These good relationships significantly enhance the progress made by the children in the Early Years classes. An experienced member of the senior management team, who has an overview responsibility for the Foundation Stage, gives her appropriate guidance and advice.
56. The special educational needs co-ordinator has a clear vision of how the school must support all its pupils and include them in all its activities and opportunities. She manages her specific responsibilities extremely well. Her contribution to the development of the school and the progress of pupils with special educational needs is excellent. She is ably supported by the headteacher and support staff. The headteacher also co-ordinates the support for pupils for whom English as an additional language. She provides very good leadership and management, and consequently the provision is very good. Very effective use is made of finance in terms of support staff, local educational authority guidance and resources. The special educational needs co-ordinator provides very effective support and guidance for all teachers and classroom assistants
57. **The governing body is very effective.** They fulfil their statutory duties and responsibilities very well. They know the school's strengths and weakness, and are well informed by the headteacher and subject leaders. Governors keep up to date through their links to specific classes, which they visit as often as possible. They have been an integral part of the creation of this successful school. They are well organised and take pride in the progress the school has made since it opened. Governors have brought many strengths to the school. They worked in close partnership with the headteacher and staff to create the school's aims and objectives and to share the same vision. Their commitment is demonstrated through the time they give to the school. For example, they are joining the staff on a training day to review the school improvement plan and agree school targets for the following year. The governors have identified target setting as their own developmental need in order to improve their skills in measuring the school's effectiveness.
58. The chair of governors has established an extremely effective working relationship with the headteacher. He has an excellent understanding of the governors' strategic role in continuing to take the school forward over the next few years. The chairs of the key committees are establishing their role as 'critical friends' effectively. They have clear written terms of reference. They seek professional guidance from the school but are clear about their own responsibilities as chairs and as governors in the decision making process.
59. The school evaluates its own performance systematically, using all the data available. There are impressive systems for assessing the academic performance of different groups of pupils. This information is used to direct energy and finances towards the school's most pressing needs. Examples include the additional support for literacy and social skills in the Early Years classes. Pupils identified as under-performing are given targeted support. Identified needs are linked to priorities in the school improvement plan. This is an impressive and substantial document. It is an excellent tool used by management, governors and staff to check progress against the school's agreed priorities. It gives the school a clear sense of direction and is regularly referred to by staff and governors.
60. **The budget is managed prudently.** Four per cent of the school's total budget is carried forward for contingencies. This is appropriate, given the previous unexpected building problems earlier in the year. The chair of the finance committee has a very good understanding of the principles of best value, which the committee has applied successfully during the year. Careful consideration is given to alternative

quotes and governors plan to review any gains the school has made from their spending decisions. The unforeseen building issues have been extremely well dealt with by the premises and finance committees. There is careful monitoring of specific grants. The money is targeted specifically for its purpose, which has a positive impact on pupils concerned. For example, the provision for pupils given the protection of a statement of special educational needs is excellent.

61. A system is in place for monitoring teaching and learning. The practices and systems established by the headteacher are meticulous and very informative. A programme of monitoring, linked to the school improvement plan priorities, is in place. Subject leaders have begun to monitor planning and pupils' work. The school's strategy for appraisal and performance management is secure and includes all non-teaching staff. All team leaders have had training and a cycle of observations is in place. The headteacher and deputy are committed to the high quality support and training of all staff. To this end the school is in the process of being assessed for external recognition as an Investor in People. The professional development needs of all staff are considered and training is matched to school or individual priorities.
62. The school is well staffed with **teachers and support staff**. As a new school, great thought has been given to appointing staff. The headteacher and governors have successfully appointed men and women of high quality, well matched to their responsibilities. The school's handbook provides a very helpful point of reference for new staff. There is a well thought out induction programme for all new staff as well as for newly qualified teachers. All the new staff interviewed during the inspection commented on how well they were supported and how quickly they were made to feel valued members of the team. There is a very good team spirit amongst all the staff and a shared commitment to succeed.
63. The teaching staff provide effective support for different groups of pupils, including pupils with special educational needs, pupils with English as an additional language and pupils who have behavioural difficulties. Teachers and their assistants form effective teams, making a positive contribution to the learning, attainment and social development of the pupils. They provide positive role models for behaviour and across the school relationships between adults and children are very good. Pupils know that the adults care about them and want them to be successful.
64. Learning **resources** are good. The number of computers is higher than the national average. Staff use resources from outside the school to supplement their resources in lessons. Good use is made of clubs, visits and visitors to enhance the curriculum. Another rich resource are the parents and carers who contribute productively both within and outside the classroom, and extend pupils' opportunities for learning.
65. The very spacious **accommodation** is used well. The school is fully accessible to pupils with disabilities, and has a shower and dedicated medical room. The school has a range of features designed to accommodate the delivery of a Year 7 curriculum. There are changing rooms for physical education, and purpose-built rooms for classes in science, food and design technology, art and music. These are already in regular use, although there is no current Year 7. The library is attractive and inviting. The ICT suite is timetabled for use by all classes and is used effectively to develop pupils' skills. There is plenty of space so that small groups of pupils can have quiet support outside the classrooms. The planned developments for the school grounds have been delayed because of the flood. For example, the youngest children have no large fixed outdoor apparatus and the school has had limited use of its grounds. The site has very good potential as a learning area, with an attractive willow sculpture and a protected hedge. There are clear plans to develop the grounds, including an environmental area.
66. The pupils' good progress, their positive attitudes, the good quality of the teaching and the high quality of leadership and management mean that the school is very effective and provides very good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

67. The headteacher, staff and governing body should continue to work closely together to raise standards further, particularly the quality of writing, by
- Ensuring that pupils are always given specific tasks in all subjects that challenge them immediately at the correct level of difficulty in relation to their potential and ability, particularly those capable of higher attainment [see paragraphs 7, 20, 21, 25, 28, 41, 105, 106, 112, 138 and 143]
 - Using words that all pupils can readily understand when setting out the purpose of the lesson and the criteria for measuring its success [see paragraph 20]
 - Making sure that pupils do not miss key parts of lessons when they are withdrawn for extra support [see paragraphs 23 and 107]
 - Continuing to emphasise the importance of a rich, varied and accurate vocabulary, and increasing the opportunities for extended writing in all subjects [see paragraphs 101, 104, 117 and 121.]

Inspectors recognise that several of the above strategies are already in the school's improvement plan and in practice in some classes.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	61
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	47

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	6	6	38	11	0	0	0
Percentage	10	10	62	18	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		325
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		40

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		53

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	34

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	30
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	14

Attendance

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
	%		%
School data	4.6	School data	0.2
National comparative data	5.4	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	22	14	36

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	18	20
	Girls	12	11	14
	Total	31	29	34
Percentage of pupils At NC level 2 or above	School	86 (n/a)	81 (n/a)	94 (n/a)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	20	21
	Girls	12	14	14
	Total	30	34	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (n/a)	94 (n/a)	97 (n/a)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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	198	1	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	17	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	8	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	3	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	7	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	14	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	1	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	8	1	0
Black or Black British – African	3	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	1	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	13
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27.1
Average class size	29.5

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	19
Total aggregate hours worked per week	390

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	13

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001-2002
	£
Total income	417285
Total expenditure	393353
Expenditure per pupil	1846.73
Balance brought forward from previous year	-3992
Balance carried forward to next year	19940

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	325
Number of questionnaires returned	161

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	70	29	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	53	42	4	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	50	42	3	1	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	46	47	6	1	0
The teaching is good.	61	34	3	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	51	37	9	0	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	70	28	2	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	69	27	2	1	1
The school works closely with parents.	52	38	4	0	6
The school is well led and managed.	65	33	0	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	56	40	1	1	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	42	46	7	1	4

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

68. Provision for the children in the Foundation Stage is one of the many strengths of the school. Early Years children get off to a flying start. This is because they are well taught in a welcoming learning environment and provided with an imaginative and interesting curriculum.
69. The main strengths are: -
- The quality and range of the curriculum provided is good.
 - Teaching is consistently good and at times very good or excellent. As a result all children make good progress.
 - Staff are knowledgeable about early years and work very well as a team. Support staff are a real asset.
 - Staff take great care to ensure that all children feel valued and are included in all activities.
 - Parents support the school well with their children's learning.
 - Children's personal development and social skills are very well promoted.
 - The Early Years unit is very well led and managed.
- Points for development: -
- The development of the outdoor learning space with a sheltered area and large fixed equipment has been delayed because of the flood. As a result children miss out on some opportunities to develop their creative and physical skills
70. All the teaching observed during the inspection was consistently good. Support staff are used effectively and interact skilfully with the children. All staff provide a calm, purposeful learning environment, which helps the children who find it more difficult to settle. Staff have a very good understanding of the needs of young children. As a result, they are happy, feel secure and try to do their best. The team leader works hard to meet the needs of all children and liaises closely with external agencies. The school has also secured external support for pupils for whom English is an additional language, and extra staffing to extend the provision for developing children's literacy and social skills. The good quality of the teaching enables the children to make good and very good progress towards their early learning goals by the end of the year.
71. All children start in the autumn term. They come from a very wide range of different pre-school settings and it is a credit to the team that they visited 28 of the 34 settings. The admission arrangements are effective and ensure that children settle easily.
72. Parents are made to feel very welcome. Staff send out attractive and useful curriculum letters with ideas for parents to use at home. Parents also make a valuable contribution to the children's learning, and undertake reading activities, share in curriculum work and help with specific activities including educational visits.
73. Staff use information provided by parents and their own detailed assessments to very good effect. The range of baseline assessments, taken at the beginning of the year, indicates that the majority of children start in the Early Years below the level expected. They are well below in their language skills, mathematical awareness and social skills. There is however a wide span of ability. A significant minority of pupils are at expected levels and some are above. The provision for the different ability groups is good. The ways in which staff measure and record children's progress is a particular strength because it helps staff plan work that is suitably challenging for the different children's needs.
74. There are very good resources indoors. Staff make full use of the school's specialist computer, music and food technology areas. The Early Years unit is spacious and attractive with a secure shared outside area. There are imaginative plans for the continued development of the school's external provision.

Personal, social and emotional development

75. Staff help the children to settle in very quickly. They plan and deliver the curriculum in a similar way, which ensures that the children learn with confidence. The classrooms are laid out so that children can select items independently. They have regular opportunities to choose activities and are responsible for putting away any equipment they use. There are many planned opportunities for children from both classes to play and learn together. Well-established routines such as registration and drink times help build the confidence of younger children. Daily planned small-group activities led by the teaching assistants and nursery nurse help children develop their social skills, take turns and think about each other. They enjoy these sessions because they are delivered as play experiences and are fun.
76. The children work well in small groups and alongside each other. Care is taken to include all of them in lessons and to make sure that no children are isolated. Good support is in place for children who have special physical, learning or behavioural needs. There is regular sharing of information between home, school and the various agencies that give guidance. There are very good relationships between the staff and children, and among the children. The staff make sure the children know what behaviour is expected. They use lots of praise and the school's 'Golden Rules' system, to which the children respond to very positively. Most children enjoy learning, behave very well and work hard.
77. The majority of children start in Early Years classes with levels of social development well below those expected for their age. The quality of teaching in this aspect is very good and children make very good progress towards their early learning goals. A significant minority are on course to achieve nationally expected levels by the end of the year.

Communication, language and literacy

78. Most children start with skills in speaking, writing and reading that are well below the levels expected for their age. Their listening skills are better developed. There is, however, a wide span of ability. A significant minority is at expected levels or above in their speaking and listening, reading and writing skills. A strength of teaching is the time all staff give to promoting children's speaking and listening skills and the range of interesting books they choose. Children are actively taught to listen well. The attractive and spacious role-play areas are used effectively to promote the use of purposeful language. Every opportunity is taken to encourage talk and help children to use their imaginations. Some reluctant language users find it very difficult to express their ideas. These children are given more time in very small language groups. In a very good lesson the teacher used an attractive big book, 'Big Feet', to promote talking. Her questions skilfully extended the very able pupils. She also encouraged less fluent children to express their ideas in sentences.
79. Children who use English as an additional language make good progress because their particular individual language needs are identified and addressed. For example, the more secure language users are encouraged to extend their vocabulary, while quieter children have their language and confidence developed informally. Extra specialist help is also provided on a weekly basis.
80. The reading areas are spacious, with good quality books. Some children choose the reading areas when they have choice times but some need more encouragement to sit and share a book. Most handle books with care because they are taught to look after them. They enjoy sharing books and some are beginning to develop an initial understanding of sounds and words to help them to read. Good use is made of rhymes, songs and sound games, and of computer programs that match sounds and words. Staff actively encourage the children to use the informal writing areas. Many have difficulty forming their letters fluently and some have additional support to develop fluent skills in writing. Children who are ready for more independent writing activities are identified early and are beginning to make simple sentences.
81. The quality of teaching is good. Children make good progress, and some very good progress, towards their early learning goals, particularly in their reading and listening. A significant minority are on course to achieve nationally expected levels by the end of the year. The majority is unlikely to achieve expected levels by then because they start with less developed speaking, reading and writing skills. Parents give good support for reading activities.

Mathematical development

82. Most children start with mathematical skills well below the levels expected for their age. However, there is a wide range in their understanding. A significant minority are as expected or better in their ability to understand and use numbers and mathematical language. Teachers have good strategies to match work at the right level for different children. Children enjoy daily opportunities to join in favourite rhymes such as 'Five currant buns'. They have many opportunities to work in very small groups with very interesting activities and good quality equipment, and are beginning to write down some of their work. A very good feature of the teaching is the opportunity children have to investigate and explore mathematical ideas for themselves.
83. In a very good lesson, an excellent range of resources was used to encourage learning. More able children used attractive number mats to count forward and backwards. The learning of less confident children was strengthened through a range of number games, jigsaws, and water and sand exploration. More able children were encouraged to make predictions of how many objects there were in a jar before counting them. Good use is made of computer programs to reinforce number skills.
84. Staff provide an appropriate balance between number-based activities and activities that promote the children's understanding of mathematical ideas and language. A large number of children do not recognise more than a few numbers and have difficulty recording their work. They are given a lot of practice in drawing the shapes of numbers correctly.
85. Teaching is good, and children make good progress towards their early learning goals, with many making very good progress. A significant minority is on course to achieve their early learning goals by the end of the year. The majority is unlikely to reach nationally expected levels by then because they start with less well developed number skills.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

86. Most children start with knowledge and understanding below the expected levels for their age. However, there is a wide range in their understanding. A significant minority are as expected or above in their ability to understand and express their ideas about the world around them. Topics such as 'All about me' and 'Out and about', together with special walks, help children build up their picture of the world. They plant bulbs and watch them grow. They have many opportunities to make models. The staff strike a good balance between intervening and letting children explore. For example, one child was particularly proud to show the space ship he had made. He had worked with real effort over a long period of time at attaching parts of his model with lots of sellotape. The children build up their environmental, geographical and scientific knowledge through these opportunities. There was no ongoing investigation area in use during the inspection, where children could handle interesting items such as magnifying glasses and kaleidoscopes, but photographic evidence shows that this happens at other times.
87. The staff extend the children's' knowledge of different cultures successfully through a range of books, music and resources. Over the year children learn about a number of festivals including Diwali and Christmas, as well as joining special school assemblies.
88. Information and communication technology skills are very well taught. The children use the school's specialist ICT suite in small groups on a weekly basis. They use computer programs regularly to reinforce basic skills. As a result children have positive attitudes to using computers. Most can use the mouse confidently with some assistance. Children are actively taught to use tape recorders and digital cameras. Girls and boys display equally good skills.
89. Teaching is consistently good and children make good progress, with many making very good progress. A significant minority are on course to reach expected levels by the end of the year. The majority is unlikely to reach them because they are unable to express their ideas about their experiences in any detail.

Physical development

90. Most children start below the levels expected for their age. However, there is a wide range of physical development, with some above and some below the standard expected. A significant minority are at expected levels or above. Children have access to the school hall and use their outdoor area. Due to the very serious disruption caused by the flood, the school's plans for a sheltered area and large fixed

equipment have had to be delayed, and therefore outdoor provision is limited. Children do not have daily opportunities to express themselves physically. The staff work hard to overcome this by taking out a range of wheeled vehicles and various equipment to help pupils extend their physical skills and play imaginatively. Floor markings and road furniture are also used to help children learn about road safety in a play situation.

91. When they have access to the school hall it is used well. For example, in an excellent lesson all children made significant gains in their skills because the activity was such fun that all participated fully. Pupils with either physical or behavioural needs were given excellent support and encouragement, and all children made very good progress in a safe environment.
92. Staff within the unit provide regular opportunities for girls and boys to play with large and small construction equipment. They also provide many opportunities for children to practise their skills in cutting, sticking and painting. Teaching is good and children make good progress. Most children are on course to achieve nationally expected levels by the end of the school year.

Creative development

93. Most children start with skills below the standard expected for their age. However, there is a wide range of ability, with a significant minority as expected or above in their ability to express themselves creatively. Staff provide children with a wide range of creative experiences. They are encouraged to experiment freely when mixing paints, printing or using materials and learn to handle equipment such as paint brushes and scissors.
94. The imaginative play areas are used well to extend children's creativity and language skills. The teaching assistants in particular interact with children skilfully, extending their language and encouraging their imagination. Children respond well and thoroughly enjoy these opportunities. In an excellent lesson children made real gains in their imaginative development. This is because all staff involved had a very clear focus for each activity because of the very detailed planning.
95. Staff develop the children's music talents effectively. Music is taught in a way that promotes their confidence. They make full use of the school's specialist music room where there is a good range of instruments. They also have daily access to instruments in both classes. Most days there are music rhymes to join, as well as the school's weekly singing session.
96. Teaching is good and most children make at least good progress. Most are on course to achieve nationally expected levels by the end of the school year because their creative development is well promoted.

ENGLISH

97. Standards are in line with national averages in Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils make good progress throughout the school. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are working at nationally expected levels for speaking and listening and reading, but standards are below the national average in writing. Pupils in Year 5 make very good progress and are well placed to achieve high standards at the end of Year 6. Bearing in mind the high level of pupil mobility, the percentage of pupils for whom English is an additional language, and standards on entry to the school of the majority of pupils, the pupils have achieved well in a short space of time.
98. The large majority of pupils throughout the school are confident and articulate speakers. Their **speaking and listening skills** are effectively developed through discussions in literacy and other lessons, and through class activities when pupils are encouraged to share their ideas and listen to each other. At the end of the more successful literacy lessons, pupils are encouraged to evaluate their own work and share their ideas with the class. Pupils use a wide range of vocabulary in these activities and express their ideas clearly. The majority spoke clearly and animatedly to inspectors about their preferences for books, authors and interests during discussions both in English lessons and when reading for them. All older pupils for whom English is an additional language speak confidently and use a good vocabulary. Some younger, lower attaining pupils, need additional support.
99. Many pupils are confident when **reading** aloud. Higher attaining pupils in Year 1 and 2 read with good expression, intonation and understanding. Letter sounds are well taught and teachers help pupils to develop their reading skills by assessing their current strengths and weaknesses, and identifying the

next steps to be taken. Many activities during literacy lessons focus on sounds, letter patterns, word recognition and the sharing of texts. These help to improve pupils' reading skills. Pupils who have difficulties in reading are well supported by trained teaching assistants as well as by the teachers.

100. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 continue to develop their reading skills and read an increasingly wide range of books. They use reference skills well and can readily find information from reference books in the school library. The school has given reading a high priority and has ensured that pupils read a very wide and increasingly challenging range of texts during the literacy hour. In Year 6, the majority of pupils speak with interest about their favourite authors and reading activities at home as well as at school. Many are self-motivated readers who show confidence in justifying their opinions about books and many are members of the public library. Pupils are able to use their reference skills to find information from books, the Internet or CD-ROM to research topics, and to scan books taken from the school library. Pupils for whom English is an additional language read competently, according to their age and ability.
101. Standards in **writing** are below the national average in Year 2 and Year 6. Overall progress is good but is inconsistent between classes. Although pupils are given a wide range of writing opportunities in literacy and other subjects, there are inconsistencies in demands placed on presentation and opportunities for extended pieces of writing. Higher attaining pupils in Year 2 write complete sentences, and sequence their ideas. They are able to write a short story. Most use familiar words correctly and apply their knowledge of spelling rules when writing less familiar words. Pupils are given a good range of writing opportunities and this enables them to develop a repertoire of writing styles.
102. Pupils continue to make good progress in the older classes, particularly in Years 3 and 5. Most have a secure grasp of punctuation and use a variety of punctuation thoughtfully by Year 5 in order to create tension and atmosphere for the readers. Pupils write in a variety of styles and for different purposes. A particular strength is pupils' increased progress in writing poetry. By Year 4 pupils understand similes and metaphors and by Year 6 appreciate a wider variety of poetic techniques including onomatopoeia, rhyming couplets, and alliteration. They use metaphors and similes to good effect when composing poems. Many pupils select the vocabulary carefully to create the desired effects for the reader. An example from a Year 4 pupil using metaphors illustrates this:-
- Mrs Bark is a tailored dark grey checked suit.
She is a special and significant grand oak tree.
She is the sun shining down on Long Meadow school*
103. The headteacher and all staff support pupils with **special educational needs** very effectively through a wide range of strategies and resources, and through valuable help from teaching assistants. Staff also make very good provision for pupils for whom **English is an additional language** by effective use of teaching assistants, school-based record keeping and, where necessary, local education authority support. Consequently these pupils progress as well as others in the class and some are identified as gifted and are in the higher-attaining groups.
104. Pupils apply their literacy skills effectively in other subjects. This is not yet having a completely successful impact on raising standards because of inconsistencies in the quality of teaching of writing and in the demands on pupils. Some work in history and religious education, for example, indicates that pupils use a narrow rather than an imaginative vocabulary. In contrast, some very good examples were seen where teachers took great care to encourage pupils to use words accurately when describing the changes taking place in scientific investigations.
105. Overall the quality of **teaching** is good, and occasionally very good or excellent. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well, with very good liaison between the teachers and the wide range of support staff. Homework is used effectively, particularly to support reading. A wide variety of texts and vocabulary are used to gain pupils' interest and improve their spelling. However, in some classes, there is insufficient planning for the different ability groups of pupils. Questions are used effectively to improve and assess pupils' understanding. Teachers use praise to good effect and the generally good quality of marking helps pupils to identify strengths in their work but does not always highlight areas for improvement, especially in presentation.
106. Spelling, punctuation and grammar are taught well throughout the school and, in most cases, teachers take the abilities of the pupils carefully into account. The teaching of personal writing and handwriting are the most inconsistent aspects. The analysis of pupils' written work shows that, although teachers give pupils a wide range of writing opportunities, similar demands are made on most pupils. As a result,

the lower attaining pupils do not always complete the work and higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged. Where handwriting is well taught, pupils make good progress and their writing is fluent, legible and well formed, and work is well presented. Where the teachers do not consistently demand these high standards, pupils' handwriting is untidy, lacks fluency and letters are not always well formed.

107. **Leadership and management** are good and the curriculum leaders have identified appropriate areas for improvement. The rigorous systems for assessment are well used to guide curricular planning, to group pupils according to ability and to identify the level of support or challenge for each pupil. This very high quality provision, together with an enriching curriculum, contributes to improved achievement throughout the school. Occasionally, the withdrawal of pupils for small-group teaching at the beginning of the literacy hour results in the introduction being missed, and pupils are not involved in the main work from the beginning. The school has identified standards in writing as an area for improvement and has been very successful in ensuring that the available resources, including the attractive library and ICT equipment, are used effectively.
108. The school has a satisfactory range of books in the library, which is extended by classroom selections and the local education authority's loan service. Books are invitingly displayed in each classroom and in the library, and encourage pupils' reading. The librarian makes a very positive contribution to the appearance of the library, displays books attractively and repairs and labels them when necessary. Although books are labelled according to the Dewey system, pupils do not, at this stage, use it. This limits their understanding of the systems used in public libraries.

MATHEMATICS

109. Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are broadly in line with national averages. Progress is good because most pupils have entered the school with below average levels of attainment for their age. The high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and the very high pupil mobility has affected attainment especially in Year 6.
110. **Pupils in Year 2** can do calculations with numbers up to 100, such as $35+9$, and work out sums such as $13+? = 20$ in their heads. They also understand basic subtraction, multiplication and division. Lower attaining pupils work confidently with numbers up to 10. They also know the names of common two-dimensional shapes. Current work in Year 2 indicates that pupils are on course to achieve results close to the national average by the end of the school year. Attainment is also close to the national average in **Year 6**. Higher attaining pupils can do calculations such as division by 10, 100 and 1000 with decimals as well as whole numbers. They can work out percentages and have worked with negative numbers. They are able to explain how they arrive at their answers. They know the names and properties of common two-dimensional shapes and understand how to fix positions using coordinates. However, the lower attaining pupils are less confident with number. They can work out calculations such as 36×100 and 50×10 , and how to find the area of right-angled triangles. Some pupils have difficulty presenting work clearly because of poor writing skills.
111. Pupils enjoy mathematics and make good progress. **Learning** in Years 1 and 2 was satisfactory or better in all the lessons seen, and is good overall. The pace of the lessons is good in most classes and pupils' concentration is well maintained. Pupils lost concentration in the few lessons when the pace was too relaxed. Activities are generally well matched to the needs of the pupils, but teachers do not always plan sufficiently for the wide spread of attainment in most classes. Learning in the lessons seen in Years 3 – 6 ranged from satisfactory to very good, and is good overall because each year's work builds successfully on earlier learning. Pupils in Year 3 were learning how to work with numbers up to 20. In Year 4 they were working confidently with numbers up to 100, both mentally and on paper. Pupils in Year 5 were learning how to do long multiplication. They could explain their own strategies for calculating sums such as 32×12 . The achievement of these pupils in lessons and as seen in their exercise books suggests that they should do well in next year's National Curriculum tests. Teachers and teaching assistants provided good support, particularly for the lower attaining pupils. Pupils with special educational needs were achieving well. No difference was noted in the progress of boys or girls. Pupils with English as an additional language made appropriate progress in the mathematics lessons seen and understood the language used in text books and by the teachers.
112. The **teaching** of mathematics is good overall. On the whole, the teachers have good subject knowledge and have integrated the National Numeracy Strategy effectively into their teaching. They have a good knowledge of their pupils' abilities and most plan work suited to them. They have good

relationships with their pupils and use appropriate teaching strategies. Pupils are used to good effect to explain and demonstrate their own mathematical strategies to the rest of the class. Teachers assess pupils' work effectively and use their assessments to help plan future work. Pupils have taken the statutory tests in Year 2 and work is assessed in other years by the use of optional tests, as well as by teacher assessment. Behaviour is well managed. Support assistants or other helpers are well prepared for the work they are to complete with their groups. In most lessons, the pace is exciting and pupils are well motivated. Where teaching is not so strong, the work planned is not well matched to the needs and attainment of the pupils, particularly those capable of work at higher levels.

113. Pupils with **special educational needs and English as an additional language** are generally well supported in their work both by teachers and teaching assistants. Pupils with special needs or who were lower attaining do similar work to the rest of the class, but at a simpler level. In one mathematics lesson, disruption by three pupils with behavioural difficulties was minimised by effective intervention by the teacher and teaching assistants. In another class, learning was disrupted for a group when they were withdrawn for an extra literacy session.
114. The whole curriculum for mathematics is taught, in addition to work with number. Pupils learn to work with time, and measure, and gain knowledge of shape. They collect data in tally charts and use this to make pictograms or bar charts. Problem solving and investigational activities are used in all classes. Information and communication technology is used to a limited extent across the school, principally for drawing graphs. The school has plans to develop this area further. Pupils use their numeracy skills effectively in other subjects, for example, measuring accurately in science and design and technology.
115. The subject has an enthusiastic and capable leader. She has had appropriate training and all the teachers in the school have been well trained to deliver the National Numeracy Strategy. However, some need further training so that they can match work more closely to the needs of their pupils. Teaching, planning and pupils' work are due to be monitored shortly. The school has developed a very effective assessment scheme and pupils' progress is tracked efficiently. The library has a satisfactory range of books to be used for research to support teaching of mathematics.

SCIENCE

116. Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with national averages. Examination of pupils' work and observations of lessons indicate that pupils' standards in Years 1, 4 and 5 are also in line with the national average for their age, with Year 3 above the national average. While standards in Year 5 are currently in line, at their current rate of progress, they have the potential to achieve above the national average when they take the tests in Year 6. It is difficult to judge pupils' progress over time because the school is new. However, the school's own analyses indicate that progress has been good for pupils from Year 1 to Year 5. All pupils, including those with special educational needs or who use English as an additional language make good progress. Progress over time has been satisfactory in Year 6. This is because pupils have come from a wide variety of schools and the class contains a high percentage of pupils with special needs. However, a scrutiny of the work of pupils in Year 6 shows good progress for all pupils since September.
117. Pupils in Year 2 answer scientific questions and understand the basic principles of scientific enquiry. They have a secure understanding of a range of common materials and can sort them into groups. Pupils in Year 6 have levels of understanding appropriate to their age, recognising, for example, the classification of materials into solids, liquids or gases. Lower attaining pupils struggle to find and use the correct scientific vocabulary to describe what is happening in their investigations.
118. The quality of **teaching and learning** is good. The curriculum fulfils the school aims effectively as teachers provide a range of stimulating activities and encourage pupils 'to develop their thinking skills' and to 'work independently and collaboratively'. The teaching is good because teachers' subject knowledge and use of scientific language are good. This helps pupils develop a secure understanding of scientific concepts. Pupils have first hand science experiences and are encouraged to investigate and make predictions. They are given good opportunities to use their speaking and listening skills to express scientific ideas. Teaching assistants are used effectively in small groups so that all pupils are included in lessons. This particularly helps pupils with learning, language or behaviour needs.
119. Good scientific principles are being established in Year 1 and Year 2. The Year 1 teachers provided very simple grids to help pupils classify their work on the senses by touch, taste and smell. Pupils were expected to use scientific language to describe what materials their own toys were made of in a well

taught lesson in Year 2. More able pupils could explain why different materials such as wood, plastic or metal were used for different toys: 'Plastic helps my doll's arms bend' and 'Soft materials are better for cuddly toys'.

120. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is good. Teachers generally adopt a lively teaching style that achieves a good balance between giving pupils information, teaching them the correct scientific vocabulary and providing good opportunities to experiment and to record their work. They build successfully on the principles being established in Years 1 and 2. For example, in a well-taught Year 3 lesson, pupils were encouraged to test out their earlier predictions about metals and magnets. They enjoyed working as scientists and undertaking timed experiments. The classroom environment was used well to display pupils' work and key vocabulary. However, most classes do not have a science display that could help pupils consolidate their work or extend their thinking.
121. Both the lessons observed in Year 5 and Year 6 were held in the purpose-built science room, where pupils are expected to take responsibility for putting out and returning equipment. Year 6 pupils showed real pleasure and enthusiasm as they checked their work on crystals from the week before. A good feature of the Year 6 lesson was the use of the interactive white board to brainstorm their ideas. It was then used successfully to summarise their findings in bullet points. This helped them have a clearer understanding of whether a reversible or irreversible change of state had occurred after mixing various materials. The teacher spent time encouraging pupils to be specific in their descriptions. For example pupils brainstormed a more scientific phrase from the suggested 'It's gungy' to 'It's a thick lumpy paste.' Despite careful explanations within the lesson lower attaining pupils struggled to explain terms previously learnt, such as 'dissolving', 'filtering', 'solidifying' and 'evaporating'.
122. Teaching is satisfactory but could be stronger when not enough activities are planned at the correct level of difficulty for different ability groups. This prevents some very high attaining pupils from making even greater progress.
123. The school produces excellent information sheets each half term that outline what aspects of science will be undertaken in lessons. This keeps parents well informed. Pupils have regular science **homework** to help to make the subject relevant to every-day life. In Year 5, for example, pupils were asked to record different sounds, which were then used in school. Pupils thoroughly enjoyed identifying sounds made by their friends, and found the work challenging and fun. Parents generally appreciate science homework as the children find it so enjoyable. The subject makes a significant contribution to pupils' health education through work on the human body.
124. The subject is led and managed effectively. The school's system of having a second person to support the subject leader works very well as both have science expertise. Although the leader is relatively new, she has begun to monitor planning and has put together her own priorities for action. These include ensuring that the curriculum is taught in a logical sequence and developing the use of ICT. End-of-topic assessments are detailed and thorough, but are not used consistently to plan activities at the correct level of difficulty for different ability groups. Science resources are good and the school has plans to develop an environmental area in the grounds.

ART AND DESIGN

125. Standards of attainment in Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with national expectations. Pupils have opportunities to work in a wide range of media in two and three dimensions, as well as considering the work of famous artists and the art of other cultures. The school has a range of high quality art works on the walls and has also used a nationally famous artist to work in the grounds. Art is also used effectively in a cross-curricular context- for example to display work about the Tudor period.
126. The quality of **teaching** observed was good. There are a number of strengths. For example, in Year 6 the teacher had made good use of research in books to relate art work to historical knowledge. As a result, the pupils gained an insight into the art of the Ancient Egyptians and how it was created. In Year 3, the teacher demonstrated how to draw portraits. The children were fascinated, and carried on to make their own. Sensitive and enthusiastic teacher support promotes confidence, and has a positive effect on standards. In Year 1, pupils were working in three dimensions to make paper collages. They were able to talk about the effects they were creating and how they achieved them. Pupils are encouraged to appreciate art from a range of cultures. For example, the theme of African art was used

when pupils produced masks and pictures in a similar style. Information and communication technology is used effectively to design and illustrate work and to produce pictures. The children learn quickly in art lessons and make good progress.

127. Most pupils enjoy art and design, and their attitudes and behaviour in lessons are good in Years 1 and 2, and very good in the older classes. Pupils in Year 1 all worked with enthusiasm on their paper collages, and were eager to share their work with each other and adults. Pupils with special educational needs were equally and fully included, and enjoyed the sessions. Pupils in Year 6 quickly became involved in their work and co-operated effectively in groups. Year 3 pupils were happy to be 'models' and there was a keenness to share ideas and opinions. Pupils with special educational needs are encouraged to participate in practical activities and, where appropriate, to work independently. Pupils with English as an additional language are fully involved in art lessons and learn well from them.
128. The subject leader undertakes her role effectively. The curriculum is broadly based and there are good links to other subjects. There is an assessment system, designed to check achievement at the end of each main piece of work. Resources to support the subject are good and are used to good effect. The school has links with a local art gallery to which visits are planned. Artists have visited the school and there is 'living sculpture' in the grounds. There are sufficient art books in the library to extend pupils' own research.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

129. Standards of attainment are broadly in line with national expectations in Year 2 and above average in Year 6. Pupils have the opportunity to undertake a good range of design, construction and evaluation activities.
130. An analysis of the work on display and discussions with pupils indicate that they have appropriate opportunities to investigate ready-made artefacts, and to design, make and evaluate their own models. In Year 5, they were evaluating a range of musical instruments, looking at how they were made and how they could be improved. By Year 6, the majority of pupils have good knowledge, understanding and skills. They make models using mechanisms, electrical circuits and simple pneumatics. They design, make and evaluate artefacts. Some interesting constructions were on display, including models using cams. Pupils learn about healthy meals and cook their own food.
131. The quality of **teaching and learning** is good overall. Teachers have an appropriate knowledge of the subject and plan thoroughly. They have very good relationships with their pupils and ensure that lessons are interesting. The pupils learn well from this and make good progress. Questions are challenging and make the pupils think hard. Teachers use specialist vocabulary effectively referring, for example, to the 'plan' or 'side' views of a design. They are very supportive of those who need time to think through their ideas. Work on display, and in photographs and books, indicates satisfactory coverage of all aspects of the curriculum. However, most of the tasks did not give pupils enough opportunities to develop their own ideas. Pupils behave well and concentrate hard on their work. They are involved fully in the lessons and generally find the subject interesting. All pupils are included, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language. Teaching assistants encourage them through skilled questioning and praise.
132. The subject leader has an appropriate knowledge of the development of the subject, but has not yet had the opportunity to monitor teaching in the area. There is an appropriate scheme of work and the planning is clear. Assessment is based on judgements made at the end of each piece of work, but is not yet formalised so that pupils' developing skills can be used as the basis for future lessons. The range of materials and tools is good. Facilities are well organised, and there is a purpose-built room to permit easy access. There is some use of information and communications technology in the subject, and a small collection of related books in the library.

GEOGRAPHY

133. Discussions with pupils and staff and looking at the pupils' work indicate that standards are in line with national expectations in Year 2 and Year 6. There are also significant numbers of pupils operating at the higher levels. The scrutiny of pupils' workbooks, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, indicate that they make satisfactory progress. Many make good progress.

134. As only one lesson was observed during the inspection, no judgment can be made about the overall quality of teaching. The teaching in the Year 6 lesson observed was good. The teacher had accurate subject knowledge and the work was correctly pitched. By the end of the lesson pupils could identify significant features of tourism in Cairo and had reinforced their mapping skills. Good use was made of numeracy skills as pupils estimated distances in both miles and kilometers.
135. Work from last term shows that pupils in Year 1 and **Year 2** are covering the planned curriculum appropriately through a range of practical experiences. Good use was made of a digital camera to produce an attractive book recording outdoor features during a visit to a local shop by Year 1. Year 2 have studied the features of islands. They can add additional features to a map and have begun to make simple comparisons between living on an island and on the mainland. A good link is made with literacy, as the Katie Morag stories are used as a starting point to gain factual information. The use of Barnaby Bear enables pupils to share their holiday experiences and widens their knowledge and appreciation of other cultures. An attractive display with useful questions helps to maintain pupils' interest. Parents give good support by helping their children to produce interesting diaries and postcards from their holidays for the display. Very attractive and useful curriculum newsletters for each year group also give parents a clear picture of the work the children will be covering and the skills they are being taught.
136. Geography skills are extended in Year 3 and Year 4. Year 3 work on weather gives pupils good opportunities to use their drawing and mathematical skills. Recent work in Year 4 on Ghana is impressive in its depth and content, displaying many good teaching features. Year 4 pupils have also increased their factual knowledge about volcanoes during English work. The organization of the timetable meant that no geography took place in Years 5 and 6 last term. From discussion with pupils in both classes, they are enthusiastic and knowledgeable about their work. Year 5 use maps and atlases confidently. They can identify St Lucia on the map and make sensible comparisons between the lives of the people and the geographical features in St Lucia and Britain. They use information books from the library and the Internet for research.
137. **Year 6** have good factual recall of their Year 5 work about St Lucia. Last year's books indicate that it was well taught. The use of artefacts and a visitor to the school helped to bring the topic to life. Higher attaining pupils can discuss environmental features and social issues affecting the economy. Pupils used the example of a change in farming methods that had improved the yield of bananas by 100 percent, but the wages of the producers only improved by 50 percent. This led to an interesting moral debate by a few pupils. Most can give examples of cities, rivers and continents around the world.
138. Good links are made between subjects. Literacy, numeracy and art skills are used appropriately to support learning in geography. Last year's Year 5 enjoyed using music and dance in their St Lucia topic, and presenting their learning in an assembly. There is less evidence of work being adapted for different ability groups. Overall, the geography syllabus makes a very good contribution to pupils' understanding and appreciation of the lives of people in the wider world. Projects such as the work on recycling in Milton Keynes also help pupils understand the impact of environmental issues on local places.
139. The subject is managed effectively. The school's system of having a second person supporting the subject leader works well. Although the subject leader is relatively new, she has begun to monitor planning and has put together her own priorities for action. Geography resources are good and the school has plans to develop an environmental area in the grounds. A range of educational visits are planned to support the geography curriculum, including a residential experience for Year 6. Appropriate use is made of the Internet to research topics in greater depth.

HISTORY

140. It was only possible to observe two lessons during the inspection. However, the evidence from pupils' past work in all classes, and from discussions with pupils in Year 2 and Year 6, indicate that standards are in line with national expectations. Achievement is good because pupils enjoy history, have a good understanding of aspects of the past and have made good progress during the four terms they have been in the school. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because they enjoy the oral nature of much of the work, and are encouraged by the teaching assistants to ask and answer questions.

141. Pupils in **Year 2** took great pleasure in describing what they had learned about seaside holidays in the past and how they compared to modern times. They had enjoyed studying old photographs and reported that they had 'learned a lot from watching a video.' Current work about Queen Elizabeth II's coronation is proving equally interesting. Higher attaining pupils explained how the orb represented the Queen's responsibility for the Church and the sceptre was a symbol of power.
142. Pupils in **Year 6** have a good factual knowledge of the Victorians and are enjoying their current work about Ancient Egypt. Although the written work concentrated on the difficult conditions under which the Victorian poor had to live, pupils have a balanced picture and were able to contrast the living conditions of all members of society. They have an extensive knowledge of Victorian industrial conditions, and spoke about the great inventors such as Brunel and the major reformers including Lord Shaftsbury and Elizabeth Fry. Very good links with literacy texts enable higher attaining pupils to draw on the content of several Dickens novels to illustrate contemporary conditions. Higher attaining pupils understood how important the Empire was to Britain, and how today's history has been the result of decisions made 150 years ago. All pupils identify the Internet as the best place to find more information. Year 6 have made very good use of ICT to research the history of the local area and have used their numeracy skills effectively to draw mathematically based pie charts of the different types of local occupation. Literacy skills have been used to gather and record information from books in the library or on various historical computer websites.
143. Pupils' books and discussions indicate that the quality of **teaching** is generally good. Planning is thorough and demonstrates that teachers have sound subject knowledge. Frequent references to a timeline confirm that pupils understand how the different historical periods fit together. Teaching was satisfactory in the two lessons observed. Good use of questions encouraged pupils to think more deeply about historical facts, as when Year 4 looked at a model of a Roman fort made by one of the parents. Teachers introduce new vocabulary carefully, making sure that all pupils, including those with English as an additional language, understand the difference- for example, between 'invader' and 'settler.' Pupils use literacy skills effectively to check new vocabulary for themselves in a dictionary. Higher attaining pupils are not given enough planned opportunities to work on group tasks that enable them to study at a more advanced level. Some 'success criteria' for the classes to complete by the end of the lesson are English tasks rather than a measure of greater historical understanding or attainment. Work is marked regularly, and judgements are made about the standards reached at the end of each topic.
144. The subject is led effectively. Planning has been checked carefully, and matches National Curriculum requirements. The subject leader has worked hard to support colleagues and develop the range of books and resources, but is not yet involved in monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning in lessons. This is planned. She recognises that the curriculum needs to be extended to include aspects of the history of the several nations represented in the school. Good use is made of visitors and visits, to see the Roman antiquities in St Albans for example, or to learn at 'first hand' about Victorian life at Holdenby House. Good use of role play is made on occasions such as the 'Tudor Day' and pupils have used the portrait skills they learned in art and design lessons to paint their friends in costumes based on Tudor portraits.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

145. Standards are in line with national expectations in Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils make good progress because teachers are becoming more confident in teaching computer skills, and very good use is made of the ICT teaching assistant/technician who works as an instructor alongside the class teachers. Her contribution to improving standards and confident learning is considerable. Pupils are enthusiastic learners, and show in their detailed questions how keen they are to develop their skills. Those with special educational needs enjoy working with computers because they do not have to worry about spelling or handwriting, and they make as much progress as the rest of the class. They learn readily from work 'partners.'
146. Pupils in **Year 2** use computers, tape recorders and other standard electronic equipment confidently. They have found out about different parts of the world by using computer based information programs, and can enter and correct text on screen. Higher attaining pupils know how to change the size, type and colour of the font. Pupils in Year 1 control equipment with switches and recognise the wide range of symbols used on toggles on tape recorders and on the 'buttons' on a computer screen. Good examples were seen in both Year 1 classes when pupils learned to record and play back simple tunes using

a

computer screen keyboard. Some younger pupils for whom English is an additional language struggled to find the correct words to explain what they were doing, but clearly understood the ICT skills they had been taught. Teachers were aware and gave them extra support.

147. Pupils in **Year 6** have appropriate skills in handling and communicating information electronically, and have a comprehensive understanding of the many uses of ICT in modern society. They use computers effectively to set out text, and change the size, colour and layout of their work, using a word processing program. They use and control electronic equipment confidently as a normal part of everyday life, operate spreadsheets to set out mathematical calculations, and use the Internet to send messages or to search for information. They have used electronic sensors and understand simple robotics.
148. The quality of **teaching** is good overall. Work is very well prepared, including 'back-ups' should the computers not work. Teachers use the correct technical vocabulary and expect the pupils to reflect this in their answers. Teachers welcome the contributions of higher attaining pupils, as was seen when Year 6 pupils helped the staff to find ways to insert a formula into several cells at the same time on a spreadsheet. Lessons are well planned so that any written tasks are as valid as the learning that involves use of computers. This was seen very clearly in Year 1 when pupils selected the correct icons to cut out and paste on the 'keys' on a drawing of a tape-recorder. This was later used by staff as secure evidence of how much pupils had learned and understood.
149. Good use is made of the ICT suite. Teachers have a good understanding of the software and make excellent use of the interactive whiteboards to demonstrate how they can be used. A very good example was seen in Year 4 when pupils learned how to use branching programs to sort information. Teachers are becoming more skilled in planning how new ICT skills can be used in different areas of the curriculum. The Year 4 work on databases, for example, was to be used later to sort information about Greek gods and goddesses. ICT is used in other areas of the curriculum, as is seen in the Year 6 written work on the Victorians, Year 5 scientific investigations into temperature using sensors, Year 3's attractively laid out posters on the benefits of eating 'healthy' foods, and in the regular use of bar coding and scanners in the library.
150. The subject is very well managed by the subject leader, supported by the skilled teaching assistant/technician. The team have exciting plans for future developments, including home access to school sites. The school is well resourced and able to meet the full requirements of the National Curriculum. There are strict safeguards in place that ensure that pupils do not access inappropriate Internet sites and to keep the system virus free. Good use is made of digital cameras to record pupils' progress in all aspects of the curriculum. Although there is no current programme for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning, this has already been agreed as an area for future development.

MUSIC

151. Pupils' attainment in Year 2 and Year 6 is in line with national expectations, with particular strengths in singing and musical appreciation. Pupils have many opportunities for instrumental tuition. All pupils make good progress, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language. Talented pupils often make very good progress.
152. Pupils in **Year 2** sing a wide range of songs and hymns from a rich variety of cultures and styles with a good sense of rhythm, dynamic range and vocal projection. They play percussion instruments with care and sensitivity, keeping a steady rhythm when accompanying singing. High quality singing develops very well as pupils progress through the school and, by **Year 6**, they sing a more challenging repertoire. Pupils in the choir are well aware of their parts in relation to accompaniment and other soloists. Pupils progress very well and achieve high standards in their knowledge and appreciation of a very wide range of music by Year 6. For example, they compared and described the majesty of the 'Zadok the Priest', the gentleness and high pitch of 'The Lark Ascending' and the power of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony. Another outstanding example of their musical skills was sensitive selection of instruments and creativity when composing an accompaniment to the poem 'Jabberwocky' by Lewis Carroll. They investigated, selected and combined musical ideas and structures. They repeated rhythms very well, understood the effects of resonance, pitch and sound effects and were able to compose with very good feel for style.
153. **Teaching** throughout the school is good and is excellent in Years 5 and 6. Pupils have very positive attitudes, and are bursting with enthusiasm and the desire to perform. They concentrate very well and

listen very carefully. Singing times and collective worship are more effectively used to extend pupils' musical knowledge and understanding than in most schools. During the inspection week pupils listened to a wide variety of flute music performed by James Galway. The headteacher made time to discuss the music and, on one occasion, two Year 6 pupils performed for the school. They played their flutes with accuracy, sensitivity and good feel for style with a true performer's instinct. The headteacher and senior staff have successfully given music a high profile throughout the school, and music makes a very positive contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

154. Pupils and teachers benefit from the very good leadership and management by the subject leaders. They have an excellent vision for the future development of the subject and a strong commitment to achieving the highest possible standards. The good range of resources includes appropriate computer programs, as was seen in Year 1 when pupils composed and recorded simple tunes. Very effective use is made of the local community and school celebrations, religious festivals and assembly as occasions for performance. Pupils participate in the Milton Keynes Music Festival and Christmas celebrations, and this year will perform at the Royal Albert Hall in aid of a charity. Music makes an enriching contribution to the quality of worship and spirituality during assembly and to the overall life of the school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

155. Standards are line with the national expectations for Year 2 and Year 6 with particular strengths in games and swimming. Pupils make good progress. The wide variety of physical education activities reflects the school's very strong commitment to developing all aspects of pupils' healthy lifestyles and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
156. **Year 2** pupils' high levels of achievements are reflected in their ability to move with agility, think creatively and use space well. They learn to move and control their actions with a good awareness of direction and respond well to instructions that help them to refine their skills. In an excellent Year 1 lesson children enjoyed the challenges of working collaboratively and improving their skills of running, positioning and controlling a ball. They develop good co-operative skills as they work closely with partners and plan imaginative ways to move.
157. **Year 6** pupils have refined and developed their movements, and participate in a wide range of team games where they learn the advanced skills of positioning, passing and control. During a games lesson and an extra-curricular football activity led by a player from Wimbledon Football Club, the pupils achieved well in a wide range of skills, especially intercepting the ball and negotiating obstacles. Pupils concentrated very hard and the coach made effective use of the available time. During the inspection pupils were understandably proud of the award they won for badminton.
158. Pupils understand the reasons for warming-up and cooling-down exercises from Year 1. This progresses to Years 5 and 6 where they understand the advantages of physical education as an essential part of a healthy lifestyle. The full range of physical education activities, including athletics, gymnastics and swimming is undertaken throughout each year. Most lessons observed during the inspection were dance and gymnastics. Pupils achieve well in a wide range of physical education skills with strengths in their ability to remember sequences of movements, think and move creatively and contrast their use of shape, space and speed.
159. Many aspects contribute to the high level of progress throughout the school. The time allocated for physical education and the rich variety of activities reflect the school's commitment to developing pupils' physical skills. The **quality of teaching** is good overall with some excellent features. The ongoing assessment of pupils' ability results in additional teaching and practise so that skills are improved before the pupils go on to more challenging activities. Pupils benefit from a very wide variety of extra-curricular activities ranging from team training for netball, football, hockey and badminton to more informal activities, which are open to pupils from all classes. In a very well led country dance activity, pupils from Reception to Year 6 learned the steps of a new dance, moved in time to the music and enjoyed the social event.
160. Pupils behave very well, listen attentively and are keen to succeed. All pupils are fully included in all aspects of physical education. There are many opportunities for more able and gifted pupils to succeed. The school provides very well for pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. Consequently they make good progress.

161. The inspirational leadership by the subject leaders, the enriching quality of the curriculum, and very good links with the community and the local comprehensive school contribute to high levels of achievement and to pupils' motivation. Very effective use of resources and accommodation supports teachers very well in their commitment to raising standards. There is a good range of fixed and moveable apparatus in the hall.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

162. Standards in Year 2 are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and are above them in Year 6. Pupils have a positive approach to religious education and make good progress. It is notable how many older pupils respect the various faiths represented in the school, several taking care for example, not to use 'God' as a swear word in the presence of a friend who would find it insulting. Pupils with special educational needs or who use English as an additional language have also made good progress, listening to and enjoying the stories they hear and playing a full part in class discussions. They are well assisted by teaching assistants who encourage them to ask and answer questions, and help them with their written work.
163. Pupils in **Year 2** have a satisfactory understanding of the basic facts about Christianity including some of the parables such as the Prodigal Son. They know that Christmas is a time to give as well as receive, and remember the main events of the Nativity. Many can recall the events of the crucifixion. Higher attaining pupils knew about the Resurrection and explained to others why Jesus did not seek revenge on those who had killed Him, showing a good understanding of the basic Christian belief of forgiveness.
164. Pupils in **Year 6** are reaching higher than expected standards because they have a good knowledge and understanding of several major world faiths, including Sikhism, Islam, Judaism and Christianity, and are also able to think and talk about religious ideas in a very mature way. Many have thought about their own beliefs and values, and are very tolerant of the views of others. In a class discussion about the nature of God, practising Christians, Sikhs and Hindus talked openly about their personal ideas of God. Those who said they had no faith listened very carefully to what others had to say, and tried to balance their understanding of a scientific explanation of the Creation with what they felt had to be a religious myth. Several pupils raised the dilemma of a loving God and the many wars and conflicts fought in His name.
165. The quality of **teaching** is generally good, and was good in both the lessons observed during the inspection. Pupils' books indicate well-planned lessons. Marking is regular and often contains a brief comment. Lessons, such as that observed in Year 6, are effective because teachers are knowledgeable and pupils feel confident in asking probing questions. The special strength of the lesson was the teacher's skilful creation of a tolerant and sensitive atmosphere in which deeper and different views could be discussed without threat of prejudice or narrow-mindedness. Teachers know their pupils well and, as was seen in Year 4 lesson on the parable of the 'Lost Sheep', explain moral issues sensitively. In this example, the teacher guided the final part of the lesson very successfully so that all pupils realised why the shepherd had made his choice, and how there were lessons for them to consider in their own lives.
166. The subject is well led and managed. Sensitive recognition is given to all the world faiths represented in the school and pupils are invited to share their religious traditions in religious education lessons. These enable pupils to learn directly from those who worship in a particular way. The curriculum is well planned over the school year and includes a visit to a local church. The school has not yet been able to arrange visits to other faith centres. The curriculum is enriched through drama, as was seen in the visiting production of 'The Selfish Giant'. Pupils sat spellbound as the play unfolded, smiling with delight and listening intently. The level of questioning at the end of the production showed how much they had learned and that they were keen to learn more. The school has a good range of religious artefacts and encourages the pupils to use the Internet for personal research. The library contains an appropriate range of books for class and personal research. The school welcomes the introduction of the new locally agreed syllabus.