

INSPECTION REPORT

OAK TREE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Mansfield

LEA area: Nottinghamshire

Unique reference number: 133276

Headteacher: Mrs Chris Williams

Reporting inspector: Mrs E M D Mackie
23482

Dates of inspection: 23 to 26 June 2003

Inspection number: 249035

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Jubilee Way North Oak Tree Lane Estate Mansfield
Postcode:	NG18 3PJ
Telephone number:	01623 458261
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of Chair of Governors:	Mr David French
Date of previous inspection:	N/A

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23482	Diana Mackie	Registered inspector	Art and design Design technology Information and communication technology Foundation Stage French	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? a) The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
19743	Ann Taylor	Lay inspector		How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
23413	Robert Allen	Team inspector	English Music Special educational needs	
20457	Brian Fletcher	Team inspector	Mathematics Physical education Religious education Educational inclusion	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
33008	Mark Taylor	Team inspector	Geography History Science	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This is a new school formed as part of the re-organisation of primary education in Mansfield. The former first school for pupils aged from three to nine years old has been enlarged to cater for pupils up to 11 years old. The school serves a housing estate isolated from the main part of the town, adjacent to a reclaimed mining area. There is significant economic and social deprivation in the vicinity, and the overall attainment of children when they start school in the Nursery is very low in comparison with that usually seen for children of this age. The school is of average size for a primary school; it has 296 pupils on roll, of whom 66 are in the Foundation Stage (the Nursery and the Reception class). The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals (51 per cent) is well above the national average. Few pupils are from ethnic minority heritages and none speaks English as an additional language. Thirty per cent of pupils have special educational needs for learning, behavioural, physical or emotional difficulties. This is above the national average and includes one statemented pupil. There is a high turnover of pupils during the school year as families move into or out of the estate. There is a great deal of vandalism in the area around the school; it has caused severe problems during the refurbishment of the old school and the building of a new teaching block. The school does not benefit from central government funding such as Sure Start or Education Action Zone support because of its isolated geographical position - it is not an 'inner city' school.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective and improving school where pupils enjoy coming and are well behaved. Although standards in English, mathematics and science are below national expectations by the end of Year 6, pupils achieve well from a very low start. The teaching and curricular provision are good, and all pupils have good access to the curriculum. Sound management by the governing body has ensured that the new school provides an attractive, secure, caring and purposeful environment in which the pupils learn and grow as part of a happy community. The headteacher provides good leadership and educational direction and she is ably supported by the deputy headteacher and other teachers with roles of responsibility. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- By the end of the Reception year, Year 2 and Year 6, pupils achieve well.
- The quality of teaching is good throughout the school.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to school and behave well.
- Pupils' personal development is very good because of the very good quality of the school's provision for their care and welfare and for their spiritual, moral and social development.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good so that pupils achieve well.
- Extra-curricular provision is very good and activities are very well attended.

What could be improved

- *Standards in English, mathematics, science, geography and history are not high enough throughout the school.
- *Information from assessments of pupils' attainment and progress is not used enough to guide teaching, learning and further raise levels of achievement.
- *Many parents are not involved enough in their children's education.
- *Attendance is unsatisfactory and well below the national average.

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

**The school has already identified these issues and is dealing with them.*

RECENT IMPROVEMENTS

This is the first inspection of the newly formed Oak Tree Primary School. Since it opened in September 2001, the headteacher and other staff have worked together effectively to improve the quality of teaching and raise standards. During its first year, the school was dogged by constant disruption from building work and vandalism. Classes were in temporary buildings and the pupils' safety on the site was a major

concern for staff and governors. The move to the completed building in September 2002 was a major task for the staff. Through commitment, good leadership, teamwork and a strong sense of loyalty, they have settled the pupils into the new building and established a consistent approach to classroom teaching so that pupils achieve well. The governing body, led by the conscientious and hard-working chair of governors, has set up a school which serves the local community well, and which has the good capacity to improve further.

STANDARDS

The oldest pupils in the school in 2002 were in Year 5. The usual reporting of results in the National Curriculum tests for pupils in Year 6 does not, therefore, apply. The 2003 results have not yet been published.

Current standards by the end of Year 6 are below national expectations in English, mathematics and science. Challenging targets in English and mathematics have been set with the local education authority and pupils are on course to reach them. Well-managed teaching of literacy and numeracy ensures that pupils achieve well. Current standards by the end of Year 2 are well below national expectations in reading, writing and mathematics and below national expectations in science. Pupils' poor speech hinders their use of letter sounds to build words quickly when they are reading texts. Also, some pupils read very little at home. In the 2002 national tests and assessments for pupils in Year 2, the school's results were in line with national expectations in writing, but were well below in reading and mathematics. In comparison with schools in similar circumstances, however, the school did well, with a very good performance in writing and an average performance in reading and mathematics. Results are not likely to be as high this year, as the capability of pupils varies from year to year.

In information and communication technology (ICT), standards by the end of Years 2 and 6 are broadly in line with national expectations and are improving. The school makes effective and efficient use of the new suite of computers. In religious education, standards are in line with the expectations outlined in the locally Agreed Syllabus. Standards in design and technology, music and physical education are in line with national expectations by the end of Years 2 and 6. In art and design, standards are in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2 and above national expectations by the end of Year 6. In geography and history, pupils' weak literacy skills hamper pupils' progress, so that standards are well below national expectations by the end of Year 2 and below national expectations by the end of Year 6.

When children start school, their overall attainment is very low. In the Nursery and the Reception class, children make good progress but do not reach the nationally agreed Early Learning Goals by the time they join Year 1.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils enjoy coming to school and have very positive attitudes to school and their work. They are keen to learn, join in activities with interest and enthusiasm and want to succeed.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils are well behaved in lessons and around the school. They are friendly and welcoming to visitors. There is a purposeful working atmosphere in the classrooms so that teachers can get on with lessons uninterrupted.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils develop very well personally. They become increasingly aware of the needs of other people and develop respect for the feelings and views of others. They work very well together in groups and take on responsibilities willingly.
Attendance	Attendance is well below the national average and is therefore

	unsatisfactory.
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TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The good quality of the teaching is a strength of the school. During the inspection, most teaching was good or better and there was no unsatisfactory teaching. Teachers have good levels of subject knowledge and plan their lessons well so that pupils learn in interesting ways. They manage pupils very well and are enthusiastic, encouraging and rewarding so that the pupils want to please them. They listen to pupils and engage with them thoughtfully in order to draw out their thoughts and guide their understanding. Lessons move at a brisk pace, so that pupils maintain their interest, enjoy what they do and acquire skills, knowledge and understanding at a good rate. Teachers have introduced the literacy and daily mathematics lessons effectively; English and mathematics are taught well. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is very good throughout the school. In the Nursery and the Reception class, the staff have a very good understanding of the needs of young children, and staff build very effectively on what the children already know and can do.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good overall provision is the result of conscientious teamwork by teachers. Pupils benefit from a good variety of interesting and well-organised activities that help them to learn at a good rate. Extra-curricular provision is very good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	There is very good provision. Well-written individual education plans are closely matched to the needs of each pupil. The plans are sensitively followed by class teachers and teaching assistants.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision is very good overall. The school establishes a secure moral code and a reflective climate in which pupils can grow and flourish. Pupils are encouraged to work co-operatively, consider the views and feelings of other people and become more responsible for their own actions. Preparation for life in contemporary, multicultural, British society, however, is an area for further development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Pupils' social, physical, emotional and curricular needs are supported very effectively through carefully planned systems and regular monitoring. Teaching assistants play a significant role in working alongside pupils to promote their happiness and achievement. Sound assessment procedures are helping teachers to track pupils' progress effectively, but not enough use is yet made of the information gathered.

Despite the school's best efforts to date, it has been difficult to get many parents to participate fruitfully in their children's education. A small number of parents support their children well, and the school is exploring ways to bring more parents into the life of the school. Parents respond well to invitations to social events, and this positive aspect of the partnership provides a good beginning for further contact.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good leadership from the headteacher has ensured that staff work as a team, pupils are well motivated and there is a climate in school conducive to learning. Together with the deputy headteacher, the headteacher gives good educational direction and provides a strong sense of vision to drive the school forward. Subject co-ordinators fulfil their roles with commitment and enthusiasm.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The effective leadership of the chair of governors has ensured sound management in difficult times during the establishment of the new school. All statutory requirements are met.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The senior management team and the governing body identify sensible and achievable priorities for improvement and take effective action to deal with them. They are well aware of strengths and areas for development and there is a strong will to succeed.
The strategic use of resources	Sound financial management ensures that spending is clearly directed to supporting pupils in the classrooms. Specific funds for purposes such as special educational needs and staff training are used very well. Evaluation of the benefits of spending in terms of improved educational standards is an area for further development.

The school has a sufficient number of well-trained and experienced teachers and teaching assistants to meet the needs of the pupils. Administrative staff fulfil their roles well. The indoor accommodation is good and it is well cared for by the conscientious caretaker and his staff. The school grounds are still being developed and require constant vigilance by the staff and governors to keep the site clear of rubbish, including supermarket trolleys and old car tyres. Learning resources are adequate overall but there are not enough for design and technology or for multicultural education. Also, there is not enough fiction available for pupils to extend their reading. The school is well equipped for mathematics and ICT.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school expects pupils to work hard and achieve their best. • Parents feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. • The school is helping pupils to become mature and responsible. • Pupils make good progress. • The teaching is good. • The school is well led and managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviour in the school is not good. • They are not well informed about how their children are getting on. • The school does not work closely with parents. • Their children do not like school. • Their children do not get the right amount of work to do at home.

Only 31 pre-inspection questionnaires were completed and returned by parents, therefore the views they express are not necessarily representative of all parents. The inspectors agree wholeheartedly with the positive views expressed but do not support the negative ones. During the inspection, pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school was good and often very good. In discussions, all pupils said they enjoyed school and showed lots of enthusiasm for lessons as well as clubs and visits. The school has put a great deal of effort into involving parents in the life of the school, and has been successful in drawing them in to social and cultural activities. It has had less success in involving parents in their children's academic progress. The school recognises that more work is necessary and is set to explore new ways of engaging with parents. Teachers set homework in all classes and monitor its return, but not enough use

is made of reading diaries for parents to guide the development of their children's literacy skills at home. Home and school links are very good in the Nursery and parents help their children with simple activities at home.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. From a very low start, children make good progress but do not reach the expected levels of attainment by the time they leave the Reception class. The main hindrance to pupils' better attainment is their weak linguistic and social skills. During their time in the Nursery and the Reception class, children achieve well because of the good teaching and curricular provision.
2. Relative to their very low attainment on entry, pupils achieve well, make good progress and, by the end of Year 6, are on course to set challenging targets set with the local education authority. By the end of Year 6, standards in English, mathematics and science are below national expectations. Pupils do not achieve appropriate standards in speaking, and many pupils are unable to formulate questions and explain their answers during discussion periods. Because of the school's very good promotion of inclusion and respect, pupils listen considerately. Standards in reading are below national expectations. Most pupils have not acquired the habit of reading regularly outside school; they do not develop the fluency and depth of understanding of complex plots expected for their age. The systematic teaching of spelling and regular practice in basic grammar help pupils to achieve well in writing, but standards are below national expectations by the end of Year 6. Despite pupils' good progress, standards are also below national expectations in mathematics and science. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to record their work in a variety of ways that help them to sort out their thoughts, express their ideas and record their findings.
3. By the end of Year 2, standards in English are well below national expectations in speaking and listening, reading and writing. Pupils' skills in oracy and literacy are weak and the school's step-by-step teaching and learning of letter sounds and patterns helps them to make good gains in reading, writing and spelling. Few pupils develop satisfactory levels of writing to express ideas or show a sense of narrative, and their work is often poorly presented. In mathematics, where standards are well below national expectations by the end of Year 2, pupils develop an increasing understanding of numbers and mathematical processes such as addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. Pupils gain increasing awareness of the use of mathematics in everyday life; for example in weighing, measuring and shopping. In science, practical investigations help pupils to gain skills of scientific enquiry and a deeper understanding of life processes and living things, materials and their properties and physical processes. However, as with the older pupils, the use of too many printed worksheets does not help pupils to explain what they have done or order their results.
4. By the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils achieve standards expected for their age in ICT. Standards are rising because of the well-equipped suite of computers, the very good training of staff, the enthusiasm of the pupils and the well-organised curriculum. In religious education, pupils in Years 2 and 6 meet the expectations outlined in the locally Agreed Syllabus. Pupils achieve well in subjects that do not depend heavily on literacy, but do not do so well in history and geography, where skills of enquiry and research involve reading and writing. Standards in art and design are above national expectations by the end of Year 6 and in line with them by the end of Year 2. The rich range of artistic experiences, beginning in Years 1 and 2 with the study of well-known artists, leads to some very good work by the end of Year 6. In design and technology, music and physical education, pupils achieve well and attain the expected levels by the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils' interest and involvement in extra-curricular activities linked to these subjects adds to the enjoyment and levels of attainment reached, especially by more capable pupils. In geography and history, standards are well below those expected nationally by the end of Year 2 and below national expectations by the end of Year 6. However, pupils are interested and motivated, especially in history, to know about other places and times.
5. The school's inclusive approach ensures that pupils from ethnic minority heritages progress well, are integrated fully into the life of the school and achieve as well as their peers. As a result of the well directed additional help which they receive, of the supportive nature of the school community,

and of their own generally good motivation, pupils with special educational needs make good progress from their different starting points, and they reach standards in line with their prior attainment. The range of needs is wide, and pupils achieve well in gradually overcoming their learning, behavioural, emotional or physical difficulties. Pupils who are gifted or talented achieve soundly when account is taken of their higher starting points. There is no formal identification of these pupils, but teachers know who they are and support them appropriately; for example in art and design.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

6. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good and they enjoy coming to school. Relationships are also very good, especially between staff and pupils. Behaviour is good. These are all strengths that help pupils to learn effectively. Pupils are pleased to see friends and staff in the mornings and enjoy their lessons. They value school as being a constant, secure and caring part of their lives. There are often new pupils arriving during the term and they quickly settle into the school because relationships are so good and everyone makes them feel welcome.
7. Children in the nursery soon adapt to routines and gain appropriate social skills so that they interact well with one another and with adults. They develop the ability to share resources willingly and soon form very good relationships with adults. Children's levels of concentration increase during their time in the Reception class and they adapt to the brisker pace of lessons.
8. Pupils enjoy completing homework and take a pride in doing it well. They value homework as being something special, just for them, and especially enjoy receiving praise from staff, when they do it well. In a geography lesson, pupils were carefully paired because the teacher knew they would help each other. This was clearly the case, and those more familiar with maps patiently helped those who needed extra guidance. A few words of praise and encouragement from the teacher, as she moved around the room, had a visible effect in motivating pupils, and they enjoyed matching up word endings, such as 'ton', 'ing', and 'field', with local places.
9. Pupils behave well and poor behaviour rarely interrupts learning. They respond well to the school rules that they helped compile and have a clear understanding of what happens if they step out of line; for example, their names go up on the board. While pupils are in the school they show respect for it and they are especially proud of their new computer suite. Governors who live in the community know of pupils who behave well in school but badly after school; for example, they know of pupils who throw stones at the school in the evening and at weekends. Oppressive behaviour and bullying do occasionally take place, but pupils are confident that such incidents are dealt with well and that staff take a firm line and are helpful. There were five fixed-period exclusions last year, involving two pupils whose behaviour was a danger to others. The extensive building work had a negative effect on pupils' behaviour and was very unsettling for them. However, things are now much improved.
10. Relationships within the school are very good and pupils make very significant progress in developing their social skills. Not everyone fully appreciates or is capable of working together or sharing, and a minority find it difficult to accept that they cannot always get their own way. The school works hard to overcome this. Pupils reflect and discuss their behaviour, feelings and experiences, often with staff on an individual basis. This can be through playing the 'emotions game' or by writing in their 'feelings' booklets. They are confident in doing this and understand that talking through their emotions does help. Pupils are keen to help each other; this was clearly shown in the attitude of the reading 'buddies', most of them boys, who volunteer to help younger pupils select and read books at lunchtimes. Pupils with special educational needs demonstrate positive attitudes to the school. They are keen to learn and generally behave well in lessons. It is evident that they feel valued by their teachers, teaching assistants, and other pupils.
11. The attendance rate is unsatisfactory as it is well below the national average. However, it has improved over the last year by over half a percentage point, and older pupils attend more regularly. Some parents do not value the importance of regular attendance or appreciate the detrimental effect

of poor attendance on their children's education. The proportion of pupils absent without parents providing a good reason - unauthorised absence - is significantly high. This is because parents often do not see the need to provide reasons for their children's absence. Children from a few families are sometimes late for school in the morning.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

12. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. Teachers work hard, demonstrate high levels of loyalty to the school and serve the pupils very well. During the period of disruption when classes were in temporary accommodation and then moved to the new building, teachers demonstrated commendable care for pupils' safety and welfare and maintained their academic progress. During the inspection, teaching was good or better in 88 per cent of the lessons seen. Teaching is good in English, mathematics and science and accounts for the pupils' good achievement from very low attainment on entry to below average attainment by the end of Year 6. Throughout the school, teaching is good in art and design, music, physical education and religious education and sound in design and technology. In geography and history, it is sound in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6.
13. The two most significant features of the overall good teaching are the good quality of the teachers' planning and the very good management of the pupils. These two aspects are linked, because pupils are thoroughly engaged and interested in what they are doing. The needs of all pupils are taken into account in lesson planning. Work set is usually well matched to need, although higher-attaining pupils are not always presented with rigorously challenging work; for example, in mathematics and science. Teachers are clear about what they want different groups to learn in each lesson, and, particularly in the core subjects, what they do actually learn. Pupils who are new to the school are assessed and supported sensitively by staff so that they soon integrate into the life of the school and achieve well.
14. Teachers respect the pupils, integrate newcomers to the school very well and value the heritages of pupils from ethnic minorities so that all achieve well and relationships are very good. As a consequence, there is a purposeful and harmonious atmosphere conducive to learning. In whole-class sessions, teachers keep pupils 'on their toes' and there is no hiding place for anyone who wants to remain in the background, unchallenged. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the curriculum. This underpins the very good planning and good quality of teachers' questioning during lessons. Teachers work well together to plan interesting lessons that drive pupils' learning forward at a good rate. Very good teamwork by teachers ensures that pupils receive their entitlement to the National Curriculum and that there is consistency in the pace and content of the teaching from class to class. Teachers ensure that girls and boys are equally involved in activities, and it is noticeable that they get together without prompting for group activities in physical education, ICT and art and design.
15. Pupils are challenged by the level of work set in most lessons, but not enough use is made of information from assessments to challenge individual pupils. There are additional classes in mathematics to help pupils learn and progress more quickly. Target setting is established and pupils know their own areas for improvement, but teachers' marking of work is not linked closely enough to the process to make it really effective. Higher-attaining pupils could be taken that 'extra mile' if they were pushed a little harder and were expected to record their work in their own way in mathematics and science. Pupils' explanations in their own words, rather than in one-word answers to printed questions, would help teachers to tease out misunderstandings and guide all pupils more effectively. In the discussion periods at the ends of lessons, some interesting points are brought out as teachers review what has been learnt and done. In some lessons not enough emphasis is always placed on getting the pupils to enlarge on their ideas as they explain what they have learnt, and opportunities are missed in developing skills of oracy; for example, in English. There are, however, examples of good use of the last part of lessons. For example, in the Reception class, the children played a game at the end of a lesson in which they had been learning about the position of the numbers one to 20 on a line. The children had to guess which numbers a teddy bear was covering. As children gave their answers, the teacher got them to explain why they had chosen their numbers, and she helped them to extend their answers.

16. Good support from teaching assistants during specific tasks ensures that pupils can ask questions, overcome problems and make good progress. In the first part of lessons, however, when teachers review earlier work, introduce new learning and explain tasks, the teaching assistants are not always deployed as well as possible. Opportunities are missed for the assistants to monitor pupils' progress in speaking and listening and to register pupils' understanding as questions are asked and answered. Staff training is gradually having a positive effect on this aspect of teaching, and there is some good practice in the school; for example, in religious education, where there is recorded evidence of how a teaching assistant has observed the pupils, and her assessments have helped the teacher to prepare the next lessons. During most lessons, teachers intervene well to guide pupils by assessing their understanding and building on what they already know and can do. In a few lessons, mistakes are not checked; for example, with handwriting to ensure that pupils get into the habit of forming letters correctly at all times. Good intervention and support was evident in an art and design lesson in Year 6, when the teacher worked alongside pupils and kept them focused on the prescribed task. In physical education, teachers monitor pupils' performance well during lessons, helping them to improve through encouragement but at the same time ensuring that skills were developed properly; for example, when pupils were playing 'kwik-cricket'. Teachers' marking of work is variable; it is not used well enough to advance pupils' progress in science.
17. Pupils with special educational needs are fully integrated into all lessons. Although they may sometimes be withdrawn for special teaching, this is much to their benefit and is carefully controlled. The teaching of these pupils in lessons is generally good, and teachers take account of specific needs in the work that they provide, ensuring that, while it is challenging, it is also appropriate. Teaching assistants are very aware of the needs of individuals, and they work very well in partnership with teachers, although some opportunities to involve their skills while the teacher is occupying the attention of the whole class, are sometimes missed. The support provided is guided by each pupil's individual education plan. These are of very high quality, not only describing problems and setting targets, but providing detailed strategies and advice on how difficulties may be tackled.
18. ICT is used in many lessons, but there is no overall plan to help teachers to incorporate the subject into as many lessons as possible. This is an area for development to make the planning of lessons even better. In mathematics and science, ICT is not used enough. More practice is essential if pupils are to use and extend the skills they acquire during lessons in the computers suite. When teachers do include it in lessons, pupils benefit significantly; for example in art and design and mathematics. Reading is promoted effectively in most lessons; for example, when teachers encourage pupils to read instructions or look for information. The use of resources has been restricted because so many were in store during the move to and from temporary accommodation. In most lessons, teachers use appropriate equipment to support pupils' learning, but more could be used in mathematics to reinforce learning, especially for lower-attaining pupils.
19. Some interesting and thought-provoking homework is set; for example, when pupils in Years 5 and 6 were given the challenge of calculating sums of money up to one pound, using a range of coins, including fictitious ones, such as three pence and seven pence pieces. Teachers check that homework has been done, and pupils have to give up their playtime at school if it has not. Reading diaries, however, are not used well enough to promote and improve pupils' reading and share books with parents.

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

20. The school provides a curriculum that is broad, balanced and relevant to the needs of the pupils. The teaching of all subjects is collaboratively planned and learning objectives are carefully identified. Lessons are planned to take good account of what pupils already know, and good use is made of continuous assessment to guide learning, particularly in English, mathematics and science. The school has an overall plan for the curriculum that enables all teachers to be aware of what is being taught in all year groups.

21. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage closely follows national guidance and promotes the 'stepping stones' of learning outlined in the new curriculum. Structured activities are well organised, and individual children are monitored to ensure their entitlement to the full curriculum. Curricular provision and support for pupils with special educational needs and other minority groups are good.

22. Teachers plan for links across subjects, although this is an area for further development. Excellent links were exemplified in a music lesson in Year 6 where art and design, music and literacy were brought together in a pupils' composition to describe the beauty of a sunset. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are firmly in place and good emphasis is given to pupils' acquisition of the basic skills of reading, writing and arithmetic that allow pupils to engage productively in all other subjects. The development of skills in information technology is satisfactory. An excellent computer suite gives pupils a head start in gaining and using computer skills but they do not have enough practice in employing them in the course of their daily lessons; for example, in mathematics and science.
23. All subjects in the National Curriculum are taught, including religious education. Sex education and drugs awareness are taught in accordance with the governors' policy and are part of a very well planned personal, social and health education programme. Teaching is direct and relevant. Pupils are encouraged to ask questions and express opinions. They do not disappoint. Emotional support groups provide pupils with a forum to discuss personal matters that may deflect them from their learning. The overall aim of the programme is to give pupils the knowledge and skills they need, ultimately, to lead confident and independent lives.
24. There is good provision for mathematics and English and standards are steadily rising from a very low base on entry to the school. Both subjects have a prominent place in the curriculum and the time allocated is used well. Teachers use the National Strategies as the basis for planning and each element is given due weight. In the discussion periods that conclude all lessons, pupils are not given quite enough time to say what they have learnt. All other subjects are given a satisfactory allocation of time, although some subjects are not taught in every term; for example, religious education, history and geography. This can lead to a loss of pupils' skills essential to a study of these subjects. Planning at school level in all subjects is at least satisfactory but more work is needed to ensure that the work set matches the pupils' needs. The curriculum is extended for pupils in Year 6 by the provision of lessons in oral French. This lays a good foundation for language work in the secondary school.
25. Oak Tree Primary is a very inclusive school. Teaching is designed to allow all pupils to have good access to the curriculum. Arrangements for supporting pupils, who have a very wide range of individual needs, are very good. Teaching assistants' give well-planned support to ensure that pupils needing help develop self-esteem and confidence necessary to their learning. The exclusion of a pupil is a rare event, because of the depth and range of the support given. The school cares for its pupils very well and provides lessons where they can learn without interference or disruption. The provision for pupils with learning difficulties is very good. It fully reflects the present national requirements. Individual education plans are well written and contain targets set in small-steps that are realistic and achievable.
26. The provision for after-school activities is very good and greatly enhances the pupils' chances of self-fulfilment. All activities are well attended and boys and girls enjoy exploring their limits, particularly in athletics, football and dance clubs, where they have the benefit of expert tuition. In one event, pupils play the staff at football and pupils pay to watch, so that sufficient funds are raised to provide new goal posts and a football kit for representative fixtures. Parents assisted in this venture but the outcome of the match is a closely guarded secret! Pupils may also join the choir and learn to play recorders. There are clubs for photography and fabric technology. In Year 4, pupils enjoy a residential trip to the local adventure centre, where they give up videos and electronic games in favour of adventurous pursuits. Given the range of activities and the numbers of boys and girls taking part, after-school activities are a strength of the school. There is good provision for the expressive arts, music in particular, and sport.
27. The school makes satisfactory contact with the local community, although more needs to be done. A community garden is planned for which the pupils will design and construct a mosaic. The local clergy are on very good terms with the school and take lessons and assemblies. Pupils visit the local church. A theatre group visits the school as part of a literacy topic on traditional stories. Pupils have worked with the Nottingham Sinfonia String Quartet and attended a timpani concert.

28. The school is developing good relationships with its partners in education. The local college of further education provides excellent support for the physical education programme that enhances pupils' opportunities for playing games. The college also organises courses for parents. There is increasing contact with the local secondary school. Arrangements for numeracy and literacy have been negotiated by teachers of both schools, and by the time pupils in Year 6 reach the secondary school, their art and design work will already be on display.
29. The new school has made a good start in setting up a curriculum that meets the needs of all its pupils. Teaching staff are already planning a systematic review of the curriculum that will focus on links between subjects and different styles of teaching and learning.
30. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. The driving principle of the school is a set of values which has at its centre mutual respect and care for others, and an insistence upon the value of each member of its community. Pupils are given good opportunities in daily acts of worship and religious education lessons to develop their spiritual awareness. In one assembly in which a visiting speaker was talking about belief and trust, there were conjuring tricks, culminating in a small flash and explosion where pupils' awe and wonder were engaged in a consideration of something special and different, outside their experience. In a lesson in Year 1, a re-enactment of a Christian baptism in which pupils took the parts of parents, godparents and priest, gave pupils a clear idea of religious belief, of the church as a family, and of the special nature of religion.
31. The arrangements for pupils' moral development are also very good. Teachers and other staff are very good role models for their pupils. They praise good practice and reward pupils for their efforts. Pupils have a clear appreciation of the difference between right and wrong, and good understanding of the impact of their words and actions upon other people. Their understanding of both class and school rules is very good. Interviews with the significant number of pupils who have entered the school mid-year or mid-term indicate that they have settled quickly, without any kind of discrimination from other pupils. Teachers make sure that any misbehaviour is quickly dealt with - without fuss and in as constructive and sensitive a way as possible - with the result that the vast majority follow the rules willingly and at all times. The school provides a safe learning environment in which pupils feel free and confident in expressing their views, and can develop their own codes of morality along the lines of what is right.
32. The social development that pupils show is witness to the school's very good provision. They care for each other very well in the paired-reading scheme, between older and younger pupils, and in the frequent opportunities that they have to work together in pairs and small groups. On the occasions when they evaluate each other's work in art and design or in music, they do it sensitively and without malice. They tidy up well after lessons, sometimes without being asked, and they greet strangers - even inspectors - smilingly, hold doors open for them and make sure that they know where they are going. The variety of visits that the school undertakes, to places of educational interest, to concerts and to festivals, extends their social awareness, and very good reports about pupils' behaviour compared with that from other schools have been received. The strongest evidence for the quality of the provision for pupils' social development, however, is the confidence that the school confers upon each of them, enabling them to get the most out of their lives and learning.
33. The provision for cultural development is satisfactory. In their religious education lessons, pupils are provided with opportunities to consider the customs of their own and other religions and ethnic communities. There is some extension of these opportunities; for example, in geography in the study of life in a small village in India, and in history in an examination of the customs of the past. In an excellent music lesson in Year 6, pupils were seen exploring the different ways in which feeling might be expressed in art, music and literature. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 were seen performing a Ukrainian dance with obvious skill and understanding, while in design and technology, items were made that were representative of Jewish, Muslim, Greek and Indian cultures. The strongly Christian and European customs, and culture of Christmas, are celebrated and enjoyed by all pupils. Nevertheless, it has to be recognised that the school, unlike the majority of schools, is placed in an almost exclusive monoculture, and there is a lack of recognition that today's world is

multicultural. The provision for pupils' cultural development, while rich and deep in many respects, does not fully and positively take into account the nature of the world which pupils will inevitably enter. The school needs more resources to support teaching and learning and promote multicultural education.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

34. The schools' main priorities are to ensure pupils are safe and secure, and to provide emotional support so that they are in the right frame of mind to learn. The school succeeds in doing these very well. The personal support and guidance it provides for pupils is very good and one of the schools' strengths.
35. There is a good induction programme for children and parents so that they feel welcome and children soon settle down to school life. All children are assessed when they start the Nursery and statutory assessments are carried out in the Reception classes. Regular day-to-day assessments are used effectively to prepare appropriate work for pupils. Support is good for children with special educational needs and any other children who need extra help.
36. Moving accounts written in pupils' 'feelings booklets' – booklets in which pupils can express their feelings - like 'I want people to know I'm not angry for no reason', help pupils to express their innermost thoughts. These books seen by staff who make supportive comments to help pupils overcome feelings such as sadness and anger. Staff find time for individual counselling sessions with pupils during the school day. The innovative 'emotions' game, devised by school staff for pupils who are emotionally damaged, is played as a way of getting them to talk about how they are feeling and to discuss ways of coping. Pupils are free to write in their feelings booklets at any time during the day, when they start to feel the need for an outlet.
37. Procedures for monitoring and promoting positive behaviour are very good. Staff create a happy atmosphere which promotes good behaviour. They are skilled in encouraging good behaviour in the classroom; as a result, poor behaviour rarely interrupts pupils' learning. Each class uses its own way of promoting good behaviour, and there is a consistently firm and supportive approach from staff. In one class, pupils compile their own daily behaviour charts, and assess how successful they have been by using a traffic light system of red, amber and green. These charts are analysed to find the times when pupils are more likely to misbehave, to develop ways of preventing emotions flaring up and to set targets for improvement. Another class has developed 'ten ways to cool down' that offer advice such as 'thinking nice thoughts', 'walking away', 'counting to ten'. The promotion of good behaviour permeates every aspect of school life; for example, a display about a visit to the church explains how the pupils 'thought about ways to behave' as preparation for their visit. Instances of bullying are firmly dealt with. The nature of some behavioural problems means that a minority of pupils will continue to react aggressively, despite the school's best efforts.
38. Arrangements for supporting pupils, who have a wide range of learning difficulties, are very good, enabling them to make progress and keep up with their peers. Well-planned support is offered to pupils who are experiencing emotional difficulties and who need to talk about their feelings. Exclusions are kept to a minimum and the school generously admits pupils who have failed to find a school elsewhere. The headteacher is committed to developing a strong team of teachers and teaching assistants who work together closely to ensure that the academic and social needs of all pupils are met. Policies are set to ensure that pupils have the opportunity to learn effectively without interference and disruption. There are good strategies for promoting good relationships and managing behaviour. Teachers provide good role models for the pupils. Teachers are aware of, and sensitive to, the personal and home circumstances of each pupil, and arrangements for dealing with issues of child protection are very good. Staff attend case conferences and liaise with external agencies, and work of this sort takes up much of the headteacher's time.
39. Very close monitoring and knowledge of pupils from the moment they enter the school means that special educational needs are identified very early. The school works closely with appropriate

outside agencies. The success with which these pupils are integrated into the life of the school and their generally positive self-esteem is an indication of the high quality of care they receive. Considerable trouble is taken to confer confidence, and to tackle long-term or temporary problems positively. A particularly strong feature of the care that the school provides is the support available where pupils may have social or emotional problems. Access to help is unobtrusively and easily available and the support provided will often compensate for the inadequacies of some pupils' lives.

40. A programme of good quality for personal, social and health education deals well with personal safety and issues related to health. It includes the Drug Abuse Resistance Education programme (DARE). Staff are experienced in helping pupils cope with serious, real-life situations, as they arise; this is the most important part of the school's personal, social and health education work. Many pupils enter and leave the school during the term; it is to the school's credit that these pupils settle in very well and are made to feel happy and secure.
41. The school's day-to-day awareness of health and safety is appropriate and procedures are satisfactory. A governor takes an interest in health and safety issues, and the caretaker is experienced and well trained in spotting potential hazards. This enables him to cope with daily safety issues, such as those arising from vandalism and general abuse of the premises in the evenings and at weekends.
42. The way the school encourages regular attendance and monitors non-attendance needs further attention. The recent introduction of some new systems has been successful and attendance rates are improving from a well below average level. The headteacher realises that stronger measures need to be taken with parents who keep their children off school without good reason.
43. 'First day calls' - when the school contacts parents on the first day their child is absent, to enquire why they are away - are used occasionally, but not often enough to make the difference needed. The use and interpretation of computerised attendance data is still only at an early stage. There are some systems for rewarding good attendance, but they do not drive home messages sufficiently to parents about the need for good attendance. Currently, there are rewards such as giving 'O T Bear' to classes with the highest attendance, but there are few individual awards for pupils. Monitoring and promoting attendance is a key issue for the school.
44. The school currently benefits from extra temporary support from an educational welfare assistant, who makes home visits and works with parents. Working with parents to help them to recognise the importance of their children's good attendance is a huge task for the school to undertake without constant external support.
45. Procedures for the assessment and monitoring of pupils' progress are satisfactory overall. The quality and use of assessment in lessons is good. Teachers use questioning well to assess the progress pupils are making. They adjust the pace and content of lessons effectively, so that pupils' learning is carefully planned and supported. This is particularly effective for pupils with special educational needs, where individual targets are used well to support good progress.
46. Assessment satisfactorily contributes to pupils' learning in English and science. In mathematics it contributes well. For example, in Year 6, a higher-attaining pupil had noted and ticked, learning objectives that had been met, and was able to explain how work in previous mathematics lessons had contributed to his achievement.
47. A satisfactory framework for assessment in each year group is in place. However, procedures to evaluate and track pupils' attainment against National Curriculum attainment targets, and to plan the progress of individual pupils and groups of pupils towards national expectations, are not sufficiently developed. This weakens the impact on learning of existing arrangements to evaluate standards and to set targets for attainment, particularly for higher-attaining pupils.
48. A satisfactory marking policy is in place, but it is not consistently applied, and its effect on learning is limited. There are some examples of good marking, where the teacher has evaluated what pupils have done well and then given clear guidance on what they need to do next. In preparation for

national tests in Year 6, pupils assessed their own written work against National Curriculum level descriptors effectively, identifying their strengths and weaknesses, and what they needed to do to improve.

49. Procedures to assess pupils on entry to the school are satisfactory overall, and good for pupils with special educational needs.
50. The school has established a core group of teachers to implement assessment across the school, and to deliver training in assessment for the other teachers. The group has already identified the need to track the progress of pupils more systematically, and to improve the effect of marking on learning. It knows well where effective practice exists. As a result the school's capacity to further improve provision for assessment is secure.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

51. Parents confirmed they have a positive view of the school. However, it was difficult to gauge most parents' views as few attended the pre-inspection parents meeting or returned the parent questionnaires.
52. Thirty-one parents who completed questionnaires agreed that they were happy with the school's expectations that their children will work hard, with the way staff are helping their children become mature and responsible, and with the way the school is approachable if they have a concern. They also agreed that their children were making good progress. Inspectors agree with these positive views but do not support the minority view of concern about pupils' behaviour, information about progress and the way the school works with parents.
53. Despite the school wanting parents to get more involved, there are few signs that parents and the school work together successfully to support learning. The school has tried to engage with parents, but many, because of their difficult social circumstances, are unable to respond as well as the school would like. More use could be made of reading diaries for parents to guide their children's reading at home. The changes caused when the school was re-organised and the effects of the building work, which caused large areas to be out of bounds for parents, are certainly partly responsible.
54. Parents want their children to be happy in school and many enjoy coming to watch them perform in concerts and plays. However, many parents are content to leave the school to educate their children, and this is a big barrier for the school to overcome. Parents will support the school; for example, by raising money for equipment such as goal posts. Some parents do not ensure their children's regular attendance at school, and this has a negative effect on their academic and personal progress.
55. The school is keen to get parents into school, but has been unable to invite them to join in assemblies because of lack of space in the hall. The new hall should remedy this, and the headteacher looks forward to being able to invite parents in. Some parents lack the confidence to come into school, and the new facilities are likely to encourage them to do so. The provision of a hall, together with community rooms, drop in centre and café, is viewed by the school as an exciting venture that will enable them to reach out to parents more effectively.
56. Links with parents of children in the Nursery are more positive. Parents bring their children in each day and contact can therefore be built up gradually. Home visits are made and these help to break down barriers. Newsletters from the Nursery are friendly and welcoming and attractively presented so that parents like reading them. An inviting parents' notice board contains helpful advice that is presented in an attractive way. Unfortunately, these productive home-school partnerships do not often continue as children get older.
57. The school tries hard to maintain contact with parents and carers, and to involve them in what it is trying to do to meet pupils' special educational needs. Where it is difficult to achieve partnership, considerable and persistent efforts are made, often with successful results.

58. The headteacher has plans for an improved newsletter that incorporates children's work, and that is intended to appeal more to parents than the rather formal letters currently sent to them. Pupils' annual reports are of a good quality and quite detailed. Teachers successfully manage to combine information about how pupils are getting on with telling comments about their attitudes to work. Reports are clearly laid out and give a useful overview of what the class has been doing.

59. Over the years, there have been many different attempts by the school to work with parents, most of which have been met with disappointing responses. Developing a more productive partnership with parents presents a huge issue for the school to tackle without help from external agencies or special funding. Yet the school has had some successes. The dedicated work of the deputy headteacher, spanning two terms, resulted in almost all parents of children in Year 6 coming in to talk about how their children were getting on and hear how they could help them to use the revision pack provided by the school. At parents' evenings, initially less than half of the parents attended, with a few more coming in when encouraged by teachers.
60. Parents' involvement makes a limited contribution to the life and work of the school. A few parents help in class and a small group are assembling story sacks - sacks containing different toys and objects, used to help illustrate a particular story - as part of a course organised by a nearby college. Parents who are governors give of their time freely. A teacher-led campaign to raise money for goal posts has collected £800 through parental and local business support. A few parents take part in the different adult education courses held at the school and run by a local college, and this forms a nucleus of success on which the school can build.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

61. The headteacher leads the school well and shares her vision of a welcoming and successful community with the governors, the staff and the pupils. Her promotion of a culture of respect and value for all members of the school community creates a happy and achieving school. In return, the community respects and values her. The extremely difficult job of keeping the school going while extensive building work was taking place - necessary for the enlarged school - was managed very well. The community is justly proud of the result and recognises the headteacher's key contribution. The thrust now is to raise standards of pupils' attainment, and the school has the good capacity to do this.
62. A climate of care and concern is evident on entering the school, and there is a culture of inclusion, so that pupils and adults are motivated to work as a team, with a common sense of purpose. The headteacher works particularly closely with her talented deputy headteacher, and together they provide good management within a larger, effective, team of teachers and governors. The conscientious and hard-working co-ordinators of subjects and particular aspects of school life, are keen to ensure that all pupils receive a wide and rich variety of experiences that develop their interests and encourage positive relationships. All members of staff have clearly defined roles and responsibilities that are understood and followed so that there is systematic management and development in the school.
63. There are very good arrangements for the professional development of both teaching and support staff. Support for teachers new to the school or the profession is very well organised so that advice is always available from more experienced colleagues. The system for performance management is well established for all teachers, including the headteacher. It is closely linked to the school's development plan so that enhanced expertise and knowledge benefits pupils in the classrooms. Monitoring of teaching and learning in English and mathematics is effective in helping the school to identify aspects that could be improved. Successful practice is also identified and shared so that pupils benefit from improved teaching methods.
64. Since the previous co-ordinator for special educational needs left the school, the headteacher has taken on this responsibility. She places the highest priority upon the progress and full integration of these pupils, so that the support for them is very good. Her leadership in this area is excellent. It is collaborative, involving teaching assistants, and (where possible) parents and carers. The result is a positive and affirming learning environment within which every pupil with special needs is valued and enabled to work confidently and successfully. Teachers and teaching assistants work together with the headteacher to produce pupils' individual education plans, and these ensure good progress for the majority, and highly effective monitoring and recording. All the requirements of the National Code of Practice have been met, and their provision for pupils with special educational needs is a strength of the school.

65. Governors have a sound understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The headteacher provides them with regular information on current monitoring of teaching and pupils' attainment and progress. The chair and vice chair of governors provide good leadership of the governing body. There is effective support for governors, particularly for the significant number of new governors, through training and advice from the local education authority. There is a vacancy on the governing body that has proved difficult to fill. Governors' influence on standards is growing as better understanding of the school's performance in national tests guides their discussions and helps them to monitor progress and contribute to the formation of the school's development plan. All statutory requirements are now in place.
66. During the firm and effective establishment of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy, governors came into school and saw how pupils were taught. A small nucleus of governors continues to visit the school regularly, but involvement by the whole group is an area for development so that discussions are better informed and governors can add their own observations to the information from the headteacher. It is clear, however, from interviews with teachers and governors, that wide-ranging discussions have taken place prior to the creation of the annual school development plan. The plan drives improvements effectively, through implementing well-identified needs. Consideration of strategic, longer-term planning has also taken place. Targets for results in national tests have been set with the local education authority and appropriate plans are in place to ensure that staffing and learning resources are adequate. Many resources were packed away during the construction work, and co-ordinators have carried out audits to identify needs. Funding is available to meet these needs, and the school is on course to be fully resourced by September 2003. The new sports and arts hall, currently under construction, will add considerably to curricular provision. It will also add to the facilities available for parents, as a wide range of social activities, such as a mother and toddler group, is included in the plans. Governors recognise the importance of the development of stronger links with parents to encourage their participation in, and support for, their children's education.
67. Budgetary decisions are clearly matched to improvements identified in the school's development plan. The school's finance officer controls the day-to-day management of finances well, and modern technology is used very well to support administration. The administrative staff deal efficiently with day-to-day school business so that teachers are not disturbed during lessons. Regular financial statements are prepared and presented to the governors by the finance officer. Issues identified in the most recent audit of the school's finances have been dealt with effectively. The specific grant to support pupils with special educational needs is supplemented by the budget; this reflects the school's commitment to the provision of a high quality education for these pupils. The headteacher and governors continually look for value for money in purchases and monitor spending against the budget. The governors are making links with the appropriate authorities to review the perimeter fence because of the drain on the school's finances due to the high cost of re-glazing broken windows. The principle of 'best value' is applied satisfactorily, but the school's development plan and minutes of governors' meetings do not show that there is regularly planned evaluation of whether spending is having enough impact on standards of pupils' attainment. For example, a new library has been set up, but there is no identifiable plan for monitoring its effectiveness in improving pupils' reading.
68. The accommodation is good, following a period of major refurbishment and building work when the school first opened. It is well cared for by the caretaker and his staff. It now includes an impressive new ICT suite. A sports and arts hall is currently under construction that will provide a bonus for the school and the local community. A significant weakness, however, is the fairly new perimeter fence that does not deter vandals and the dumping of rubbish. For example, part of the roof of the new building was damaged, and windows are often broken. The cost of replacing broken windows is a significant drain on the school budget, and is absorbing funds that could be put to better use for the pupils' education. Overall, staffing and learning resources are satisfactory and sufficient to meet the needs of the curriculum. Resources for ICT and mathematics are good overall. Some musical instruments are in need of repair and there are not enough fiction books in the classrooms to promote reading for pleasure. There are not enough resources for design and technology and for developing multicultural awareness in all subjects.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

69. The school governors, in conjunction with the headteacher and staff, should take the following actions to raise standards in the school further:

(1) *Raise standards in English by:

- Promoting and developing a stronger culture of reading through such measures as enhancing the amount of fiction available on loan in the classrooms to encourage pupils to read
- Setting and sharing short-term individual targets for pupils and following them up regularly
(Paragraphs 2, 3, 86-89, 91, 92, 96, 97, 99)

(2) *Raise standards in mathematics by:

- Improving the presentation of pupils' work to help them to think more logically
- Providing more challenge for higher-attaining pupils
- Using resources, including ICT, more effectively to help pupils to understand mathematical ideas
(Paragraphs 2, 3, 15, 18, 22, 102-104, 106)

(3) *Raise standards in science by:

- Developing better evaluation of pupils' progress and using the information to improve planning
- Promoting more care and accuracy in pupils' presentation of their work
- Extending the variety of ways in which pupils record their work
- Increasing the use of ICT in science
(Paragraphs 2, 3, 15, 16, 18, 22, 110, 117, 119)

(4) *Raise standards in geography and history by

- Reviewing curricular provision and teaching methods to extend opportunities and develop pupils' skills of enquiry and recording
(Paragraphs 4, 137, 141, 144, 147, 148)

(5) *Develop further the effect of assessments on teaching by:

- Improving the consistency of teachers' marking of work so that pupils have a better understanding of what they know and understand and what they need to do next to improve
- Ensuring that the progress of individual pupils and groups of pupils is more systematically monitored as they progress through the school
(Paragraphs 15, 16, 47, 50, 96, 99, 109, 119, 136, 138, 140, 143, 147)

(6) *Explore further ways of involving parents more in their children's education
(Paragraphs 11, 53-60)

(7) *Work increasingly closely with parents to improve attendance
(Paragraphs 11, 43)

Other aspects that the governors should consider for inclusion in the action plan:

- Improving provision for multicultural education (33, 68)
- Planning for the consistent use of ICT in all subjects (Paragraphs 130, 152, 156, 157, 168, 185)
- *Improving resources for design and technology (Paragraphs 68, 134)
- *Negotiating with the appropriate authorities to review the perimeter fence in order to curb vandalism on the school building (Paragraphs 41, 67, 68)

*These issues have already been identified for improvement by the school

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	59
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	42

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	14	37	7	0	0	0
Percentage	2	24	62	12	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)	21	254
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	129

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	10	78

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	49
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	48

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	7.1
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	1.9
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)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	15	23	38

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	13	14
	Girls	17	22	18
	Total	27	35	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	71 (n/a)	92 (n/a)	84 (n/a)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	14	12
	Girls	19	18	14
	Total	30	32	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	79 (n/a)	84 (n/a)	68 (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

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British - Indian
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group
No ethnic group recorded

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
245	5	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
6	0	0
0	0	0
2	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
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)	10.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.4
Average class size	28.7

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	212.25

Qualified teachers and support staff: Nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21
Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	52.5
Number of pupils per FTE adult	9.8

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2002-03
	£
Total income	717,540
Total expenditure	692,960
Expenditure per pupil	2,520
Balance brought forward from previous year	N/A*
Balance carried forward to next year	24,580

*New school established September 2001

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	274
Number of questionnaires returned	31

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	65	19	10	6	0
My child is making good progress in school.	48	45	3	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	42	23	16	10	10
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	35	42	13	3	6
The teaching is good.	65	26	0	0	10
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	39	35	13	10	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	71	23	3	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	65	32	3	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	42	32	16	3	6
The school is well led and managed.	52	35	6	6	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	35	29	6	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	55	32	3	3	6

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

70. When children start school in the Nursery, the majority have poor language skills. They make good progress and achieve well in the Nursery and the Reception class because of the good teaching. Despite this good progress and achievement, by the time they join Year 1, children do not reach the expected levels for their age in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development. Staff support pupils with special educational needs very effectively, and there are good challenges for higher-attaining children.
71. The teaching is good in all the six required areas of learning, with evidence of some very good teaching in the Nursery. As a result, children achieve well, enjoy school and get a good start to their education. In both classes, children are well taught in a welcoming environment and provided with an imaginative, interesting and relevant curriculum. Equal opportunities are promoted through a range of carefully directed and self-chosen activities for all children to develop academically and socially. The co-ordinator for the Foundation Stage of education (children in Nursery and Reception classes) provides good leadership. Children's progress and attainment are assessed regularly in both classes, and teachers use the information obtained very well to plan lessons and activities that match the needs of all children. The staff work very well together as a team, and teaching assistants play a significant role in the teaching process as they work effectively with groups of children. All staff have a secure understanding of the needs of young children.

Personal, social and emotional development

72. Although they do not reach the expected goals for this aspect of the curriculum by the end of the Reception year, children make good progress due to the good teaching, the very positive way in which they are welcomed to school each day, and the consistency of approach used to help them to become confident learners.
73. In the Nursery, children soon settle into the school's routines because they are guided and helped well by experienced staff. With sensitive support, children in the Nursery concentrate for increasing lengths of time and develop greater levels of independence in personal hygiene and getting ready for activities; for example, when they put on aprons. For some, this is a significant step, as they come to school with weak social skills. Girls and boys are encouraged to play and work together. The staff listen well to the children, and are patient in the way they spend time with them to ensure that the simple, well-founded classroom rules are understood. The children's self-control becomes stronger and they gradually develop an understanding of right and wrong. Children become increasingly confident in asking for help. They show a developing sense of responsibility as they help to clear up and keep the classroom tidy.
74. When children join the Reception class, they adapt confidently to the brisker pace of lessons because of the good teaching and support. Because of the growing sense of trust and responsibility, children develop good self-esteem and improved levels of attention that help them to learn at a good rate. They play happily with older pupils in the playground and move around the school sensibly; for example, when they go to the hall for assemblies. In both the Nursery and the Reception class, relationships are very good. Increasingly, children consider the needs and views of other people; for example, when they share equipment, listen to one another in discussions and learn about different cultures and ways of life. In the Reception class, the teacher organises circle games where pupils take turns to say nice things about each other. This raises their self-esteem and gets them to think positively about other people. The staff provide very good role models. They avoid criticism, and guide children towards doing the right things. Children are involved in school assemblies and, from a very early stage, know that they are part of a larger school community. They receive awards for achievement and effort and begin to understand some of the different customs and religious practices of children from different faiths.

Communication, language and literacy

75. In both the Nursery and the Reception class, the quality of teaching and learning is good. During literacy sessions and focused activities, the staff encourage the children to sit quietly, listen carefully and contribute sensibly. In both classes, parents are regularly encouraged to listen to their children read at home. However, a significant number of children, especially in the lower-attaining groups, do not benefit from consistent, regular reading at home.
76. In the Nursery, children talk to one another as they play and learn together. They chat as they play with sand, roll and shape dough and make models from construction kits. A significant number of children have speech difficulties, but they all want to communicate and share their thoughts. The staff are skilful in extending conversations so that children sort out their ideas and become more confident and able to explain what they mean. Children enjoy joining in rhymes and looking at the interesting and exciting range of books in the well-organised book corner. In very well planned literacy sessions, the staff read books with the children and get them to follow the story by looking carefully at the illustrations. Children are encouraged to look at words; for example, in the titles of books. Displays are labelled well so that children gradually connect words with pictures. The teacher's plans include rhymes and stories that link with topics such as 'animals'. There are opportunities for children to write in nearly all parts of the room; for example, when paper and pencils are placed strategically by the telephone in the 'vet's surgery'. Although the making of marks on paper is poor, the children want to communicate and happily write notes and messages.
77. In the Reception class, staff build well on the good start children made in the Nursery. Children are encouraged to contribute to discussions and to use appropriate vocabulary as they describe things. Throughout the day, the staff help children to express their ideas and speak clearly. In discussions, most children talk to the class confidently, but they need help to say exactly what they mean. In reading, children learn through well-focused activities that are taught at a good pace. The teacher works well with small groups of children of similar ability. For example, as the teacher reads a simple book with a group of children, she skilfully reinforced the learning of letter sounds and shapes and encouraged children to suggest what the words might be. Cards with commonly used words are displayed for children to choose, read and form sentences. Slower-learning children consolidate and reinforce their knowledge before they move on to the next step, and children who learn more quickly press on with suitably more difficult work, so that all are challenged. There is daily work on sounds, and higher-attaining children gradually blend sounds together to make words. Higher-attaining children read a few commonly used words, but most children need a great deal of focused support to concentrate and follow even a simple text. Most children make marks below their pictures, and higher-attaining children copy the teacher's writing legibly, although letters are not always formed correctly. Few children show any sense of narrative in their writing, though a few higher-attaining children begin to do so by the time they join Year 1.

Mathematical Development

78. In the Nursery, children develop mathematical skills in practical ways throughout the day, and teaching is good. Through a wide range of sorting, matching and ordering activities, they develop a growing vocabulary to express number, shape, size and colour. In story time, the staff talk about bigger and smaller animals, and as they play in the sand and water, children are encouraged to talk about 'more' and 'less', 'full' and 'empty'. In a good session, the teaching assistant worked effectively with children, questioning them closely and encouraging them to explain their answers, to reinforce and extend their understanding of counting and numbers. Pupils said the numbers one to ten, but they were less sure when counting objects. Most can count objects to five reliably, but not all can count them to ten. The staff promote children's mathematical development in outdoor activities, too, as they encourage children to keep within boundaries as they ride the tricycles along a track and count the vehicles as they go past. In a good physical education lesson in the hall, children practised bouncing balls in a circle. As they participate in such activities, which bring relevance to their learning, pupils extend their mathematical vocabulary.

79. The early stages of the National Numeracy Strategy are gradually introduced in the Reception class. In addition to the mathematical ideas incorporated into activities such as story telling, art and craft and playing with construction kits, children benefit from good teaching in small groups, when specific mathematical ideas are developed. Teaching is of good quality. The teacher begins these sessions with brisk games and questions that keep the children focused and maintain their interest. As a result, children build effectively on what they already know. The children then have time to play with the equipment to consolidate their learning. Higher-attaining children understand 'one more' and 'one less', and average-attaining children do so with help. Most children know the names of simple two-dimensional figures such as squares, circles and triangles. The progress of lower-attaining children is hampered by their weak language skills. Staff intervene well to extend pupils' mathematical vocabulary, and spend time sitting with children as they play games, do puzzles and write numbers. This is a significant feature of the teaching in both the Nursery and the Reception class. Staff are patient and understanding so that children know they can ask questions and expect praise when they are successful. The sessions are very well organised and children enjoy them.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

80. In the Nursery, children develop early investigative skills as they sow seeds and learn that plants need water to grow. Good teaching ensures that maximum value, in terms of children's learning, comes from such activities. Many children have limited experiences of the area outside school and know little about the wider world. The staff take the children for walks, read books with them and bring visitors into school to widen children's knowledge and bring relevance to their learning; for example, when members of the police force or the fire service make visits. Staff make the most of the opportunities for learning in the area around the school. Children become more aware of the local environment when they are taken for Autumn walks in a local wood to collect leaves from the impressive oak trees. They visit 'The Heathers' – a local heath area - where they release butterflies that they have watched develop from the caterpillar and chrysalis stages. The awe and wonder on the children's faces as they realise that the caterpillars have changed to pupae is moving, and pictures of them releasing the caterpillars show their delight. They visit places further afield; for example, they go to a farm that links well with the study of animals. In a lesson during the inspection, a number of younger children were unable to name models of a cow and a goat, although they knew a pig and a horse. The overriding benefit of this work is that it enhances children's experiences and extends their vocabulary. Skills in design and technology and ICT are developed well as children make models and explore simple programs on the computer. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of life are promoted as pupils learn to be considerate for one another. Staff hang children's names on a 'please and thank you tree', and the good range of books includes a range of stories from different countries and cultures.
81. In the Reception class, the good teaching continues and children enjoy learning about the world around them. The staff prepare stimulating activities which engage pupils' interest and sustain their concentration; for example, when children listened to the story 'Dear Zoo', which is linked to a topic about creatures. Afterwards, a group of children played with finger puppets of pets and were encouraged to look at books about pets and talk about the animals. Children grow beans and tomatoes and draw pictures showing the development of the plants. The staff use every opportunity to talk with children about what they are making and doing, and they bring relevance to children's learning by talking about the outside world; for example, when children join and fix components with increasing skill and make models of simple vehicles and buildings from construction kits. On the computer, they play simple games and gradually extend their skills in responding to signals; they drag images across the screen, match pictures and reinforce their learning in literacy and numeracy. Most children's understanding of the wider world is hindered by their narrow experiences and weak language skills prior to joining the school, but the staff do very well in the Nursery and the Reception class to compensate for these deficiencies. Staff are enthusiastic, caring and imaginative in their provision for the children.

Physical Development

82. The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the Foundation Stage. In the Nursery, children run, jump, climb and balance with increasing confidence and most develop appropriate levels of muscular control and co-ordination in larger movements. Most children move around with an awareness of space and are controlled and purposeful when they play outside. They ride tricycles confidently and steer them safely. The majority of children, however, do not have appropriate levels of finer manipulative control for drawing, writing and cutting. Children handle pencils with varying degrees of success as they make marks in the well-organised writing areas. The staff plan well for children to develop skills for handwriting, cutting, modelling with construction kits and painting. Children are encouraged to play with puzzles, models and construction kits that help them to develop greater levels of co-ordination and control. In painting and printing activities, children become more precise in creating patterns and pictures, but most need some adult support to achieve success.
83. Children in the Reception class run about the playground safely and play games confidently. They enjoy physical education lessons in the school hall and show satisfactory levels of hand and eye co-ordination as they throw, roll and bounce balls. In a good lesson, the teacher gave children time to explore how they could pass a ball to one another. This enabled the children to think about what they were doing and recognise their ability to control equipment. The teacher used a skipping rope very effectively to get children to imagine they were jumping over a stream or a wall. Weak manipulative skills continue to hamper pupils' development of writing, however, and few children write their names in properly formed letters by the end of the Reception year. The staff provide many opportunities for the children to use simple craft equipment, construct models from reclaimed materials, model with dough, play with model vehicles and build with construction kits, so that appropriate skills for finer work are being developed appropriately.

Creative Development

84. The quality of teaching and learning is good in both classes, and both classrooms are organised effectively to provide opportunities for children's creative development. Staff guide and support children well to maintain their concentration and extend their knowledge of colours and techniques. In the Nursery, children practise making marks with thick brushes and bright colours and use a wide variety of paints, felt-tipped pens, paper and malleable materials, such as modelling dough. Children dab, swirl and stroke the paint onto paper to make bold patterns. Activities are planned to be inviting so that children experiment with a range of materials, use their imagination and enjoy what they do. They print with a variety of objects and explore contrasting colours. Musical activities are linked well to other areas of learning; for example, when children sing songs about animals. They extend their imaginative skills as they pretend to care for animals in the 'vet's surgery' or bring their pets to the surgery and sit in the waiting room chatting to each other.
85. In the Reception class, children extend their skills and create pictures and collages with a wide range of materials, including fabric and pasta. In assemblies, children join with older pupils to sing songs with more words and increasingly complicated rhythms. Children have frequent opportunities to sing rhymes and jingles, and they play percussion instruments and perform for one another. The teacher plans well to ensure that children have a wide range of opportunities to use their imagination and benefit from creative and expressive activities. Artwork is displayed attractively to promote the children's self-esteem and brighten the classroom. The teacher links art well with other subjects; for example, when the children made a huge collage spider which is well labelled to extend children's scientific vocabulary with words such as 'antennae'. Drawings of the development of frogs from tadpoles are immature, but the children's understanding of the life process is clear in the sequence of drawings.

ENGLISH

86. Strengths in the subject
- Good teaching.
 - Pupils' positive attitudes.
 - Good relationships between pupils and teachers, and between pupils.

- The secure learning environment.

87. Areas for development

- A reading culture that will enhance levels of literacy.
- A sharing with pupils of the evaluation of their work, so that they may be more aware of the learning process, and know in detail what they must do next to improve.

86. Standards of attainment in English are well below the national average by the end of Year 2, and below the national average by the end of Year 6. This is because a significant proportion of pupils enter the school with very low levels of educational, social and cultural development. This problem is further exacerbated by a high mobility factor, with a higher than average percentage of pupils entering and leaving the school at a variety of points during each school year. Nevertheless, pupils achieve well, as a result of three strong influences: the good teaching they receive, the secure and caring environment of the school, and their own positive motivation. Pupils who are new to the school are well assessed and supported so that work is matched to their needs and they work comfortably alongside other pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are enabled to achieve at rates similar to those of other pupils because of the quality of support which they receive. Pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds benefit from the school's inclusive approach and achieve well.
87. Attainment at the end of Year 2 as recorded in the national tests in 2002 was in line with the national average for writing and well above the average for similar schools. For reading, the attainment was well below the national average, but in line with the average for similar schools. This picture is not typical for the school, and is due to the inclusion in the year group of a number of pupils whose levels of attainment are higher than is the case in other year groups. As the school did not have a Year 6 in 2002, there are no figures for this group. The results for 2003 are not yet available, but it is likely that they will correspond with the inspection findings of this report.
88. In Year 2, in speaking and listening, pupils have yet to develop the skills that might be expected. The expectations of mutual respect mean that the majority of pupils listen carefully to their teachers and their peers. They are eager to express themselves, but often do not possess the reserve of words which will enable them to do so. Sometimes they find it difficult to verbalise the concepts in their minds, and while they will brightly and confidently hold up their hands in response to a teacher's question, when they are invited to speak, they will say 'I don't know', or 'I've forgotten'.
89. As they move up the school, pupils' speaking and listening skills develop well, supported by the emphasis which all teachers place upon communication. Pupils are increasingly confident and ready to try speaking formally. The important thing is that they are enabled not to be anxious about being wrong. They listen attentively in class, and readily give their opinions about books they have read or stories they have heard, and older pupils make well-reasoned suggestions about finding things out or devising experiments. The problem is that levels of literacy - of knowledge of words and how they are put together - are low, and, in spite of improvement, attainment in this aspect of English is still below average by the time pupils approach the end of their primary education.
90. In reading, all pupils show an enthusiasm for books and the pleasure they can give, but the low levels of literacy just described mean that standards remain below average at the end of Year 6, and well below at the end of Year 2. A small number of pupils in the infants' part of the school can read a simple text with accuracy, fluency and expression, but the majority need support when reading aloud; for example, they are only developing decoding strategies beyond linking initial letters to pictures on the page. As they get older, they acquire more skills, applying a range of strategies, and often relying on 'informed guesses' which may or may not be accurate.
91. With the reading which is an intrinsic part of the National Literacy Hour, and the regular reading that is encouraged at school and in some homes, there is consistent improvement through Years 3 to 6. Higher-achieving pupils read accurately and fluently, though sometimes missing expression through reading too fast. These pupils achieve standards that are in line with the national average. (The fact that keen readers exist in the school was illustrated by the number of new Harry Potter books to be seen at the time of the inspection). However, the number of pupils who do not make a habit of reading, or who would prefer a video to a book, is high, and consequently the standard of the majority is below average at the end of Year 6. Reading aloud tends to be hesitant, and the reserve of words recognised on sight is smaller than expected. Reading diaries are not used as well as they could be to guide parents on how they can help their children at home.

92. In writing, good progress is made throughout Years 1 and 2, from a low base. At the end of Year 1, the majority do not yet function convincingly as writers. Letters are not well formed or placed, and words are grouped together in very short units. Higher-attainers try hard to find the right word for the effect they are describing, and all make reasonable attempts at spelling correctly, often mirroring the sounds of words. Throughout the school, standards of handwriting and presentation are not high, calling into question the amount of time devoted to handwriting lessons. There are often clear contrasts between the writing in handwriting exercises and in pupils' normal literacy books. All but a very few pupils write in pencil, even in Year 6, and this does not help presentation or control.
93. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 write for an increasingly broad range of purposes, and writing standards improve from well below to below average in Year 6. Technical competence improves with correct use of capital letters and full stops; some are beginning to use speech marks appropriately. All pupils try to make their writing interesting by choosing the right word, and the higher-attaining pupils are using an increasing range of vocabulary, often arranged quite sensitively to achieve a particular effect, as in some carefully written poems by pupils in Years 5 and 6, like the one which follows:

Happy

*Happy is yellow, like the sun.
It smells like lavender.
It tastes like sweets or chocolate.
It sounds like laughter.
It feels like a baby's skin.
It lives in a rose.*

94. Pupils whose attainment is average or below average for the school, find writing a challenge because of a limited range of vocabulary and a lack of technical skills, but they constantly strive to improve the quality of their work. They write their ideas in order, but using basic, simple and unvaried forms, sometimes running on without pause or sentence demarcation.
95. The quality of teaching seen was consistently good, and some was very good. Teachers rise to meet the challenge of improving the standards of their pupils with hard work and committed patience. They plan carefully, and consequently their lessons have good pace and structure, with clear expectations of the standards of work that were to be achieved. Their questioning techniques are good, probing and provoking thought, so that pupils remain on task and make good progress. A particularly strong feature of the teaching is the good relationships between teachers and pupils. Pupils are enabled to feel secure, confident and free to 'have a go' without fear of being wrong. This promotes learning of a high quality, in which pupils strive to please their teachers as well as themselves, and are proud of what they achieve. Teachers know their pupils well, and provide well for their differing requirements, so that those with special educational needs are included in all the opportunities provided, and make progress in parallel with their peers.
96. Teaching assistants have a significant role in lessons, and provide effective support to pupils with special educational needs or other difficulties by leading small groups or working with individuals. Sometimes, however, while the teacher is occupying the attention of the whole class, teaching assistants could be more involved in activities such as assessing and recording pupils' responses. They are often supporting particular pupils, but when this is not the case, more use could be made of their expertise. All of pupils' written work is marked. However, sometimes this is with no more than a tick, and perhaps an encouraging remark. Developmental marking, which evaluates the work, makes suggestions for improvement, and subsequently checks whether the advice has been followed, is rare. Pupils are provided with targets, pasted into exercise books, but these are too generalised and too long-term to give each individual an idea of what he or she must do to improve. At the end of literacy lessons, discussion periods are often used to summarise what has been learnt, or to show off the best work. They are rarely used to involve pupils in the evaluation of their own learning, and this would further promote progress.

97. The leadership of English is good. The very experienced, skilled and knowledgeable teacher who is the subject co-ordinator, has a clear vision of the priorities for the subject. She ensures that the pupils' achievements are tracked, and that planning and teaching are monitored. Procedures for the assessment of reading and writing are satisfactory, but progress in speaking and listening is not formally recorded. The National Literacy Strategy has been adopted as the subject scheme of work, but this needs to be extended and adapted to the school's needs so that a formal policy and teaching programme may be used and applied. Resources in English are satisfactory, even though there is still some considerable sharing of texts in class. The school library is not a satisfactory resource: it contains a well-ordered but limited collection of non-fiction books, and is barely used to find information. In classrooms, the stock of fiction books that may be lent to pupils for reading for pleasure is limited, at some cost to any strategies for the promotion of literacy.
98. English makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, in encounters with great literature (or in the thrill of their own writing and reading), through personal interactions in lessons, in paired and group work (where they are particularly successful), in the discussions of moral questions in class, and through contacts with their own and some other cultures, through the range of books and poems that they read.
99. Literacy is promoted well in subjects other than English. Key words are on display, and appropriate subject-specific vocabulary is encouraged. Teachers expect pupils to listen carefully and to speak thoughtfully. The approach to marking is inconsistent, and technical errors of expression are not yet systematically identified. The approach to reading for pleasure needs to be enhanced. Currently, low levels of language skills affect the attainment and progress of many pupils, and there is a powerful need to develop strategies to promote reading: through enriched collections of books in each classroom that pupils may borrow; through increased involvement of parents and other adults in pupils' reading; through extension of the shared reading between older and younger pupils that already exists, and through promotional events.

MATHEMATICS

100. Strengths
- Teaching is good
 - Expectations of work and behaviour are high
 - Good support is given to pupils with learning difficulties
 - Pupils want to learn
 - Relationships between all adults and pupils are positive and make a significant impact upon learning
100. Areas for development
- The better provision of mental work that is crisp and demanding and that ensures the regular recall of number facts
 - The regular use of ICT to support learning
 - The provision of work for higher-attaining pupils that more closely matches their abilities
 - The use of mathematical equipment, wherever possible, to support learning
101. Pupils enter the school with standards that are very low in comparison with national averages, but make good progress and achieve well.
102. By the end of Year 2, although standards remain well below average, most pupils have made a good start to learning about number, shape and measure. There is a wide variation in what is achieved by the most and least able. Pupils with learning difficulties are well supported as they slowly but surely begin to understand and use number. It is significant that pupils' test results compare favourably with those of pupils from similar schools. Pupils who are new to the school soon adapt to the teaching of mathematics because teachers are sympathetic and give good support and encouragement. Pupils from ethnic minority pupils achieve in line with their peers.

103. By the end of Year 6, about half the pupils reach the expected standard in numeracy, which, although still below the national standard, represents hard work and solid achievement. There are underlying weaknesses in the pupils' ability to solve problems and to conduct investigations but the co-ordinator for mathematics has a good grasp of these and other weaknesses and is determined to ensure that pupils' attainment continues to improve.
104. By the end of Year 2 many pupils count, order and add numbers satisfactorily. Some pupils still find difficulty in writing numbers and need to be shown how to hold a pencil correctly. Nearly all pupils find 'taking away' difficult and would benefit from regular practice in counting backwards. Most pupils know the names of common shapes such as the square, rectangle and circle, and are able to find examples of them in the classroom. These young pupils progress better if they can see and touch brightly coloured shapes. Pupils hesitantly use number skills in telling the time on the hour and the half hour, but some are confused by the difference between forward and back. Pupils are greatly assisted in their learning by the use of model clocks with moveable hands. Pupils are beginning to understand how information is collected and recorded; for example, they conduct an experiment with the toss of a single coin and record the times it falls heads or tails. Pupils illustrate the information on a bar chart.
105. By the end of Year 6, pupils' mental skills in arithmetic are generally sound and most are able to explain how they arrived at their answers. Pupils are acquiring a firmer understanding of the four rules of number, although some are still struggling with subtraction of three-digit numbers. Pupils apply what they know to solve simple problems but are handicapped by their insecure knowledge of their tables. Their enthusiasm for number is fired by a quick game of classroom bingo that inspires greater recall than is usually seen. In Year 6, pupils know about the different kinds of angles and how to measure them accurately with a protractor. Those who estimate first, use the correct set of figures on the protractor. A check of pupils' previous work shows satisfactory progress in anticipating the work of the secondary school; for example, pupils understand that a pair of co-ordinates fixes a point and apply this to reading maps in geography. Pupils use measuring skills to plan experiments in science and design and technology projects. Pupils also show historical events on a time-line and this helps them to become more confident in finding the difference between four-digit numbers.
106. Although there are minor variations in the quality of teaching, it is good overall. Teachers share good practice and plan together. This helps pupils to learn and to progress. Teachers also work closely with teaching assistants who work sensitively in helping pupils with learning difficulties. Teachers manage their classes very well and relationships are very good. As a consequence pupils are eager to learn and try very hard to progress. Teachers expect good standards of work and behaviour. Therefore, pupils know what is expected of them. Higher-attaining pupils are not always given the kind of challenging work they need and occasionally mark time, while others catch up. Greater use of the classroom computer or textbooks would help these pupils to progress at their own pace; for example, for independent planning of an investigation. Practising the regular recall of number facts in oral and mental sessions would help all pupils. Pupils' work is well marked and teachers make helpful comments and corrections in pupils' exercise books. Pupils also use worksheets, where one-word answers suffice but teachers are not able to judge where an error in thinking has occurred. A good system of assessment is being developed which, when consistently applied, will sharpen planning and enhance pupils' progress. Wherever mathematical equipment is used to support learning, progress quickens and pupils are more secure; for example, when they use the clock in Year 2 or the computer program for angle measurement in Years 5 and 6.
107. The provision for mathematics is well managed. The co-ordinator and her colleagues work well together to ensure that targets are set and that they are met. There is a good spirit of shared endeavour and a strong commitment to raising standards. Pupils in Years 4 to 6 are given valuable, additional support in small groups so that individual difficulties can be addressed. The co-ordinator has welcomed strong support and guidance from the county numeracy team. Mathematics is on an upward path.

SCIENCE

108. Strengths
- Pupils achieve well from a low start
 - Pupils enjoy science
 - Teaching is good
 - Homework is used well to advance pupils' learning
 - The subject is well led and managed

109. Areas for improvement
- Ensuring that judgements about pupils' attainment at the end of each unit of work, are closely matched to National Curriculum attainment targets, and evaluated with regard to what pupils are expected to achieve nationally at the end of Years 2 and 6.
 - Continuing to monitor the quality of teaching, learning and attainment through lesson observations and work scrutiny, but with greater emphasis on evaluating the standards pupils achieve, and what teachers might do next to improve them.
 - Ensuring that pupils have the opportunity to record their work in a greater variety of ways and, in Years 5 and 6, in more depth and detail.
 - Ensuring a consistent approach to the marking of pupils' work, so that it evaluates what pupils have learnt, and provides clear guidance on what they need to do next to improve.
110. Standards of work seen, by the end of Years 2 and 6, are below national expectations. The achievements of pupils, in relation to the very low attainment on entry to the school, are good. This is because consistently effective teaching ensures that pupils learn well, and make good progress overall. Pupils enjoy lessons, and have a positive attitude to the subject. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. The progress of higher-attaining pupils is satisfactory but they are not always challenged enough in organising the presentation of their results and findings. Pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds achieve in line with their peers. The inspection found no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls.
111. With help from the teacher, pupils in Year 2 were able to name the parts of a plant. They have observed the growth of seeds, and, with support, recorded their findings in a seed diary adding simple pictures and captions. They have planted sunflower seeds under different conditions, and begin to understand what is needed to make a fair test. In a very good lesson in Year 2, higher-attaining pupils wrote accounts of the life cycle of the frog. Pupils in Year 1 begin to understand and describe the properties of materials, and investigate different sources of light. In Years 1 and 2, the weak speaking and writing skills of some pupils means that they find it difficult to use scientific vocabulary to talk about what they have observed and to record the results of investigations.
112. By the end of Year 6, pupils make good gains in new scientific knowledge and skills. Overall, attainment is below national expectations. In a very good lesson in Year 6, pupils used the computer microscope to view sections of plants. With help from the teacher, some were able to name the male and female parts of plants. When investigating how different soils affect the growth of plants, pupils showed a more secure knowledge of fair testing, and a better understanding of how to plan an experiment, and of how to record the results.
113. In Year 5, pupils demonstrated a sound knowledge of scientific facts. For example, in a good Year 5 lesson, pupils applied their knowledge of evaporation well to get things to dry more quickly. In discussion with the teacher, very few pupils were confident enough in using scientific language to talk about what they had learnt in earlier work on the water cycle.
114. In Year 3, pupils learned how water travels up the stem of a plant. They observed and recorded how coloured water was slowly drawn through the plant stem to tint the white petals of a carnation. Pupils' developing sense of awe and wonder at the natural world was a tangible presence in this lesson, and made a good contribution to their learning.
115. The quality of teaching in Years 1 to 6 is good. In the lessons observed, it was never less than good, and two very good lessons were seen. In a very good lesson for pupils in Years 1 and 2, the teacher carefully assessed what pupils remembered from a previous lesson when they planted seeds in glass jars. The teacher's use of scientific vocabulary was precise, and resources, including a clearly labelled diagram of the parts of a plant, were of good quality. Pupils gasped and clapped when the glass jar with densely packed white roots was dramatically revealed and passed from pupil to pupil. The teacher had high expectations, and used very good questioning, asking pupils to describe what they saw, and 'predict what will happen to the plant in the four weeks to the end of term'. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour were very good; they listened intently to the teacher's questions, and to the answers of other pupils.

116. In a very good lesson in Year 6, the teacher had good knowledge of the subject, and used a range of methods to engage pupils' interest. For example, in work on food chains, she said that the name of a mystery predator, 'at large in the school grounds', was hidden in an envelope and promised that if pupils guessed the name correctly, it would become a class pet. This has a very good impact on learning, as pupils excitedly talked about the likely predator, its characteristics, and its relationship to producers and consumers in the food chain. Lessons are very well planned, and they move along briskly, exciting pupils and holding their interest, so that they achieve well.
117. Pupils mainly use worksheets to record their work. These satisfactorily support the learning of most pupils, and give good support to pupils with special educational needs. For example, in providing a framework for a group of pupils in Year 3 to carry out an investigation a worksheet will prompt, 'First we ... Then we... We noticed that...'. For higher-attaining pupils, opportunities to record and interpret observations and measurements in a variety of ways, using tables, bar charts and simple graphs, are too limited.
118. Homework makes a good contribution to pupils' learning. For example, in a good lesson in Year 6, the teacher reminded pupils how the task set linked to a high quality display of previous work on the water cycle, and talked to them about how they could use the Internet to find what they needed to know. The teacher made clear the expectation that homework should be completed, but sensitively indicated when time would be available during the school day to do it.
119. Assessment in lessons, of what pupils know and understand, is good. For example, in a good lesson in Year 6, pupils were asked, 'In the investigation, why do we need to make sure we add the same amount of water to each plant?' Approximately half the pupils were unsure. The teacher amended her lesson plan to explain again the meaning of fair testing. Consequently, pupils' understanding became more secure, and they made good progress. Procedures to assess the progress pupils make from one year group to the next, are less secure. The early assessment of pupils who are new to the school helps them to achieve well and enjoy science. Teachers' marking of work is inconsistent, and does not provide pupils with sufficient guidance on what they have done well, and what they need to do next to improve.
120. The subject is well led and managed. Some observations to monitor the quality of teaching and learning, have taken place. Through these, and the analysis of pupils' work, co-ordinators have a good grasp of strengths and weaknesses in pupils' attainment. A sound action plan is in place. National guidelines for coverage and planning have been sensibly amended for Years 1 and 2 to meet the needs of mixed-age classes, and for single year groups in Years 3 to 6. Planning for the term, and for each lesson, is now good. Resources are satisfactory and good use is made of them because they are well organised, and readily available to teachers.

ART AND DESIGN

121. Strengths
- Pupils' attainment is good by the end of Year 6
 - Teaching and learning are good
 - The work of well-known artists is used effectively to extend pupils' artistic skills
 - Pupils use their artistic skills well in other subjects
122. Area for development
- The better use of sketchbooks
123. Few art and design lessons were seen during the inspection, but from discussions with the co-ordinator, teachers and pupils and looking at pupils' work and displays around the school, it is clear that pupils produce work that is in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2 and above national expectations by the end of Year 6. Pupils use a wide variety of media and techniques and develop their skills systematically as they move through the school. Pupils with special

educational needs gain self esteem in a subject in which success does not rely on reading or writing.

124. By the end of Year 2, pupils use paint, collage, pens, crayons and pencils to create an appropriate range of imaginative and illustrative work of satisfactory quality. Pupils' drawing is often immature, but more capable pupils produce some good work. Pupils' manipulative control of pencils develops well as staff intervene to give appropriate advice that helps pupils to improve their drawing. Three-dimensional art is developed effectively as pupils work with clay. They made well moulded models and decorated them well with paint; for example, of dinosaurs.
125. A good feature of the teaching is the way pupils are given opportunities to explore a range of three-dimensional techniques. They learn to plan their work and select their own materials; for example, when they work with reclaimed materials and construction kits. When asked what 3-D meant, a pupil promptly answered, 'You can see all round it'. In Year 2, pupils consolidate their drawing and observational skills. In links with literature, pupils created an attractive frieze, done in crayon, about a Zambian story. The work is full of life and interest, and it conveys an African scene of brightness and excitement. In religious education, pupils created Rangoli patterns. Pupils from ethnic minority families gain self-esteem when other cultures are valued. Paintings are bold and bright. Teaching assistants guide and support pupils well because they are involved in the planning and preparation of lessons. In a lesson where pupils were using clay, they created models of animals – a tortoise, snails, a cheetah and frog – of varying quality. Some were very good indeed, but others were clumsily constructed. The teaching assistant worked very well alongside pupils, helping them to improve the texture and patterns on the creatures' backs. Learning is good because skills are taught carefully and it builds on pupils' strengths effectively as they grow more confident and develop better manipulative control.
126. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 use sketchbooks, but they are not used well enough for them to try out ideas and explore new techniques. However, pupils work with different types of pencils to gain skills in drawing. As they sketch in pencil with increasing accuracy, pupils use shading to give added form and depth to their line drawings. When they did portraits of the school staff, a talented pupil in Year 5 produced a sketch of high quality. Architectural drawings of good quality show pupils' attention to detail in the brickwork and window frames. In a lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6, the teacher ensured that, when pupils were introduced to a new idea, they were given time to practise and improve it; for example, when they designed hats that included models and drawings depicting their experiences at Redlands. Teachers use the work of other artists effectively to show pupils examples of what others have done. Very good examples of work in the style of Van Gogh, Mondrian, Matisse and Kandinsky are displayed attractively in the school hall. They were drawn by pupils in Years 5 and 6, who worked in twos and threes to create large, bright pictures of a bridge, boats set beneath a starry sky, sunflowers and imaginative patterns and shapes. The original artists' colours, form and tone have been well translated. Girls and boys worked well together and achieved similarly.
127. From the quality of work produced, teaching and learning in art and design are good throughout the school. Pupils say that they enjoy their lessons. They know that their efforts are valued, because the teachers display work well throughout the school. Pupils' artistic skills are used extensively to support topics in subjects such as history and geography, and written work throughout the school is often illustrated with lively drawings. In Years 1 and 2, a bold collage depicts the story of 'Peter and the Wolf', which the pupils have heard in a music lesson. Pupils' work, along with that of other artists, is displayed very effectively around the school and classes have interesting displays of two- and three-dimensional work which enhance the environment; for example, in the display of pottery dinosaurs in Year 1. Speaking and listening skills are promoted well as pupils participate enthusiastically in discussions about their own work, and teachers reinforce skills in mathematics as pupils print repeating patterns and make symmetrical shapes. In ICT, pupils use simple drawing packages satisfactorily, and older pupils employ their artistic skills effectively as they organise pictures and text attractively on pages for presentations. Imaginative work done in the art club includes photographs taken by the pupils. Interesting shadows were formed as pupils shone light onto their friends' faces and then photographed them; the resulting work is very good.

128. The subject is effectively co-ordinated and there are adequate resources for all aspects of the curriculum. The helpful scheme of work ensures that pupils improve and extend their skills and understanding as they move through the school. Artistic experiences, including workshops, provide valuable additional opportunities for learning new techniques and working together. Art and design make a significant contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils. Pupils' artistic ability is harnessed to produce thought-provoking posters about keeping the school tidy and 'doing the right thing'.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

129. Strengths
- There are good opportunities for pupils to develop appropriate skills
 - Work is linked well to other subjects
130. Area for development
- Less use of printed worksheets so that pupils organise their own writing of plans and instructions
 - More use of ICT
131. Evidence for judgements comes from examination of pupils' work, discussions with pupils and the co-ordinator for the subject, and limited observations of pupils working in the classrooms. From this evidence, pupils attain standards in line with national expectations by the end of Years 2 and 6.
132. Teachers generally have a good understanding of the designing and making process. In Years 1 and 2, pupils produced some attractive puppets. A variety of textiles was used to create glove puppets that incorporated felt, cloth and decorations, such as sequins and lace. In examples of stick puppets, pupils created characters such as a bold-faced and gold-crowned king. Most of the examples of puppets involved the use of glue. The work was linked with study in literacy, and contributed effectively to the school's drive to improve oracy. There was little stitching or use of other fixing techniques in making the puppets. However, pupils develop an appropriate understanding of ways in which materials can be fixed together; for example, when they used split pins on calendars to turn pointers that indicate the seasons. In a good link with religious education, pupils made Torah scrolls and rests, prayer mats and clay divas. Such activities demonstrate to pupils from ethnic minorities that their cultures are valued. Appropriate skills in designing and evaluating products are well practised in Years 1 and 2. The quality of pupils' written work is variable, but the idea of thinking hard before starting a project and considering how products could be improved is well embedded.
133. As they progress through the school, pupils continue to have good opportunities to improve their skills in the designing, making and evaluation process. Work is often linked to other subjects; for example, when pupils in Year 4 explored how different kinds of switches and electrical circuits work. This investigation was closely linked to work in science. In Years 5 and 6, pupils did some interesting work on the construction of Greek temples. This linked with work in history and science. The pupils found that the density and placing of the pillars were important considerations and they adapted their designs and choice of materials accordingly. Some very good end products resulted from a detailed study of how slippers are made. The whole design, making and evaluation process was followed through imaginatively and recorded well. Plans, instructions and evaluations show that pupils benefited greatly from the project. The finished slippers are well made, incorporating a good range of materials, joining techniques and decoration.
134. From the work produced, teaching is judged to be sound. Teachers have a clear understanding of how to teach the basic skills in the subject and pupils generally make satisfactory progress in activities such as cutting, joining and measuring, as manipulative control becomes more secure. Appropriate support is planned for pupils with special educational needs. Mathematical skills are used effectively. Teachers challenge pupils to use their imagination and ensure that they

experience a sound range of materials and techniques. The use of ICT by pupils, to plan their work and explore designs, is growing but is an area for speedier development. Pupils extend and practise their literacy skills effectively as they make lists and label drawings, but opportunities are missed for pupils to organise the recording of their own investigations when printed worksheets are over-used. Sound leadership ensures that teachers are supported effectively with a helpful scheme of work and advice is always to hand when teachers need new ideas. Resources are inadequate for the full extension of pupils' skills in Year 6. Tools and equipment were in store for some time, but the co-ordinator has recently carried out a detailed audit of what is needed to meet the requirements of the curriculum throughout the school. The management is aware of the deficiency and is dealing with it.

GEOGRAPHY

135. Strengths
- Pupils have positive attitudes and enjoy the subject
 - Teaching is good in Years 3 to 6
 - The local environment is used well for teaching and learning
136. Areas for development
- Higher-attaining pupils need more challenge
 - Teachers' marking needs to be more consistent across the school
 - There is no consistent procedure for monitoring pupils' progress from year to year
 - The planned monitoring of teaching and learning is essential to share good practice and establish consistently effective teaching throughout the school
137. No lessons were seen in Years 1 and 2, therefore judgements on standards and teaching are based on scrutiny of displays and pupils' earlier work. From the quality of work seen, pupils' attainment by the end of Year 2 is well below national expectations, and teaching is at least satisfactory. By Year 6, standards are below national expectations. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2. From Year 3 to Year 6, pupils progress well because the good teaching makes effective use of pupils' improving speaking and writing skills.
138. Evidence from past work and from discussions with pupils shows that in Years 1 and 2, pupils develop an awareness of their own locality and of other places. Teachers make good use of the local environment. In Year 1, pupils are able to name places that are near to their homes – the school, further away – Tesco, and very far away - grandad's. On a visit to a local church, pupils recorded what they saw and how they felt; this promoted an understanding of the purpose and importance of particular buildings in the community. Pupils also develop an awareness of places further away from home. In Year 2, pupils located Australia on a map of the world, identifying animals and key features of the Australian environment. Teaching is relevant and interesting when pupils are actively involved as young geographers; for example, when they visited the seaside and were then able to compare and contrast the coastal locality with their own area. Pupils' written work varies in quality, and teachers' marking is variable.
139. In Year 6, pupils' knowledge and understanding of mapping and of places outside the immediate locality is more secure. In a good lesson in Years 5 and 6, pupils used a globe confidently to locate and mark places in England, Europe and the rest of the world, visited in the novel 'Kensuke's Kingdom'. In Year 5, pupils begin to respond to geographical questions, such as 'Should traffic be allowed in the high street?' They carried out a survey and recorded their findings in a letter that they sent to the local council. Pupils' improving literacy skills make a sound contribution to their progress. More able pupils made satisfactory use of previous work in mathematics to draw a bar chart showing the noise levels in different areas in the school. In good lessons in Years 3 and 4, pupils were able to identify and use geographical symbols to interpret features on an Ordnance Survey map. No difference was noted in the achievement of boys and girls.
140. In Years 3 to 6, teaching is good. Lessons are planned well and classrooms are well organised, but there are not always enough opportunities for more able pupils to move ahead. Teaching

assistants give good support for pupils with special educational needs. Resources are used effectively; for example, when the teacher's good use of a map contributed well to the learning of pupils in Years 3 and 4. Teachers' assessments of what pupils know and understand in lessons are good. In a good lesson in Year 6, enthusiastic teaching and sprightly questioning gave the teacher a good picture of pupils' understanding and kept pupils interested and involved. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good because teachers manage lessons well and include features which stimulate pupils' interest; for example, when a teacher used the pupils' interest in football to get them to identify countries on a globe. In written work, teachers' marking does not sufficiently support pupils' learning because there is little guidance on what pupils need to do to improve. Teachers use the local environment effectively to bring relevance to pupils' learning, and pupils respond well to educational visits and other opportunities the school has to offer them.

141. A sound start has been made in leading and managing the subject. The priority has been to organise and plan a good curriculum in all year groups. This has been achieved, but the effect on learning is better in Years 3 to 6 than in the earlier years. There is no consistent procedure to monitor the progress pupils make from one year group to the next. The need to judge standards against national expectations more effectively and to evaluate the impact of teaching on pupils' progress, are sensibly identified as priorities in the proposed action plan to raise standards. An audit of resources has been carried out and requirements are being dealt with. A list of useful web sites to support pupils' learning has been prepared, and the use of ICT in lessons is satisfactory. Some scrutiny of pupils' work has been carried out, but because of the school's appropriate focus on literacy and numeracy, there has been no opportunity to directly observe teaching and to evaluate learning in classes. These, however, are planned as part of the school's rolling programme of monitoring to improve standards.

HISTORY

142. Strengths
- Pupils make good progress in Years 3 to 6 when their skills in reading and writing improve
 - Teachers' planning is good
 - Teachers assess pupils' knowledge and understanding well in lessons
143. Areas for development
- Higher-attaining pupils do not have enough opportunities to find things out for themselves
 - Worksheets are of variable quality
 - The marking of pupils' work is inconsistent
 - Assessments of pupils' attainment are not aligned closely enough to national expectations
144. By the end of Year 2, standards in history are well below national expectations. By Year 6, they are below national expectations. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2, and good progress in Years 3 to 6, as their skills in reading and writing improve. In the one lesson observed for pupils in Years 3 and 4, progress was very good. Pupils from ethnic minority groups make progress in line with their peers, and there is no evidence of differences in attainment between boys and girls.
145. No lessons were seen in Years 1 and 2. Evidence from past work and discussions with pupils shows that in Year 2, pupils are using time-lines to increase their understanding of the passage of time, and of how things change. They record events happening now, when they were born, and in the past 'when granny was born'. Pupils stick pictures next to written captions to sequence the life story of Florence Nightingale. Higher-attaining pupils build on this work to contrast the uniform of a nurse years ago with the present one. They have written simple diary accounts of the Great Fire of London, and the Gunpowder Plot. Weak writing skills limit pupils' achievements in this work. In Year 1, pupils have drawn modern toys, and toys from the past. In discussion, pupils in Years 1 and 2 have some understanding of the past and the present. They know that 'you can use a book to find out about history'. Pupils find it difficult to recall and to talk about past events they have studied.

146. In Year 6, pupils write about life in Athens and why they might like to live there. Work using time-lines is more detailed, and pupils have marked on them with reasonable accuracy, significant events from 1400 to the present day. In Year 5, pupils contrast and interpret pictures of a Victorian classroom and a classroom from the present day. Pupils in Year 5 write accounts of significant events since the 1930's. These accounts are mainly descriptive, and weak writing skills limit achievement. In a very good Years 3 and 4 lesson, pupils learnt about the homes of the Romans and the Celts, and found out how they farmed. One pupil was able to talk freely about the conflict between the Romans and the Celts, and why the Romans were victorious. Pupils enjoy learning about history, and have good attitudes to the subject. They make good progress overall. Pupils' learning is supported by visits to historical sites. Visitors are invited into school; for example, to talk about their experiences in the Second World War. Pupils are encouraged to continue their learning outside school. In a Years 3 and 4 class, a high quality model of a Roman sword and shield, made by a child and his father at home, formed the centrepiece of a good display.
147. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, and good in Years 3 to 6, where a very good lesson was seen in Years 3 and 4. In this lesson, the teacher's enthusiasm, enjoyment and very good subject knowledge, brought the lesson to life. The teacher had high expectations and used frequent and carefully phrased questions to assess what pupils knew and understood. For example, pupils were asked to explain 'in more detail', the disadvantages of straw housing in Celtic life, and to explain how they could use the Internet to get more information. The assessment of pupils' knowledge and understanding in lessons is good. The marking of pupils' work is inconsistent, and does not give pupils enough guidance on what they need to do to improve.
148. Higher-attaining pupils, particularly in Years 5 and 6, do not have enough opportunity to research and interpret first-hand evidence in sufficient depth or detail. Most of their work is recorded on worksheets, which are of variable quality. The use of ICT to support pupils' learning is satisfactory. Pupils look for information in CD ROMs and on the Internet.
149. A good beginning has been made in leading and managing the subject. In a new school, the co-ordinator has identified the need to put in place a good curriculum plan, based on national guidelines, and ensure that available resources are organised to deliver it. The good half-termly and termly plans that are in place, are sound evidence that this has been achieved. The subject is satisfactorily resourced. Some observation and evaluation of teaching and learning have been undertaken, and an action plan for improvement has been drawn up. This accurately identifies the need to raise standards, and ensure that judgements about pupils' attainment are more closely aligned to national expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

150. Strengths
- Pupils enjoy using ICT
 - Teaching is good in the computer suite, where pupils are well supported so that they achieve well
 - Staff are well trained
 - Resources are good
151. Areas for improvement
- ICT is not planned and used consistently in all subjects
152. By the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils' attainment in ICT is broadly in line with standards expected nationally and pupils have very positive attitudes to the subject. Girls and boys achieve similarly, and pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds achieve in line with their peers. Pupils benefit from improved resources, increased skills and confidence of staff and sound leadership. With the establishment of a new suite of computers, the school is ready to extend the average levels of skill achieved by most pupils. Faster progress is hampered by the lack of an overall plan to show how ICT can be used and developed across all subjects.

153. By the end of Year 2, pupils learn the necessary skills to enable them to use computers for practical purposes such as word-processing and data-handling. Higher-attaining pupils look for information by exploring CD ROMs and searching on the Internet. Most pupils are confident in their use of the keyboard, the mouse and program menus. They change the size and colour of fonts, write simple sentences and, with help, import pictures. In art and design, pupils use a graphics package confidently to draw shapes, fill them in with colour, and create a background; for example, when they drew portraits. In mathematics, pupils have used a simple data-handling program effectively to plot a range of data about themselves and favourite foods and hobbies. They enter data and display their results in different forms, such as graphs and lists. In a good

lesson in Years 1 and 2, the teacher gave pupils clear instructions for entering details such as favourite foods and the kind of house in which they live. Pupils carried out the task successfully and printed out their work independently.

154. By the end of Year 6, pupils use CD ROMs with increasing skill and go to them as an automatic resource for research. They do not yet use ICT confidently and independently as a useful tool for communicating their own ideas, but the school has made a good start. Pupils plan simple presentations, with text and imported pictures, and more able pupils include animation. They access the Internet confidently and look for information to support work in a range of subjects. This contributes well to the development of literacy. Most pupils word-process confidently, but ICT is not used enough to help pupils to improve their writing. However, some good work was done when pupils created advertisements for half-price computers. The work included ripple text, a range of fonts and colours, and linked well with work on persuasive writing. Pupils have also written letters, but the poor spelling show that pupils are not proficient with the use of a spell-checker. Higher-attaining pupils write interesting stories, such as one based on the story of 'The Hobbit', that include direct speech and exude excitement. Pupils' skills in control and monitoring are developing well as teachers link work with learning in mathematics, when pupils explore angles and shapes. Data-handling is practised increasingly in a range of subjects, but its use needs extending further. Not enough of this kind of work is done; for example, pupils are not as confident as they should be in creating graphs, tables and charts independently. They do so as a class, but there is little evidence of pupils exploring their own ways of displaying information. A good feature in all classes is the increasing use of digital photographs to illustrate work. This brings relevance to pupils' learning and helps them to see how journalistic techniques are used to add interest, focus and information to presentations.
155. Teaching is satisfactory overall, and the quality of teaching in the computer suite is good. Teachers choose interesting programs that engage pupils' imagination and extend their expertise. The planning of lessons is good. Subject knowledge is secure as teachers advise, support and encourage pupils. Teachers use the electronic interactive whiteboard confidently, and pupils are alert and interested during sessions when it is used. In a mathematics lesson in Year 1 on halves and quarters, the teacher displayed 'ribbons' which were partly coloured to show different fractions. Many pupils found the idea of two halves making a whole one difficult to understand, but the teacher added colour to sections and talked the class through the process of adding together fractions. Support by teaching assistants is of good quality, and pupils are helped through their difficulties so that their self-esteem is raised as they achieve success. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from working on programs which repeat letter sounds, spellings and simple number problems. They are supported well by teaching assistants, and pupils are given time to practise what they have learned.
156. In the classrooms, computers are not used effectively because ICT is not planned into lessons sufficiently. This is the area of teaching that needs improvement. When it is used, it adds interest to the subject and provides further opportunities for pupils to use computers and improve their writing; for example in design and technology in Year 5, to write instructions for making bran muffins. A good feature in the teaching and learning of ICT is the way in which pupils record their own progress by completing a simple chart when they finish tasks. Further development of this is planned so that teachers and the co-ordinator have unique information for each pupil, which feeds

into a broader picture to show attainment and progress of all pupils across the school. There will then be clear evidence of the strengths that can be built on further, and the weaknesses that will be addressed.

157. The co-ordinator has adapted national guidance to produce a useful scheme of work that helps pupils to extend their skills systematically. He monitors teachers' plans and pupils' work and is always ready to advise colleagues. He provides useful guidance on programs which link well with topic work, but ICT is not systematically included in the planning of all subjects. Teachers recognise that this is the next step in the development of the subject. The co-ordinator has a clear vision for the subject - he says he wants pupils to think, 'I'll do that on the computer', rather than be told to do it that way. The quality of professional training for staff has been good. Resources are good and the co-ordinator keeps a keen overview of equipment and software.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES – FRENCH

158. Strengths
- The teaching of French contributes well to pupils' social and cultural development
159. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are given a 'taster' course in French to widen their knowledge and experiences of European culture and prepare them for learning the language more intensively in secondary school. Because so little teaching and learning was seen, no judgement is given for attainment and teaching. Only one short lesson was observed; it was well organised and the pupils enjoyed it. They behaved well and listened to the teacher very well.
160. Pupils learn to count, tell their age and talk about the weather. Few pupils are confident enough to express any ideas in French, but they repeat the teacher's statements and practise saying phrases to their friends. The subject contributes well to pupils' cultural and social development.

MUSIC

161. Strengths
- Pupils enjoy music
 - Pupils in the choir and the recorder clubs perform well
 - Teaching is good and teachers plan lessons well
 - Teachers manage the pupils very well, and relationships between the teachers and pupils are very good
 - The leadership and management of the subject are good
162. Areas for development
- The regular use of the choir to model sensitive and tuneful singing for the rest of the school
 - The better development of pupils' spiritual, cultural and multicultural awareness through musical activities
163. Pupils' levels of attainment at the ends of Years 2 and 6 correspond broadly to national expectations in both performance and appraisal skills.
164. Throughout the school, pupils sing with enjoyment, confidence, and a great sense of timing and rhythm. Volume, diction and breathing are well controlled, and performance in singing in assemblies is spirited and lively, though it is not always tuneful or sweet. However, the school choir performs sensitively and tunefully.
165. In Years 1 and 2, pupils understand the varying qualities of simple musical instruments. In Year 2, they identify some by name, and they show that they have a good idea of the kind of sound that they can make. Their compositions show that they have tried to match their instruments to a purpose, as was observed in a lesson where pupils were asked to compose short pieces descriptive of mini-beasts - a caterpillar, a wood louse and a centipede - in a story. There were recognisable representations of the animals and illustrations to the story. Afterwards, they appraised their own and each other's performances sensitively and thoughtfully.
166. In Years 3 and 4, pupils sang in a lesson based upon a commercial music scheme. As the songs were written down, and sung rather fast, well over half the class were not able to read the words quickly enough to participate. In the more practical parts of this lesson, however, pupils showed good understanding of the tempo and dynamics (pace and volume) of music, and showed how their performance could improve through rehearsal. By the time pupils approach the end of Year 6, they show that they can listen and respond to a piece of music. They have a satisfactory understanding of the connection between music and mood, and were observed composing a piece inspired by reading a novel about a desert island, looking at a picture of a sunset seascape, and listening to sea music. They then recorded their composition in pictures, using their own symbols to represent sounds. They showed skills of control in their playing, of creating and developing musical ideas,

and of evaluating their own and others' music, which were at least in line with those of others in the same year group nationally.

167. The positive attitudes to music have a very constructive effect upon pupils' learning. Pupils respond to a conductor (usually the teacher) very well, starting and stopping punctiliously to a signal. They get out and put away instruments very carefully, and they work hard to improve their performance. Another main influence upon their learning is the good teaching they receive. Even though not all teachers have specialist musical knowledge, they all understand and communicate music in a lively and practical way. Control of potentially noisy and disruptive lessons is very good, largely as a result of the trouble teachers have taken to develop good and firm relationships with their classes in which rules are clearly observed because all understand that this is the way to get the most enjoyment out of the lesson. Planning is good, as is the preparation and the distribution of the instruments and the use of the music room.
168. The leadership of music is good. The co-ordinator is a skilled musician herself, and she provides her colleagues with clear and useful guidance. The scheme of work for the subject needs to be developed to meet the precise needs of the school. At the moment, it combines national guidance with commercial provision, and this situation needs formalising. Resources for music are barely satisfactory. While, with care, there are sufficient instruments to go round a class, many are not in good condition, having been inherited from another school when the new school was set up. The use of ICT in music is limited but it is developing appropriately as pupils become increasingly confident in using the suite of computers and exploring programs. The teaching of music in lessons is enriched by the school's extra-curricular recorder group and choir, both of which are well subscribed to and perform well. Pupils' experience is further extended by visits to performances outside school, and by visits from outside performers.
169. Music makes a good contribution to pupils' moral and social development through the requirements of performing and improving together in ensemble work. The contribution to their spiritual development through the singing of songs with a religious content is satisfactory. This is also the case with cultural development, through the simple experience of making music and performing well-known pieces. However, spiritual, cultural and multicultural experiences are not consciously pursued among the priorities for the subject.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

170. Strengths
 - Pupils enjoy physical education
 - Teaching is good.
 - Extra-curricular activities are very good and they are very well attended
 - The subject is well led
171. Area for development
 - Monitoring of lessons, as planned
172. Physical education has a firm place in the curriculum and is supported by a very good range of after-school activities. Pupils' attainment by the end of Years 2 and 6 matches national expectations. All pupils, including those with learning difficulties, achieve appropriately for their age and make at least satisfactory progress in all aspects of physical education.
173. Many pupils in Years 5 and 6 achieve well and make good progress; for example, in athletics and football. Representative fixtures in both sports act as a spur to progress and provide a good opportunity for the development of skills. Weekly swimming sessions are provided for pupils in Years 3 and 4, and records show that most pupils swim to the national standard by the end of Year 6.
174. Pupils in Year 2, demonstrate their physical agility as they curl and stretch their bodies on the floor and on the apparatus. Pupils have the confidence and the physical suppleness to make

imaginative movements. Pupils demonstrate what they can do to the class, and all have a chance to make constructive comments. Pupils also learn simple ball skills, such as throwing, rolling and catching that they use in team games.

175. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 putt the shot and throw the javelin. They practise, improve and refine their performance and by the end of the lesson most pupils develop a good technique for throwing. Pupils in Year 5 show great enthusiasm and agility in performing a spirited Ukrainian dance and there are several very good individual performances. In a game of kwik-cricket, taught by students of the local college, pupils show how much they have learnt about ball control, particularly throwing, hitting and catching. Pupils in Year 6, try to beat the 'previous best' times as they practise short sprints on the school field, exerting maximum effort as they do so.
176. Teaching is good. Teachers are enthusiastic for the subject and are well prepared to teach it. They set a good example to the pupils and join in with the activities. They offer pupils praise and encouragement. Pupils respond by trying very hard to better their previous performances, whatever the sport. Classes are well and safely managed; relationships are very good. Teachers set just the right tone for vigorous activity. The balance between creativity and control is well made. Teachers are well aware of what pupils know, understand and can do, and make this knowledge the starting point of each lesson. Written assessment of pupils' progress is developing satisfactorily. Pupils enjoy physical education. This is because teachers give the pupils challenging things to do and set clear targets for improvement.
177. The subject is well co-ordinated by an enthusiastic teacher who has clear plans for its development, pending the completion of the sports hall, which will be an excellent facility and will supplement the good resources already available. Plans include lesson observations to ensure that good practice is shared, and the collection of photographic evidence of pupils' activities and progress. Pupils attend after-school activities in large numbers and take part in competitive games. Parents and teaching assistants supervise these fixtures and emphasise the importance of a well-mannered and fair approach to competition.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

178. Strengths
- The subject contributes well to pupils' personal development
 - Themes in assemblies add to pupils' knowledge and understanding in religious education
 - The leadership and management of the subject are good
 - There are good links with the local church
179. Areas for development
- Resources need to be extended
 - The school's curriculum needs to be reviewed so that it matches pupils' needs more closely
180. By Years 2 and 6, pupils' attainment in religious education matches the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus. Pupils are taught from the standpoint of different world faiths. This helps them to understand the customs, symbols and practices of world religions and the effects they have on people's lives. Learning about religion, and from religion, contributes well to pupils' personal development.
181. Pupils, including those with learning difficulties, make at least satisfactory progress. For the majority, knowledge and understanding grow slowly but surely. Pupils achieve all that could reasonably be expected of them. Pupils have limited background knowledge of religious practices and this often makes learning difficult and challenging.
182. Themes in assembly contribute well to the quality of teaching and learning. The special relationship that the school and its pupils have with the local clergy promotes a good understanding of the Christian Church and its practices. The warm and humorous approach adopted by the local clergy in assembly and in lessons demonstrates to the pupils that religious belief has an effect on

the way people live. Older pupils, particularly, enjoy and benefit from this approach. A visiting teacher told pupils the story of the successful adoption of a baby boy. Only at the end of the story did she reveal that she was the adoptive mother. All present learnt a great deal about human compassion and kindness from the story.

183. After a visit to the local church, pupils in Year 1 enacted a Christian baptism. The teacher explained each step carefully, simply and vividly. Pupils responded well, listened quietly, and captured some of the magic of infant baptism. Pupils in Year 2 learn about Florence Nightingale and how she dedicated herself to nursing sick and injured people because of her beliefs. Pupils also learn about other ceremonies that take place in church and watch a video of a wedding that is ultimately seen to be the teacher's own. This sparks lively interest and many questions.
184. In Year 5, pupils learn why and how Muslims pray. They learn that the Qu'ran is a holy book for Muslim people. Pupils compare its statements with those in the Bible and look for differences and similarities. In Year 6, pupils learn that art can be sacred for religious believers. Pupils discuss the meaning of faith and how daily prayer supports this. Pupils study a range of objects from various faiths, including paintings, prayer wheels and models of Hindu Gods. They discuss and write about their use in religious belief.
185. Teaching is good. It is well planned and carefully thought through. Pupils are given good opportunities to say what they think and to relate personal stories. Pupils are sensitively managed and teachers take care to explain belief in words that pupils can understand. Pupils are encouraged to ask questions and teachers patiently give honest answers. Good use is made of role-play and of video. The good contact with the local church is a key factor in the teaching. Visits to other places of worship are planned. What writing pupils do is generally of good quality but more needs to be done so that understanding may be confirmed. The use of ICT is limited, but pupils look for information on the Internet. Teachers are developing useful ways of recording pupils' progress.
186. The subject is well led and managed by an enthusiastic teacher. Resources are satisfactory but need to be extended, so that they are readily accessible to all teachers. Sensible plans for development include the monitoring of lessons so that good practice may be shared and a review of the new locally Agreed Syllabus so that it can be adapted more closely to match the needs of the pupils.