

INSPECTION REPORT

ST MARTIN'S GARDEN PRIMARY SCHOOL

Bath

LEA area: Bath and North East Somerset

Unique reference number: 133290

Headteacher: Mr Philip Pope

Reporting inspector: Dr Tom Simpson
10428

Dates of inspection: 19th to 22nd May 2003

Inspection number: 249044

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
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Lympsham Green Odd Down Bath
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Telephone number:	01225 832112
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Mark Erickson
Date of previous inspection:	The school has not been inspected before

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
10428	Tom Simpson	Registered inspector	Science Art and design Music English as an additional language	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well is the school led and managed?
9756	Ken Parsons	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
16038	Jill Bavin	Team inspector	Geography The Foundation Stage Special educational needs	
12367	Tony Green	Team inspector	Mathematics History	How well are pupils taught
22772	Rhon Rogers	Team inspector	English Religious education	
1224	Graham Todd	Team inspector	Provision for pupils in the Margaret Coates Centre	
22092	Derek Watts	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Design and technology Physical education Educational inclusion	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Martin's Garden is a large primary school serving part of the city of Bath. It was created in September 2001 out of the amalgamation of an infant and a junior school on the same site. The pupils come from a mixture of private and rented accommodation and there are some pockets of social deprivation in the area served by the school. There are 343 pupils on roll – including 53 who are in reception and nursery classes. This latter group is described as being in the Foundation Stage. There are about the same number of girls and boys on roll. Approximately eight percent of the pupils are from ethnic minority groups. A small number speak English as an additional language, but only two of these are at an early stage of English language acquisition. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is above the national average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is currently around average – but the percentage with a Statement of Special Educational Needs is above average. Attainment on entry varies – but is below the expected level overall. The school includes the Margaret Coates Centre – a unit for local pupils with autistic spectrum disorder.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The effectiveness of this school is good. Pupils of all levels of attainment are very well cared for and most achieve well despite the high number who leave or join the school part way through their primary education. Teaching overall is good and there are examples at all stages of education in the school where it is very good. The headteacher and staff have a strong commitment to improvement and the capacity to succeed. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The teaching is good and as a result the pupils achieve well. Very good behaviour management is having a positive impact on the pupils, and relationships are very good at all levels.
- Overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, while provision for their moral development is very good.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs - including those in the Margaret Coates Centre - is good and as a result these pupils achieve well.
- The strong leadership provided by the headteacher and senior staff is impacting successfully on the school's forward development and the aims of the school are very well reflected in its work.
- Standards in art and design and in information and communication technology are above the nationally expected levels.
- This is a very inclusive school where all pupils are very well cared for and are provided with a very good range of extra-curricular activities.

What could be improved

- The quality of writing across the curriculum is not good enough.
- Pupils' attendance is unsatisfactory.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was established in September 2001 and has not been inspected before.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
			2002	2002	
English			C	A	well above average A
Mathematics			B	A	above average B
Science			A	A	average C
					below average D
					well below average E

The 2002 results are the only ones that have been published for the school so far. The table shows that the test results were at the national average in English, above average in mathematics and well above average in science. When compared to similar schools (a measure relating to the percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals) they were well above average in all three subjects. In the same year's tests of pupils at the end of Year 2, results were well below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. The school has identified mixed-age classes as a key reason for this and pupils are now taught in single-age groups. This is already having a positive impact. In the teacher assessments in science, the percentage of pupils reaching the expected Level 2 was below average. Standards vary from year to year because of differences in groups of pupils, and they are currently not as high in Year 6 as they were in 2002. In English overall, the majority of pupils are reaching broadly average standards at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6 – although writing is weaker than reading and speaking and listening, and is not applied effectively across the other subjects of the curriculum. Standards in mathematics are below average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 (although achievement in the subject is still good), while they are at the national average in science. By the time they reach the end of the Foundation Stage, most children are still reaching below expected standards in all the areas of learning except physical development – where they are as expected. The school has set appropriately challenging targets for further improving standards in literacy and numeracy and is on course to meet them.

It is difficult to judge achievement because of the large number of pupils who enter and leave the school other than at the usual time. However, as many pupils enter the school with below and sometimes well below the expected levels of attainment, their overall achievement is good. This is substantiated by an analysis of the progress of individual pupils over time using the school's own very effective tracking system, which includes data from the time before the amalgamation. Pupils with special educational needs and for whom English is an additional language also achieve well. There is some evidence that girls achieve better than boys – particularly in Years 3 to 6 – although it is not clear why this is so. Standards in subjects other than English, mathematics and science are average at the end of Year 2. At the end of Year 6 they are also average – apart from art and design and information and communication technology, where they are above average and the pupils are achieving very well.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good – the pupils like coming to school and are interested and involved in all its activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good – most pupils work hard and are keen to learn. They try hard to meet the school's expectations.

Personal development and relationships	Personal development is good and relationships at all levels are very good. Pupils empathise well with the feelings of others.
Attendance	This is well below the national average, while unauthorised absence is well above average.

In most lessons pupils work hard, learn well and please their teachers. They respond appropriately to the clear and consistent expectations of the school and are polite to each other, to staff and to visitors. They work and play well together and are keen to help around the school. There is not enough statistical evidence available yet to accurately judge the effect of the high rate of absence on standards, but it is inevitable that it will have a negative impact.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching is good overall and there is very good teaching at all stages of education in the school. This is a major contributory factor to the good achievement being made by the pupils. Teaching is stronger at Year 1 than it is at Year 2. One particular strength of the teaching at the school is the way that teachers manage their pupils in a consistent and positive way. This contributes effectively to the positive attitudes that pupils have towards their learning. Teachers know their pupils well and sensitively promote their self-esteem and personal development. They listen to and value pupils' ideas, helping them successfully to develop their self-confidence. Many lessons proceed with a good pace, which keeps the pupils interested and supports their rates of learning. Conversely, in some lessons introductions are too long – with the result that pupils become restless and lose interest. In others, the work set is not closely enough matched to the attainment of different pupils in the class. In the best lessons, learning objectives are discussed with the pupils at the beginning of lessons and returned to during and at the end of the lessons so that they appreciate not only what they are expected to learn, but how they are doing. English is taught well in literacy lessons, but not enough opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their literacy skills in other subjects. Mathematics – including numeracy – is taught effectively. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are taught successfully – with additional support if necessary. Overall, teaching at the school meets the needs of the pupils well.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good overall – the school provides a rich curriculum and activities are made interesting for the pupils. This is a very inclusive school.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good – these pupils access the curriculum fully. They are well supported and make good progress against their prior attainment.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good - these pupils have full access to the curriculum, supported where appropriate.

Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall – provision for moral development is very good, while provision for their spiritual, social and cultural development is good. The pupils are well prepared for life in a culturally diverse society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There are good procedures in place for assessing and monitoring pupils' academic progress. The results of assessment, however, are not fully used yet in informing planning. Procedures for promoting and monitoring good behaviour are very good.

The school's links with parents are good overall and the parents have a very high regard for the school. Parents, however, have a limited impact overall on the work of the school. The statutory requirements of the National Curriculum are fully in place and a very good range of extra-curricular activities contributes well to the overall provision for the pupils. The pupils are very well supported and cared for by staff, and feel happy and confident in school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Overall management at the school is good. The headteacher provides strong and committed leadership while the deputy head has a major complementary role. Staff are dedicated to further improvement and have the capacity to achieve this.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is hard working and supportive, and fulfils its statutory duties appropriately. Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for further development.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The senior management of the school is constantly involved in self-evaluation and acts well on this. The head and deputy regularly monitor teaching as part of the school's very good performance management system. The role of co-ordinators in monitoring teaching of their subjects is, however, still underdeveloped.
The strategic use of resources	Good - the budget is constructed fully in response to the school's needs and aspirations and available resources are used well to support pupils' learning.

Resources are sufficient overall with strengths in those available to support mathematics, information and communication technology and physical education. There are relative weaknesses, however, in the provision of non-fiction books in the library. The accommodation – including the external environment – is very good. There is sound regard for the principles of best value with some consultation with relevant parties, competitive purchasing and some comparison with similar schools.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• They feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.• Their children like school.• Their children are making good progress.• The school expects their children to work hard and achieve of their best.• The teaching is good.• The school is helping their children to become mature and responsible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A few parents expressed the view that they were not kept well enough informed and that the school did not work closely enough with the parents.

The inspection team agreed with the positive views but did not support the concerns.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. There are a number of reasons for the below average results in the tests of pupils at the end of Year 2 in 2002. One is that a significant number of the pupils had special educational needs. (Pupils attending the Margaret Coates Centre are included in the statistics). Another relates to high pupil mobility, often stemming from family instability. However, the school identified mixed-age classes in Years 1 and 2 as having the major negative impact and has re-directed resources to ensure that all pupils are now taught in National Curriculum year groups. This is already impacting positively – although there has not been time for the full effects to be realised. The reason for current standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science in Year 6 being lower than the above average results gained in the 2002 tests is also partly related to the incidence of special educational needs in the year group. The regularly very good teaching and the good quality provision for pupils currently in Year 6 indicate that these pupils are achieving well. The school has developed a very good system for tracking the progress of pupils and this is being used to set targets for individuals and groups of pupils and for the establishment of ability groups within years and classes. When this has been fully implemented, it has the potential to further stabilise the standards being reached by the pupils.
2. Within English, standards in speaking and listening are broadly average at the end of Year 2 and the end of Year 6. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 listen well to their teachers and to one another and enjoy contributing to discussions. Some lower attaining pupils, however, find it difficult to explain what they mean. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are able to use persuasive language well. By the end of Year 6, most pupils can talk satisfactorily in a range of contexts. In Year 2, higher attaining pupils read with a sound degree of accuracy and fluency. Although lower attaining pupils know their basic phonic sounds, they still read hesitantly. Higher attaining pupils in Year 6 read aloud with confidence and expression, and can discuss authors and their style, while average attainers read fluently, offering some opinions with reference to the text. Lower attainers read simple texts with some expression – but still need help to sound out unfamiliar words. Most pupils are reaching the expected Level 2 in writing at the end of Year 2, but few are reaching higher levels. This is because they do not get enough opportunities to write at length in English lessons or in other subjects. By the end of Year 6, higher attaining pupils write fluently and accurately for a range of purposes while average and lower attaining pupils write with a growing use of different forms and styles – although their spelling and punctuation are less accurate. Again there are not enough opportunities for the pupils to develop their writing skills across the subjects of the curriculum and this is having a negative impact on standards.
3. The decline in standards in mathematics by Year 6 since the above average test results of 2002 can also be attributed to greater numbers of pupils with special educational needs and high pupil mobility. Teaching is good overall and teachers have a good understanding of the subject. The National Numeracy Strategy is well established in the school and the subject is well managed. Consequently, pupils are achieving well. The majority of pupils in Year 2 can add and subtract two-digit numbers, see patterns in number, continue a sequence to 100 and identify halves and quarters. However, lower attaining pupils are not confident when counting backwards or when trying to solve simple money problems, and there is no evidence of higher attaining pupils using negative numbers. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a sound recall of number bonds and the strategies for addition, subtraction, multiplication and division of number, and can interrogate graphs for information. By Year 2, the pupils are beginning to recognise that seeds are part of a plant's reproductive system and can construct simple electrical circuits. By Year 6, the pupils have a sound understanding of a range of scientific issues such as habitat, adaptation and 'states of matter'. In art and design, Year 6 pupils produce very effective designs for the creation of clay pots in an 'art deco' style, wire and papier mache figures and abstract clay models representing family life. There are examples of good, and sometimes very good quality art work being produced at all stages of education in the school. Pupils in Year 6 create multi-media presentations, use text-editing facilities confidently and import scanned photographs to their work.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

4. There is a strong consensus amongst parents that their children like school and discussions with the pupils themselves confirm this view. The pupils have good attitudes towards the school and their work. It is a place where they are listened to and valued. Pupils show this in the cheerful way they come into school in the morning and when the younger children leave their parents without a fuss. Pupils of all ages are ready to work and to settle to their tasks at the start of the school day. They are interested in what the school has to offer. They are involved in the subject matter of their lessons and prepared to get on with their work.
5. The vast majority of parents think that behaviour in the school is good and this positive picture is reflected in the inspection findings. Pupils do behave well in lessons and around the school, trying hard to meet the school's expectations. In the majority of lessons, pupils work hard and learn well, with the teacher not having to spend much time maintaining order. For example, pupils showed strong interest and self-motivation in an exercise, writing a letter as if from a World War II evacuee, getting on well with their work whilst the teacher was engaged elsewhere in the classroom. Good behaviour does not come automatically to many of the pupils; it comes from the school's strong ethos, which provides clear and consistent expectations throughout the school, coupled with the professionalism of staff in motivating pupils to behave well. The pupils are usually polite to each other and to staff. They are also friendly and courteous to visitors. They move around the school sensibly, for instance when going to assemblies. The pupils are trustworthy in carrying out jobs, such as putting out the chairs for an assembly or sorting recycled paper in a lunch break, without direct supervision. Play at both break and lunchtimes is mainly good-natured, although there are occasional incidents of play fighting. No incidents of bullying were observed during the inspection - although pupils and the school records indicate that some instances do occur. Last year there were 11 fixed term and one permanent exclusions, a very high figure for a primary school. The reasons were justified, mainly for incidents of violence where safety was threatened. The majority of the boys concerned now attend special schools. This year, exclusions have been far fewer in number. Pupils with special educational needs have very positive attitudes to learning in the small specialist teaching groups provided to meet their needs. This is because they have relationships of considerable trust with the members of staff concerned and are highly motivated by them.
6. Pupils' personal development is good, whilst their relationships are very good. They often work together well in lessons in pairs or groups, encouraged by teaching that emphasises this aspect of their work. For example, in an art lesson where pupils produced tessellated designs, they discussed their work with their neighbour very sensibly. In a music lesson, pupils were asked what a piece by Vangelis reminded them of, and they listened to each others' views well, respecting them even when different from their own. Relationships between pupils and their teachers are very productive. Pupils' desire to please their teachers is an important element of encouraging learning in this school. Pupils can empathise with the feelings of others. One example was in a religious education lesson when they role-played Martin Luther King faced with discrimination and were able to understand the emotions generated. In the playground pupils generally play well together. Many pupils display good self-confidence and they talk naturally to adults. It is a pleasure to meet them, although a few can at times be silly and immature. Pupils are very keen to help around the school, volunteering to carry out tasks. For example, at lunchtime older pupils are keen to act as buddies in the infant playground or to go to the Margaret Coates Centre.
7. Pupils' attendance is well below the national average for schools of this type. Unauthorised absence, for which parents have not supplied a reason, is well above average. Attendance registers show that most pupil absence is recorded as sickness, with a trend for such absence to be in whole week blocks. However, holidays taken in term time are running below the level seen in many other schools. It is too early to be able to judge accurately the effect of the high rate of absence on standards. However, it must inevitably be having a negative impact. A significant number of pupils are brought to school a few minutes late in the morning although they do not delay the start to the school day.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

8. The quality of teaching is good overall and pupils learn effectively in most lessons. This contributes well to the good achievement of pupils. The quality of teaching and learning was good or better in over three out of five of the lessons seen. It was very good or excellent in over one out of five of the lessons seen. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. The school has only been open for less than two years following the amalgamation of the junior and infant schools that were on the same site. Therefore the current team has been in place for a relatively short time and several teachers have changed year groups or joined the school this year. Although consistency in teaching is not yet fully embedded, it is a credit to teachers and learning support assistants that there is a general unity of approach to teaching throughout the school. Regular monitoring of teaching and learning by the headteacher and deputy headteacher and effective staff training have contributed to the overall good standard of teaching. Teachers and learning support assistants work well together and share good practice. They also share a determination to improve the quality of learning for all of their pupils. The school has begun to take part in a project that gathers opinions from pupils about what it is like to be a pupil in lessons. This is helping the school to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of different teaching styles throughout the school.
9. Teaching is good overall across the key subjects of English, mathematics, science, and information and communication technology, which results in pupils making good gains in their learning and achieving well or better in these subjects. Teaching is also good overall in art, music and physical education, which contributes to the good and sometimes very good achievement of pupils in these subjects. Not enough lessons were seen in design and technology during the inspection period to make a judgement about teaching in this subject. Teaching of history was only observed in Years 3 to Years 6 and was good, with pupils again achieving well. Teaching is generally satisfactory in religious education and geography. The quality of teaching is good both in the Foundation Stage and in Years 3 to 6. In the Foundation Stage seven out of ten lessons were good or very good. In Years 3 to 6 seven out of ten lessons were good or better and almost three out of ten lessons very good or excellent. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. However, teaching is stronger in Year 1, where six out of ten lessons were good or very good. This gives pupils a good start to Years 1 and 2 and accounts for the good achievement of pupils by the time they reach the end of Year 2. Teaching in Year 2 is satisfactory overall, with three out of ten lessons being good.
10. Basic numeracy skills are taught well, helping pupils to make good progress in many lessons and to achieve well. One reason for this is that teachers have worked hard to implement the National Numeracy Strategy. Other reasons include the often effective support given to pupils of all levels of attainment, as well as those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language. In Years 5 and 6 pupils are grouped by attainment for mathematics, which supports generally well-matched work for the pupils in each set. For example, in an excellent Year 5 lesson for lower attaining pupils, the teacher ensured that very well matched questions were targeted at all pupils, which meant that they were fully involved and all made excellent progress in their knowledge of place value of tens and units. Basic literacy skills are taught satisfactorily overall. Although taught well in the majority of English lessons, which helps pupils to make good progress and to achieve well, teachers do not make enough use of opportunities in other subjects for pupils to practise and extend their writing skills. For example, analysis of pupils' work in history and geography shows that throughout the school opportunities for recording work are limited and the use of different styles of writing to support these subjects are not consistently planned for. English lessons generally give good support to pupils of all levels of attainment, as well as those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language. For example, in a good Year 1 lesson, pupils were well supported by the teacher and two learning support assistants to develop their skills in writing descriptive sentences and recognising the sounds of the letters i and e in words such as 'kite', 'bike' and 'like'. The well-matched work and an emphasis on the vocabulary to be used, ensured that pupils made good progress within the lesson. Pupils receive additional support through the early literacy strategy in Year 1 and the additional literacy strategy in Year 3, which also contributes to their good achievement in English.

11. Pupils with special educational needs receive very good teaching in separate literacy and numeracy lessons in Year 5. In these lessons, as a direct result of the high quality teaching they make very good gains in confidence and understanding and work very hard. Teaching is good overall for pupils with special educational needs, including those with a Statement of Special Educational Needs, throughout the school. Learning support assistants work closely with teachers and provide valuable support for pupils. However, on occasions when teachers are addressing the whole class they sometimes do not use learning support assistants fully. The school makes good use of visiting specialists who run special groups for a few weeks at a time with a specific focus, such as enhancing self-esteem. Pupils appreciate these groups and participate well in them. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are taught well. When appropriate, they receive additional support from specialist teachers and their own class teachers are provided with relevant advice from experts. The teaching of children in the Foundation Stage is good. Teachers and support staff share a very good understanding of how children at this age learn best. They plan for a good curriculum with a suitably high emphasis on child-led activities. However, learning objectives are not always clearly identified to match the needs of different groups of children.
12. In many lessons throughout the school there are strong features that contribute to the good attitudes pupils have towards their learning. Teachers manage their pupils in a consistent and positive way. This is based on the very good relationships between staff and pupils throughout the school. Teachers generally help pupils to meet their high expectations of behaviour and attitudes to work by creating a calm, secure and purposeful atmosphere in lessons. They have a good knowledge of individual pupils, which they use sensitively to support their learning and to promote their self-esteem and personal development. They go out of their way, very successfully, to ensure that every pupil, irrespective of their culture, social background or level of attainment is fully included in all activities and feels fully part of the class. This contributes very well to the very good integration of all pupils across the school and the respect that pupils show for each other. Teachers listen to and value pupils' ideas, helping them to develop their confidence.
13. Other good features include the way that teachers work together well as a team. They plan together in year groups to ensure that pupils in each class have similar opportunities and that work is generally well matched to pupils' needs. However, in a significant minority of lessons observed, and in the analysis of pupils' work, there are examples of similar work and worksheets for pupils irrespective of their attainment. For example, in a satisfactory Year 4 mathematics lesson pupils were set the same task to measure the capacity of a variety of containers. Pupils were given the same worksheet to complete, which prevented higher attaining pupils from designing their own recording sheet or planning their own strategies for estimating and measuring. In an otherwise good Year 3 history lesson, the teacher grouped pupils so that higher attaining pupils could support lower attaining pupils in each group. Although this approach worked well for most groups, in a minority of groups the higher attainers did most of the work and were not always stretched by the task. Teachers plan their work for a period of six weeks at a time to ensure continuity and progression. This planning is monitored by the headteacher, deputy headteacher and subject co-ordinators and, as it is all word-processed, it can be easily accessed through the school's networked computer system. Teachers then plan the six week's work in greater depth for each week. However, this latter planning is not regularly monitored and varies in consistency of approach and detail. Not all weekly planning shows how pupils will be assessed in order to inform future planning or how a task will be changed to meet the needs of all pupils in the class.
14. Teachers brief and deploy their learning support assistants well, so that their skilled support has a positive impact on pupils' learning. Examples were seen of teachers using good questioning skills in whole-class sessions to involve pupils of all levels of attainment and to ensure, for example, that boys and girls were equally involved. However, this is not consistent throughout the school - especially in Years 1 and 2, where the use of questions and pupils' responses is stronger in Year 1 than in Year 2. Teachers are careful to choose resources and interesting activities that are relevant to pupils and arouse their interest. As a result, pupils listen well, are keen to learn and work hard in lessons, showing how well they can concentrate and co-operate together. Teachers use a satisfactory range of assessment strategies, such as questioning, marking of work and observational notes, to monitor pupils' learning and to decide what to teach next. In a very good Year 1 mathematics lesson, the lower attaining pupils were set very well matched work on the

addition of money to 10 pence. This meant that they were able to work unsupported by an adult and made very good progress. Meanwhile, the class teacher and learning support assistant worked with higher attaining pupils to support more difficult work on addition and subtraction of money and giving change when shopping. The higher attaining pupils also made very good progress in the lesson.

15. There were many elements of teaching, where examples of good or very good practice were seen, but where there was some inconsistency between teachers. These frequently made the difference between good, very good and excellent teaching and satisfactory lessons. Many lessons are conducted at a good pace with a good variety of learning activities that keep pupils engaged and help them to concentrate well. However, in a significant minority of lessons, too long is spent on the oral introduction and some pupils become restless and lose interest. Although lessons are planned with clear learning objectives, not all teachers share these effectively with pupils. In the best examples, teachers not only discussed the objectives with pupils so they knew exactly what they should be learning, but also kept pupils tightly focused by returning to them during the lesson. At the end, they encouraged pupils to evaluate their work against them, so that they knew how well they were doing. For example, in a very good Year 6 mathematics lesson, the teacher began the lesson by sharing and discussing the objectives with the pupils. Throughout the lesson he used numerous transparencies projected on to the whiteboard of the tasks and examples of the work being set. Each transparency also showed the relevant objective to consolidate and inform pupils' understanding. At the end of the lesson the pupils were asked to self-evaluate their understanding of the objectives. In some lessons, such continual reviews are too brief and opportunities are lost. Teachers are beginning to set individual targets in English and mathematics to help pupils focus on particular areas for improvement and to move their learning on but they are not always referred to in lessons by the teacher or pupils. The use of pupils' skills in information and communication technology to support their learning in other subjects is good overall.

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

16. Overall, the school provides a good quality curriculum and this is enriched by a very good range of extra-curricular activities and good partnerships with the community. There is a good quality and range of learning opportunities for children in the Foundation Stage. Teachers plan together to provide relevant topics that keep children interested and increase their understanding of the world around them. The school offers a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum for Years 1 to 6. All National Curriculum subjects plus religious education are taught and given appropriate time and attention. The school is meeting statutory requirements for the National Curriculum subjects and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education and collective acts of worship. Overall, the planning and implementation of the curriculum are good. The planning for English and mathematics is firmly based on the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The school has implemented these strategies well. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to apply and develop writing skills across the curriculum. Also, opportunities to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills in a range of subjects are not consistent throughout the school. Pupils' opportunities to apply and develop numeracy skills across the curriculum are satisfactory. National schemes of work for most other subjects have been adopted and the school has modified these appropriately to suit its own specific needs. The planning of the curriculum helps to ensure that pupils acquire knowledge, understanding and skills in a systematic and progressive way as they move through the school. This planning forms a good basis from which teachers can plan their lessons. There are, however, relative weaknesses in the school's provision for geography as pupils have very few opportunities to use grids and coordinates.
17. The school offers a very good range of extra-curricular activities including: computers, cricket, dance, football, gardening, netball, recorders, swimming and 'get set' (a sports club for wheelchair users and their friends, which is a particularly impressive provision). These make a valuable contribution to pupils' academic, physical and social development. There is very good equality of access for children with special educational needs. The school is very welcoming of pupils with physical disabilities or emotional, social and learning difficulties. The quality and usefulness of individual education plans varies considerably. Most have clear targets related to behaviour,

literacy or numeracy - sensibly matched to the pupil's needs. However, in some classes pupils who would benefit from them do not have relevant targets to meet their needs. Pupils with English as an additional language have full access to the curriculum – supported when appropriate by specialist teachers. The school's approaches and strategies for promoting equal opportunities are very good. All pupils in the school, regardless of their attainment, background, gender or nature of their special educational needs, are provided with good quality learning opportunities. The school is particularly successful in ensuring that all pupils are valued and included fully in activities provided.

18. The provision for personal, social and health education and citizenship is sound. The school has a clear policy statement setting out aims and rationale. The programme includes keeping healthy, taking responsibility for the environment, helping others, resolving arguments, growth and change, developing confidence and independence, social justice, making informed choices and being a responsible member of communities. Safety and health issues are promoted well in subjects such as design and technology and physical education. Provision for sex education and teaching about the misuse of drugs is appropriate.
19. The school's links with the community make a good contribution to learning. There are frequent visits out into the rich resources available in Bath, ranging from the Roman baths through to the bakery of a local supermarket - and even a sewerage treatment works. Visitors such as the local policeman and the school nurse enhance personal, social and health education lessons. The school recognises that there are areas where it could make still greater use of the community, especially in fostering pupils' awareness of multi-cultural issues. There are satisfactory links with partner schools. Appropriate liaison arrangements with local secondary schools are in place to ease the transfer of Year 6 pupils to the next stage of their education. Regular meetings are held to improve pupils' continuity of learning when they change school. There are good bridging projects, whereby pupils start a piece of work at St Martin's Garden and complete it at their secondary school. Pupils have a taster day in their chosen secondary school to get to know their tutor and the school layout. The local cluster of schools meets together to discuss issues of common interest and there are some useful contacts with nearby Bath University.
20. A key part of the school's vision, as summarised in the prospectus, is to 'help the children in our care learn to be responsible for themselves, and for their role in the community'. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is successful in meeting these aspirations. Parents agree with this view; the vast majority believing that the school is helping their children to become mature and responsible. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. The school has created a climate in which pupils can flourish, respecting others and receiving respect in return. Throughout the school, teachers value pupils' questions and give them space for their own ideas and thoughts. There are strengths in the informal provision as well as in the more formal aspects, such as in personal, social and health education or religious education lessons. In one religious education lesson on Christian Aid, for example, pupils were helped to appreciate the concept of providing the means for the poor to help themselves rather than just giving them emergency aid. Other subjects contribute well on occasion to developing spiritual values. For example, in one music lesson pupils listened to a piece by Vangelis and were then encouraged to let their imaginations flow before suggesting their views on what the music was describing. Another example of pupils reflecting on feelings was in their writing about World War II evacuees, when they were encouraged to empathise with the emotions of the children involved. Pupils are given the opportunity to explore values and beliefs of various religions through religious education, and the school holds good quality daily acts of collective worship. A whole-school award assembly was a genuinely spiritual occasion with the entire school community coming together, with all year groups joining in enthusiastically. The school's long-established Memorial Garden is beautifully kept by community volunteers and is used sensitively to provide pupils with an experience of tranquillity and introspection amidst the bustle of school life.
21. Provision for moral development is very good. The school has a clear moral code, which is promoted through all aspects of its work. It is expressed in the set of 11 key rights and responsibilities, objectives that underpin the work of the school. They appear on attractive wooden plaques in the school foyer. They are the basis of the home-school agreement and are the basis of

school rules. They make up the core themes for assemblies throughout the year, are the basis for the award of merits and are often alluded to by staff in day-to-day work with pupils. Through this code, pupils are made aware of the difference between right and wrong and are expected to show respect for each other and for the school's accepted codes of behaviour. This is constantly reinforced by teachers and other staff in their day-to-day dealing with pupils. It is this consistency that makes the provision so effective. Teachers set a very good example and expect pupils to behave considerately. Moral issues are considered in some assemblies, as well as in personal, social and health education lessons. For example, one circle time covered the topic 'its not fair', helping pupils to come to terms with frustrations in their own lives in a supportive environment, whilst another attempted a less personal topic, getting pupils to discuss the moral pros and cons of a rat cull on Lundy Island to protect nesting seabirds. Pupils' awareness of the needs of the less fortunate is developed through charitable fund-raising events.

22. Provision for the development of social skills is good. Pupils are encouraged to see themselves as part of a whole-school community, with being 'happy in the company of others' an important element of the school charter. Pupils are helped to resolve conflicts between their own desires and the needs of others, and to develop respect both for themselves and for others. The school provides some useful opportunities for pupils to show initiative and accept responsibility. Many of these are in themselves low key but taken together they show the way that the encouragement of pupil involvement is central to the work of the school. Simple tasks such as tidying the classroom at the end of a lesson are routinely carried out by pupils without fuss. Pupils are proud to be part of the St Martin's Garden community. The house system provides another focus for loyalties. Some school clubs are provided with the specific intention of helping groups of pupils who might otherwise not be able to access the full range of what the school offers. Pupils are regularly given the chance to work collaboratively, developing teamwork skills and learning to value the contribution of others. For example, a large number of pupils play music together at school assemblies – although this is largely an all-girl experience. Friendships and social skills are covered in the personal, social and health education programme, including circle times. Social interaction is also promoted through mainstream extra-curricular activities and on residential and day visits. Pupils' views are sought on issues such as deciding which playground equipment to buy.
23. There is good provision to help pupils develop an understanding of their own and other cultures. The school is very aware of the richness of resource in its local Bath environment and consciously tries to make full use of it. For example, the American Museum provides a fertile resource, which the school uses to encourage pupils' own artwork. Pupils recently participated in the Bath Festival procession in African-style costumes made by themselves. Art displays around the school are of high quality and stimulate pupils' interest. Pupils study artistic traditions and styles from around the world. For example, older pupils have produced some attractive model figures in the style of Giacometti. Geography contributes to pupils' cultural awareness through the study of countries and their ways of life, and past cultures are studied in history. Religious education covers the beliefs and symbols to be found in major world faiths. The drama club entered groups into the Mid-Somerset Festival in mime, choral speaking, group and individual acting categories. The school's own resources are augmented by visitors, including for example a puppet theatre, a Hungarian gypsy band, storytellers and a brass instrument workshop. Pupils visit an Anglican church but not, for example, a synagogue or Hindu temple.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

24. The school's assessment procedures are good overall. It has developed a very good system for monitoring pupils individually from the time of the initial assessment made when they begin the Foundation Stage. Challenging targets are set for all pupils to achieve in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6 and progress towards these targets is carefully monitored. The data is used to help identify those pupils with additional learning needs and to influence the grouping of pupils in English and mathematics. Statutory assessment in English, mathematics and science takes place at the end of Years 2 and 6 and optional tests take place at the end of Years 3, 4 and 5. The results are analysed and are used appropriately to identify any weakness in curriculum coverage and set targets for improvement. Regular mid-term assessments take place in English, mathematics and science in both Years 1 and 2 and Years 3 to 6. The 'Once a Month' book used in Years 1 and 2 provides a good method of building up a picture of pupils' progress and attainment over time and a secure base for setting individual curriculum targets for pupils. However, systematic use of the results of assessment to inform planning and establish attainment groups in lessons is not implemented by all teachers yet. The school has introduced a system of target setting which supports individual progress and helps pupils be clear about what they have to learn next in English and mathematics. This is most effective in classes where teachers refer to the pupils' targets regularly in their teaching and where pupils know what their target is without having to look it up.
25. The school has an effective and manageable system of recording pupils' progress in the National Curriculum but no records are kept of pupils' attainment in religious education. The deputy headteacher has good systems in place for assessing and monitoring the achievement of pupils with special educational needs. However, because the quality of individual education plans varies, so does the quality of day-to-day assessment of pupils with special educational needs. When targets are not set, opportunities to closely assess areas of difficulty are missed. Nevertheless, when pupils are taught in small groups teachers make very good use of their detailed assessments to adjust tasks and questions to suit individual pupils.
26. Procedures for child protection and welfare are satisfactory. The headteacher has received the necessary training and ensures that other staff are aware of their child protection responsibilities and that proper records are kept. Local guidelines are followed and he liaises with social services as required. Pupils are helped to keep themselves safe through the school's personal, social and health education programme, whilst their good relationships with staff mean that they are confident enough to approach them should the need arise. Routine health and safety procedures are in place. Staff and governors regularly monitor the school buildings and grounds for safety. However, no formal risk assessment documentation has been completed in connection with the school itself or for visits by pupils off site. Although there is no implication that safety has been compromised, this procedure needs to be completed.
27. The procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are very good. The school provides a caring environment in which pupils feel safe and valued, allowing them to both develop as individuals and to learn effectively. The school places considerable emphasis on this aspect of its work. There are opportunities in personal, social and health education lessons, including the regular circle time sessions, to deal with any general issues that are raised, but the main strength of the school is in the less formal provision. A significant number of families with pupils in the school are supported by various agencies and the school sometimes is involved in supporting the whole family rather than individual pupils. All teachers are concerned about the pastoral care of their own pupils and try to support the welfare of these individuals when they need it. On occasion, learning support assistants provide one-to-one support to pupils experiencing particular difficulties. Individual teachers know their pupils well and have productive relationships with them. This is a major benefit of the school's small class sizes. The headteacher, his deputy and the special needs co-ordinator are all active in providing support as required. Outside agencies are called in as required, with the school nurse in particular making a positive contribution. The governors are also involved, through their pastoral and personnel committee, in maintaining a register of pupils causing concern. Overall, the school is effective in helping pupils become mature

and responsible individuals and assisting them to face the challenges in their everyday lives. The school has satisfactory procedures to monitor and support attendance. Registers are properly completed, with one minor exception, and the school is active in encouraging parents to provide reasons for their child's absence when necessary. When this does not happen, teachers are able to refer cases to the school office, for staff to telephone parents to obtain reasons. The educational welfare officer is involved as necessary, with procedures up to and including taking parents to court being invoked. However, senior managers are not monitoring registers and there is no clear long-term strategy in place to improve the school's attendance record.

28. The procedures to monitor and promote pupils' behaviour are very good. The school behaviour policy includes guidelines for behaviour management, including the system of rewards and sanctions, and provides good guidance to teachers as to when to apply them. Procedures are based on principles of assertive discipline, so that both staff and pupils know exactly where they stand and what consequences follow what behaviour. As a result of the clear lead provided by senior management, implementation of this policy is consistent across the school. The strong ethos of pupils conforming to the school's expectations means that serious formal sanctions are only rarely invoked. Pupils want to please their teachers and this is a key motivation for good behaviour. Nevertheless, pupils do appreciate the rewards on offer; for example they are very keen for their house to get the most merits for the week, and they themselves are proud when they receive personal recognition. Class teachers are able to deal with most problems as they occur but receive good backup from the headteacher and his deputy when needed. Procedures for dealing with oppressive behaviour are very good. The school's bullying policy is based on a no-blame approach and the empowerment of victims. It is effective and pupils believe that any concerns that they may have will be taken seriously and that they will be dealt with quickly.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

29. Parents hold very positive views about the school. The headteacher and his staff have the confidence of a large proportion of the parent body and this provides a strong foundation for their work. Parents are very supportive of the way the school is being run and the provision the school makes for the education of their children. Parents believe the school is well led and managed and are satisfied with the progress their children are making, the quality of teaching, information from the school, and pupil behaviour. Inspection findings support the positive views held by parents.
30. The school provides good information for parents. In particular, the annual reports to parents on their child's progress are good. They contain useful information on curriculum coverage, what the individual can do, sometimes have targets for improvement and usually include pertinent and supportive personal comments on the child. The school provides three formal opportunities per year for parents to talk to staff about their children's progress and a high proportion of them do attend on these occasions. The prospectus and the governors' report both meet legal requirements. The headteacher holds a strong commitment to see parents as soon as possible should an issue arise. Virtually all parents would feel comfortable about approaching the school with a question or problem, a strong indication that his approach is working exceptionally well. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept fully informed about the support that the school is offering. However, because the two special educational needs co-ordinators have full teaching commitments the school has not started discussing and planning to meet the latest requirements for increasing parents' involvement in setting individual targets for their children. Teachers and support staff in the nursery and reception class welcome contact with parents at the start of each day. This means that there is a good opportunity for parents to share information on a daily basis that keeps staff aware of anything that may affect how a child is learning.
31. It is apparent that parents feel welcome in the school. Large numbers of them accompany younger children into school and they are clearly comfortable doing so. However, overall parents have a limited impact on the work of the school. Few parents take up the school's invitation to help in the classroom, although more will help when asked on a specific occasion such as a trip. Parents are invited to the weekly merit assembly but very few indeed take up the offer. Some parents contribute to children's learning at home, but this is not consistent. Most parents, however, have signed the home-school agreement. There is a handful of dedicated individuals who organise fund-

raising and social events, raising significant sums of money for the benefit of the school. However, the overall contribution of parents to their children's learning is unsatisfactory.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

32. Management at the school is good. This is reflected in the quality of the teaching and the achievement of the pupils. The headteacher provides strong and committed leadership. He has been a significant factor in the successful amalgamation of the school and has a clear vision for its forward development. He is highly influential in the creation of the calm and positive atmosphere which exists at the school. The deputy head has a major complementary role and is a key figure in the school's management structure. He has a very good appreciation of current educational issues, which he has put to good use in the establishment of management systems in the school. In addition to very successfully managing pupil tracking and assessment, he is responsible for a number of other important areas including the school's good information and communication technology provision, dealing with distressed pupils and mentoring new staff. He shares responsibility with the headteacher for the school's very thorough performance management system. As a classroom practitioner, he provides a good role model for others. There is a senior management team which is representative of each stage of education in the school. It meets weekly to discuss concerns and to plan ahead. Co-ordinators are enthusiastic and committed to the forward development of their subjects. They all have some non-teaching time allocated to look at resources and planning and to support their colleagues. Some have had the opportunity to observe teaching, but this is an aspect of their role which is relatively underdeveloped, as most have spent a significant amount of their recent co-ordination time gaining insight into matters relating to the year groups with which they were not involved prior to the amalgamation. The school has appropriately identified developing the role of the co-ordinators in monitoring teaching as one of its targets.
33. The school has made good use of the two special educational needs co-ordinators from each of the previous schools to help the smooth transition to the new amalgamated school. However, neither of these members of staff has sufficient time to plan for the longer-term development of provision for pupils with special educational needs. Senior managers recognise that the school needs to plan strategically in order to fully implement the latest guidance and more closely monitor that good practice is consistently shared. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactorily managed because teachers work together sufficiently to ensure that all children receive a good curriculum with a good emphasis upon play. Leadership has successfully ensured that the outdoor play provision has recently been improved. However, leadership and management do not ensure that the best assessment procedures are shared. This is a highly inclusive school which promotes race equality well. Pupils are prepared very well to take their place in a multi-cultural society. Routine school administration is effective.
34. The governors are hard working and very supportive and fulfil their statutory duties appropriately. They bring a good range of relevant expertise to the role, including among their number, for example, individuals with a background in health and safety, business, health provision, catering and leisure. They have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for further development. There is an appropriate committee structure and committees contribute successfully to the overall efficiency of the governing body. There are named governors for literacy, numeracy and special needs. These, however, are new to their posts and have not yet established their roles fully. Although they keep themselves well informed about developments in the school, the governors' role in strategic monitoring of the curriculum is currently relatively underdeveloped. This, again, is mainly due to their pre-occupation with matters related to the amalgamation. The school improvement plan is a comprehensive working document whose construction involved all relevant parties including the governors and which reflects the school's priorities well. Newly qualified teachers have an appropriate induction programme and are well supported. The school does not suffer from any bureaucratic constraints.
35. Strategies for budget construction are good and reflect the school's needs and aspirations well. The budget is effectively monitored by the staff and governors. The finance committee of the governing body, for example, has an active role and a clear finance policy outlines terms of

delegation to the headteacher. The minor recommendations of the most recent local authority audit have been implemented. The school has sound regard for the principles of best value. There is some consultation with pupils and parents, the school council, for example, having been involved in the recent development of the playground and parents being included in discussions about a race equality policy. All major purchases are only made after competitive tendering. Recent examples of the latter include grounds maintenance and the equipping of the new computer suite. There is some comparison with similar schools using local authority data. The match of teachers and support staff to pupils is better than the national average. Staff are committed to improvement and have the capacity to achieve this. Resources for learning are sufficient overall, with strengths in those available to support mathematics, information and communication technology and physical education. There are relative weaknesses, however, in the provision of non-fiction books in the library. The accommodation – including the external environment of the school – is very good overall. Weaknesses in the building which houses the Margaret Coates centre are currently being addressed through the construction of a new building. Ethos is strong. The school is effective and provides good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

The governors and staff should address the following matters in writing the action plan, in order to raise standards and improve the provision the school makes further:

- (1) Improve standards in writing by:
 - a. providing more planned opportunities for speaking and listening as a preparation for writing;
 - b. providing opportunities for extended writing outside the literacy hour and in subjects across the curriculum.
(see paragraphs 10, 16, 55 and 57)
- (2) Develop a long term strategy for improving attendance.
(see paragraphs 7 and 27)

In addition to these key issues, there are several less important matters that the school should consider for inclusion in the action plan. These involve the use of assessment to inform planning in some lessons, the role of co-ordinators, further raising the achievement of boys and formalising arrangements for risk assessment. Details are found in paragraphs 24, 26, 32 and 54.

THE MARGARET COATES CENTRE

36. The centre provides a good curriculum for pupils with autistic spectrum disorder (ASD). The overall quality of teaching is good. The pupils are very well supported and, as a result, most achieve well and make good progress in overcoming their difficulties. All 14 pupils attending the centre have a Statement of Special Educational Needs. The speech therapist works one day each week. She liaises effectively with the teachers in planning the curriculum in relation to the pupils' speech and language difficulties. One session of music therapy, paid for by parents, is available for a few pupils with severe social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. There are a number of pupils presenting challenging behaviour who are not easily managed. This is made more difficult because of the size and poor quality of the accommodation. The classrooms are too small and do not allow enough personal work areas for pupils who need individual space to work alone. Storage space is also extremely limited. However, a new centre is about to be built. The new centre will be attached to the school by a covered walkway, which should give impetus to inclusion, by providing better liaison and access for the pupils integrating into the main school.
37. Very good teaching was seen in English in one class. The teacher made learning fun by selecting different pupils to choose objects from a box and match them with words they had been learning. For example, one pupil selected a bib and matched this to a flash card with the word 'bib' written on it. Good opportunities were available for the pupils to develop language, and they were praised appropriately for good talking and rewarded with stickers for good progress. Higher attaining pupils were challenged to recognise rhyming words. In the other class, sound numeracy teaching challenged the higher attaining pupils and they learned that when dividing, the sum does not always work out exactly and sometimes you have a remainder. Most were able to apply this knowledge to the task set. However, some time was lost because of some unsatisfactory behaviour by two pupils. The learning support assistants have clearly identified roles. During the inspection they contributed very effectively to all lessons.
38. Good use is made of techniques such as the Treatment and Education of Autistic and related Communication Handicapped Children (TEACCH). This helps to provide appropriate routines and structure. For example, good use is made of a visual timetable for many pupils. Picture Exchange Communication Systems (PECS) are being used effectively to improve communication. The scrutiny of pupils' work showed limited use is being made of information and communication technology. Some examples were seen of a symbol vocabulary being used to improve pupils' language and sentence structure, and the use of digital photography is increasing. However, insufficient thought has been given to exploring how information and communication technology can be used as an aid to communication and to support pupils' learning. Staff training is an issue. Funding has not been allocated for this and in the past the school has had to raise significant sums of money for staff to attend specialist courses for ASD pupils. The school is very committed to inclusion and has been successful in reintegrating one pupil on a full-time basis within the main school. Another pupil is reintegrating for one day each week at his local school. Four other pupils attend lessons in the main school for one half day a week in subjects such as physical education and art and design.
39. The management of the Learning Resource Base is good. Staff work very well together as a team and this is a strong feature of the provision. Pupils are assessed very well and individual education plans are of a high quality and set clear literacy, numeracy and social targets. Teachers use these effectively in their lesson planning. There are good relationships with parents and they are fully involved in the annual reviews of Statements. Statutory requirements in relation to these are fully met. The daily contact books are used well and are an effective means of communication between the parents and the school.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	80
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	37

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	17	32	29	0	0	0
Percentage	2.5	21.25	40	36.25	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)	13	317
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	96

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	8
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	65

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	8

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	50
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	30

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.1

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.3

National comparative data	5.4
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	25	20	45

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	18	23
	Girls	19	19	19
	Total	39	37	42
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87	82	93
	National	84	86	90

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	21	20
	Girls	19	18	19
	Total	35	39	39
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	78	87	87
	National	85	89	89

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	20	29	49

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	16	17
	Girls	25	27	29
	Total	36	43	46
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	73	88	94
	National	75	73	86

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	11	13
	Girls	25	24	26
	Total	35	35	39
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	71	71	80
	National	73	74	82

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	269	7	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	4	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	5	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	1
Black or Black British – African	3	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	2	2	0
Chinese	1	2	0
Any other ethnic group	3	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	1	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)	15.9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.3
Average class size	23.4

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	13
Total aggregate hours worked per week	206

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	17

Financial information

Financial year	2002/2003
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	£
Total income	987461
Total expenditure	965589
Expenditure per pupil	2815
Balance brought forward from previous year	17313
Balance carried forward to next year	21872

Number of pupils per FTE adult	13
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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	2

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	343
Number of questionnaires returned	83

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	79	19	0	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	66	32	1	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	60	30	6	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	59	28	6	1	6
The teaching is good.	77	19	1	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	69	22	8	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	81	18	1	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	78	19	0	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	65	24	9	1	1
The school is well led and managed.	70	24	4	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	66	30	1	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	65	23	2	0	10

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

40. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good. Children achieve well in the nursery and reception class. Teachers and support staff successfully help children to make a good start to their education. Children join the nursery in the autumn term at the age of three in line with the local authority policy. Most attend the nursery part-time for one year and then move into the reception class. A well-planned system of gradually introducing groups of children to the nursery over the first five weeks of term helps to ensure their smooth transition from home to school. This approach provides a good opportunity for parents to get to know staff and helps children to settle confidently into the nursery routines. Very few children have had previous experience of working in groups outside their home when they start school. On entry most girls and boys have limited communication and social skills. They do not speak, nor demonstrate as much curiosity, as is expected for their age. A significant minority of children has special educational needs related to speech and/or language. These children make equally good progress as their peers. When there is a child in the nursery or reception class for whom English is a new and developing language, they also make good progress.
41. Children achieve well because staff have a very good understanding of the needs of children at this age and so they provide a wide variety of interesting and stimulating practical activities for them. This good curriculum together with sensitive intervention from adults and good teaching in all areas of learning means that most children develop and learn at a good and steady rate. Nevertheless, in spite of the strengths of the provision, most children do not reach expected levels of personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development by the time they leave the Foundation Stage. This is because in spite of good progress they do not fully catch up in their communication skills and this affects many elements of these areas of learning. However, more children are closer to expected levels by the end of the reception class than at the beginning of the nursery. Most reach the levels of co-ordination and motor skills expected for their age in physical development with both large movements and small precise use of tools and equipment.
42. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Planning is fully matched to the recommended areas of learning and links activities with topics of relevance to the children such as 'homes'. The good range of activities for both indoors and out with sensitive adult intervention has a positive impact upon children's learning, because they have plenty of opportunities to learn by being actively and practically involved. In both classes, all adults use praise and encouragement very effectively to promote good behaviour in a supportive environment. Consequently relationships between most children and adults are very good. In the nursery the teacher periodically makes focused observations and records of children's progress. This helps her and the nursery nurse to gain a good understanding of each child. However, in the reception class the additional system of jotting down observed achievements on a daily basis means that there is greater focus on adjusting questions to suit individual children and further meet their needs.

Personal, social and emotional development

43. Both classes provide a secure and welcoming environment with adults who are warm and friendly and consistent in their expectations. This helps children to quickly understand the routines and expectations. For example, a child in the nursery who does not speak showed an understanding that it is time to change activity by beginning to pack away the blocks on the carpet. The nursery nurse reinforced this behaviour by politely saying, *'thank you that's very kind'*. Because teachers and support staff consistently set a good example, children in the nursery and reception class gain a good understanding of polite and considerate behaviour. However, children in the nursery call out enthusiastically without realising they need to wait a turn unless they are constantly reminded. Even the youngest children begin to choose what they want to work with and work well independently, although a few take longer than expected to part from their parent or carer

confidently at the start of the day. Older children extend their concentration over longer periods of time in a large group, whether at the start of a numeracy lesson or the introduction to a lesson about tadpoles. On these occasions most concentrate well. Most children share adult attention and limited space with increasing harmony as they move through the nursery and reception class. The books of photographs of their past experiences help to foster a sense of community. However, the vast majority of children do not spontaneously and voluntarily talk about their experiences as much as is expected for their age. They remain more dependent on adults to remind them to take turns and share for longer than is expected. At the end of the reception year most girls and boys do not share ideas with friends as much as is expected, remaining dependent on adults or one of the more confident children to do so.

Communication, language and literacy

44. Both classes provide activities and an environment where children have good opportunities to develop an interest in books and the written word. This was evident in a physical development lesson for nursery children in the hall when the teacher's very good use of the book 'Bears in the Night' helped children to move imaginatively and confidently. Consequently children associate books with enjoyment and in the nursery home corner they share books, turning the pages sensibly and carefully. With support they enjoy finding their name card to put onto the attendance board, indicating that they have arrived in the morning. In the reception class children have a growing understanding that they can be readers. Those who are beginning to recognise familiar words do so with pride and most, but not all, children recognise their first name. Elements of the National Literacy Strategy are used very well to prepare children for joining Year 1. Most parents help their children at home by sharing books with them and helping them to recognise individual words. Nevertheless, most children do not reach the level of confidence that is expected in linking letters with sounds or talking about books.
45. Because all adults in both classes value children's efforts so well, children confidently make marks on paper and as their interest in books grows, so these marks more closely resemble writing. In both classes children are encouraged to make marks freely and to copy an adult's writing - which also contributes to the good progress that children make. Nevertheless, most children do not organise recognisable letters to represent words or phrases to the extent expected for their age. Children's writing is not displayed in the classes as much as their art work and adults' writing. Members of the Foundation Stage team are very aware of the need to develop children's oral skills. They ask children questions throughout activities and set a good example when they speak with children. When staff sensitively ask questions with more than one answer such as, 'What do you like about your room? What is important to you?' children feel sufficiently confident to want to share their ideas. However, because of adults' desire to help they do not always give children sufficient time to answer and talk. Opportunities to give children such time when they are working individually are often missed because staff do not consistently anticipate learning outcomes for individual children when they are working at activities they have chosen themselves. Most of the time most children do not use the breadth of vocabulary, develop their ideas or ask questions as much as is expected for their age.

Mathematical development

46. This area of learning is taught well overall and so children make good progress. Members of staff make suitable use of the outside environment to add interest to mathematical activities through games such as hopscotch. This contributes positively to children's learning. Children enjoy learning number rhymes, such as 'Five speckled frogs', which give them much needed confidence in using number vocabulary. During the inspection, teaching ranged from satisfactory to very good. When teaching was very good in the reception class teachers provided very interesting materials and equipment to stimulate children's interest and contribute to very good rates of learning. This was evident in the use of soft toys to mark a number line and to stimulate children to choose a means of sorting and categorising. Very good teaching is also characterised by giving children good opportunities to learn from each other and by pitching questions and comments to match individual children's needs effectively. In the nursery very good physical development teaching

reinforces children's understanding of the language of position, such as 'through' 'behind' and 'over', which helps them with mathematical ideas.

47. When teaching is good in the nursery an adult uses interesting resources and her good relationships with children to enable them to learn well over a short period of time. For example, during the inspection the nursery nurse played a number game with a small group of children, helping them to recognise numerals on the 'spider's drain pipe' and use dice to count spots and the corresponding number of spaces on the card. Similarly the teacher made good use of 'big' and 'little' items such as toy dinosaurs and spiders to lead a memory game with the whole class. This gave children good opportunities to use some size vocabulary as they identified what was missing from the tray. When teaching is satisfactory adults provide suitable resources, such as 'peg-it animals' and an egg-timer, and encourage children to see how many pieces they can link in 'half a minute'. However, in this situation adults do not plan to focus on modifying what they say and do to meet the needs of different groups of children.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

48. Most children join the nursery with limited experience of the world beyond their home. Teaching is good in this area of learning and helps children to develop their understanding of the world in which they live well. Both classes place a suitably high emphasis upon encouraging children to learn about and respect the natural world. This means that children have good opportunities to learn about the effect of time passing on living things. For example, they watch the effect of time, light and water on growing sunflowers and the development of frogs from tadpoles and frogspawn. This part of the curriculum is successfully enriched by visitors with their babies or pets. In spite of their good progress in observing the natural world and understanding how time passes most children remain more dependent on adults than is expected for their age to help them comment upon what they see.
49. Children have good opportunities to experiment with early scientific ideas such as gravity, force and speed when they shoot toy cars down ramps. Similarly they have good experience of materials changing when they are combined and heated when they make chocolate buns, although the rather old oven does not have a glass window in the door so opportunities to watch cakes rising as they cook are missed! These activities successfully extend children's experience and interest but most do not ask questions or make links between their learning as much as is expected for their age. Children have regular opportunities to use a computer mouse and keyboard to operate programs that are relevant to other learning, such as 'Henry's Farm'. However, there is insufficient evidence to make a judgement on the level of competence they will reach in these skills by the time they join Year 1. The nursery and reception classes provide satisfactory opportunities for children to learn about cultures other than their own. For example, in the nursery children celebrate festivals that are relevant to their friends in the class and in the reception class children celebrated Chinese New Year with costumes and food. This means that children are beginning to know that different people have different beliefs and celebrations. However, resources to support learning about different cultures are limited and teachers do not plan enough to extend children's experience beyond those cultures that are represented within their classes.

Creative development

50. A good curriculum gives children regular opportunities for painting, using different materials to make collage and models, using musical instruments and experimenting with sounds. The quality of teaching and learning in this area of learning is good. Consequently, as children progress through the nursery and reception they become increasingly confident in mixing paint to create a chosen effect, in appreciating the different qualities of different materials and in identifying high and low sounds. Activities such as rolling paper to make a 'house of sticks', fringing paper to depict a 'house of straw' and printing paper to represent a 'house of bricks' make a good contribution to children discovering different techniques with different materials. In the nursery children join large boxes and tubes to represent dinosaurs and as their physical manipulative skills develop they thread wool through holes to make 'spiders' webs'.

51. Because they have a very good understanding of how children in the Foundation Stage learn best, all members of staff provide good opportunities for children to learn through their imagination. Consequently children make good progress in demonstrating their understanding of the world around them in role-play situations, such as the home corner in the nursery or the 'estate agent's office' in the reception class. However, in spite of the good provision, most children play peacefully alongside their peers far more than they collaborate with them. They use their imagination to allow one object to represent another but do not develop shared imaginative stories or sustain a shared idea with peers to the extent expected for their age.

Physical development

52. The school has recently made a considerable financial investment in equipment for nursery children to use outside. There are now very good resources to enable children to develop skills in climbing, pedalling and steering. Both classes have regular access to the school hall and climbing equipment that is suitable for their size. These resources, together with good teaching, help children to develop their skills well and reach expected levels of attainment in this area of learning. Even the youngest nursery children quickly become confident in the large space of the school hall. During the inspection, very good teaching meant that children listened to the journey undertaken by 'bears in the night' before clambering through, round, under and over equipment. Consequently, they developed their physical skills confidently alongside their creative and mathematical understanding. In the reception class children balance and move on apparatus with the level of co-ordination expected for their age. Throughout each day the good variety of activities planned for children means they have good opportunities to practise small and precise movements and control. For example, when nursery children push interlocking equipment together they are learning how to adjust their strength effectively. Similarly, when reception children fold paper tightly to make 'snails' they are increasingly harnessing their strength for a precise purpose. Activities such as these help them to then learn to control a pencil or paintbrush and so support their early writing skills well.

ENGLISH

53. The national tests in 2002 show that Year 2 pupils attained results that were well below the national average, but when compared with similar schools standards of attainment were average in reading and below average in writing. This is because few pupils reached the higher Level 3. Teachers' assessments for the pupils currently in Year 2 indicate that most pupils will attain the expected Level 2 but as in 2002, few pupils will attain Level 3. Inspection findings show that pupils in Year 2 are performing in class at an average standard overall - although they are not attaining as well in writing as in reading. However, this still represents good achievement because pupils enter school with literacy skills that are below average.
54. By the end of Year 6, standards are again average. The national tests in 2002 showed that Year 6 pupils attained results that were in line with the national average but were well above average when compared with similar schools. The number of pupils who reached the higher Level 5 was very high. Inspection findings show that standards in 2003 are lower than in 2002 and that standards in writing are lower than standards in reading. The likely explanation for the difference is the variance in ability of the year groups. However, bearing in mind their attainment on entry, pupils of all levels of ability, including those with special educational needs, achieve well. In the national tests in 2002, girls attained higher standards in English than the boys and this was found to be the case during the inspection.
55. Standards in speaking and listening are at the expected level by the end of Year 2. All pupils understand and respond to a variety of everyday classroom instructions and questions. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 listen well to their teachers and visitors. For example, they sat enthralled as visitors to assembly told the story of Jairus and his daughter. They are keen to respond in question and answer sessions. However, too few opportunities were seen for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills by talking together in pairs or in groups. Teachers provide good models of spoken English and higher and average attainers in Year 2 respond by using properly constructed sentences. Lower attaining pupils speak clearly and politely but find it difficult to explain what they

mean. By the end of Year 6, standards in speaking and listening are average. Pupils can talk satisfactorily in a range of contexts. In one very good lesson, pupils responded very well to their teacher's enthusiasm and contributed keenly to a brainstorm of suitably expressive words for starting a thriller story. In another, pupils showed very good listening skills when they were totally engaged by their teacher's evident pleasure in reading 'Mr Tom'. In Years 3 and 4 pupils are able to improvise and use language appropriate to a situation and character when dramatising a scene from Martin Luther King's life. They are also able to use persuasive language well to argue the case for not smoking. All pupils listen well in assemblies where opportunities are also taken to develop speaking skills. Some pupils in Years 3 to 6 have had the opportunity to compete successfully in the choral speaking section of the Mid-Somerset festival for the last two years.

56. Standards in reading are average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. In Year 2 the higher attaining pupils read with a fair degree of accuracy and fluency. They understand about authors and illustrators and can talk about favourite authors like Shirley Hughes. When reading aloud they use punctuation to guide their expression. Lower attaining pupils read hesitantly and although they know their basic phonic sounds, they are not confident enough to blend them into the new words they meet in their reading book. All pupils enjoy reading to adults both at home and in school but only the higher attainers can offer opinions about events and characters. Their reading records are kept up to date by their teachers and a home school log book encourages parents to record when they have heard their children read at home. In Year 6 most pupils enjoy reading - but discussion with them indicates that when choosing a book in school, their preference is for fiction as they feel there are insufficient books to meet their interests in the non-fiction section of the library. Higher attaining pupils read aloud with confidence and expression and can discuss authors and their style. For example, a Year 6 pupil spoke about Philip Pullman's trilogy with understanding and enthusiasm. Average attainers read fluently and offer opinions with some reference to the text and lower attainers can read simple text with some expression, but often need help to sound out unknown words. Year 6 pupils of all levels of attainment know how to find a book in the library and how to locate information in a book, although lower attaining pupils were hesitant and needed some support. Discussion with pupils indicated that they do not use the library regularly to develop skills and that few pupils use a public library.
57. Although most pupils are reaching the expected levels in writing at the end of Year 2, few are reaching higher ones. Pupils write for a range of purposes including letters, invitations and stories. Higher attaining pupils retell stories accurately and structure their stories well but there are limited opportunities for pupils to produce work of any length either in their English lessons or in other subjects. This means that they do not extend their ideas or select imaginative and interesting vocabulary. Samples of work seen from pupils of all levels of attainment show satisfactory progress over the year in the accuracy of their punctuation and spelling. A recent focus on handwriting has ensured that almost all pupils write clearly and regularly join their letters. Standards in writing are average by the end of Year 6. Higher attaining pupils write fluently and accurately for a range of purposes including narrative, reports, biographies and letters. They adapt their language appropriately for a particular genre. Average and lower attaining pupils write with a growing use of different forms and styles although spelling and punctuation are less accurate. Samples of work indicate that there are limited opportunities for pupils to edit and re-draft their work on a regular basis or to use computers to present writing in a variety of styles. Opportunities for pupils to develop their skill in extended writing across a range of subjects are also limited.
58. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. In Year 6 it is very good. Objectives are usually explained to the pupils at the start of the lesson and in the best lessons pupils are reminded of these throughout the lesson and encouraged to review their success at the end. Where teaching is good or very good, teachers use the information gained from earlier marking and effective questioning during the lesson to ensure that the aims of the next lesson are well matched to pupils' learning needs. However this is not consistent in all classes. Question and answer sessions are used regularly in all classrooms but in many lessons insufficient time is allowed for pupils to think about their answers. In the best lessons, teachers use open-ended questions that require pupils to consider their responses carefully and encourage them to make use of a wider range of interesting words. All teachers use a variety of teaching methods that help to involve all pupils in their learning. For example, in a good lesson in Year 4 pupils discussed the questions

they will use in an interview with a 'Viking' the next day and used a web site to gain the information they needed about Viking life. Teachers' expectations of pupils' behaviour are high and the management of pupils is good. This enables lessons to run smoothly and pupils to learn well. Teaching assistants work well alongside teachers and provide valuable support to pupils with special educational needs, ensuring that they make good progress in lessons. Marking is regular and all teachers use constructive comments to motivate pupils. In some cases teachers provide very good feedback to pupils about their work. However, this is inconsistent across the school.

59. The leadership of the subject is satisfactory. The subject co-ordinator has considerable experience of the Years 1 and 2 curriculum and a satisfactory knowledge of Years 3 to 6 initiatives. She has had limited opportunities to fully monitor the subject throughout the school, but has analysed the results of the national tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The school has identified the need to develop writing as a result of this evaluation. Teachers are knowledgeable and well trained in applying the National Literacy Strategy. Good assessment systems have been introduced which allow the school to track each pupil's progress carefully. Pupils are set individual targets so that they know what they have to do to improve their work, but these are not used consistently across the school and not all pupils know what their targets are. Resources are satisfactory overall with a good range available for delivering the National Literacy Strategy and a well-stocked area containing reading scheme books. The school has recently purchased many new books to expand the library but there are still categories that are under-resourced: for example, music, faith and beliefs and fiction for higher attaining readers.

MATHEMATICS

60. Results of the national tests for 2002 showed pupils' overall attainment by Year 2 to be well below the national average. National tests results for Year 6 pupils in 2002 showed attainment to be above the national average. Inspection evidence indicates that attainment is currently below the national average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 but pupils' achievement is good. The apparent decline in results by Year 6 since 2002 can be attributed to the higher number of pupils with special educational needs in Year 2 and Year 6 and the high number of pupils joining and leaving the school throughout the year. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language achieve well and make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. Although 2002 results indicate a difference between the achievement of boys and girls in Year 6 national tests no evidence was observed of any gender differences during the inspection week and in the analysis of pupils' work.
61. The quality of teaching is good overall throughout the school. The generally good teaching results in good learning in the majority of lessons. No lessons observed were less than satisfactory. Three out of five lessons observed in Years 1 and 2 were good or better, which accounts for the good achievement of pupils. However, the majority of good or better lessons were in Year 1, which gives the pupils a good start to their learning at this stage of their education, but which is not consistently built upon in Year 2. In Years 3 to 6 almost 7 out of 10 lessons were good or better and almost 4 out of 10 lessons very good or better, which results in the good achievement of pupils by Year 6. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and there is a good commitment to raising standards. Lessons are generally taught at a good pace and with a good level of challenge. However, in a minority of lessons, the introductions are too long and pupils become restless or lose focus. For example, in a satisfactory Year 2 lesson the introduction lasted 30 minutes, which left just 10 minutes for group and individual activities. Generally, teachers use activities that motivate and interest pupils, which results in them enjoying mathematics lessons and feeling challenged. For example, in a very good Year 5 lesson with the higher attaining pupils, the teacher's very good use of questions and her very good subject knowledge enthused pupils so that they quickly understood how to calculate the answer to a division sum as a percentage and a fraction. The very good match of work ensured that pupils felt challenged and yet were able to succeed well. At the end of the lesson the teacher brought the pupils together to recap the objectives and to assess their understanding. The pupils were also given the opportunity to self-assess their understanding against the objectives of the lesson. This led to a very good understanding by the pupils of what they had learnt, and also contributed well to their sense of achievement. Teachers use questioning well to assess pupils - but not all use pupils' errors and

misconceptions as further teaching points, or ask pupils to explain and share their personal mental strategies. In a very good Year 6 lesson, the teacher used pupils' errors well to consolidate and develop their understanding of angles and the properties of two-dimensional shapes. Pupils felt confident enough to challenge and question the teacher's explanations, which he used well as a further teaching point. However, in a satisfactory Year 2 lesson, the teacher discussed a strategy for multiplying by 2 but did not ask pupils for their personal strategies to compare and share different methods. The pace of lessons is generally good and ensures pupils are motivated. Although most teachers display the objectives of the lesson, so that pupils know what it is that they will be learning, this is not consistently applied throughout the school. In the best lessons, teachers also refer to the objectives continually throughout the lesson to ensure pupils understood what they were learning and why, and to give pupils the opportunity to self-evaluate their own learning. For example, in a very good Year 1 lesson the teacher referred to the objectives related to addition and subtraction of money throughout the lesson. At the end she recapped the objectives so that the pupils knew if these had been achieved. The teacher also set some challenging questions so that she could also assess pupils' understanding. Lessons are appropriately planned but do not always make specific reference to the individual targets of pupils with special educational needs and Statements of Special Educational Needs. In Years 5 and 6 pupils are set in attainment groups each day, in order to ensure a greater match of work to their abilities and needs. Although planning shows activities and objectives for the different ability groups within a class or set, scrutiny of pupils' work shows that in some classes or sets work for the different ability groups are often the same. Good use is generally made of assessment of pupils against the lesson objectives, which then informs future planning. Work is regularly marked, but not all teachers comment on pupils' strengths and areas for development. Individual targets are not always shared with all pupils. Management of pupils is very good overall and teachers create a good atmosphere for learning.

62. Lessons are well organised and teachers generally apply the components of the National Numeracy Strategy well. Most lessons start with a whole-class mental warm-up session in which teachers involve everyone. However, in some lessons the mental warm-up is too long and pupils lose concentration. In two lessons observed there was no mental warm-up activity. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language are given good support by learning support assistants. These are well briefed by the class teachers about the objectives for the lesson and give good, well balanced, support as required - but also ensure that pupils, especially those with special educational needs, are given the opportunity to work independently on the task set. For example, in a very good Year 1 lesson, the learning support assistant worked with the lower attaining pupils during the introduction but then with higher attaining pupils during the group activity because the lower attainers had been set very well matched work, which allowed them to work without adult support. Trainee teachers and a trainee nursery nurse were also used well in lessons and gave good support for pupils. In a Year 5 set a parent also gave good support for a lower attaining group of pupils.
63. Inspection evidence indicates that the standards between the different strands of the mathematics curriculum are generally similar, except for number work, which is a weakness compared to the others. By the end of Year 2 standards in numeracy are below expectations although pupils achieve well. The majority of pupils can add and subtract two-digit numbers, see patterns in number, continue a sequence to 100 and identify halves and quarters. There was no evidence of the higher attaining pupils using negative numbers and little evidence of pupils using place value to 1000. The analysis of recorded work indicates that pupils do not always show their methods of working out, as they often work in published workbooks, which have little room for pupils to show their methods. Tasks in workbooks are not always completed. Lower attaining pupils are not confident when counting backwards and when solving simple money problems. By the end of Year 6 pupils have a sound recall of number bonds and the strategies for addition, subtraction, multiplication and division of number. They can describe their mental strategies for recalling number facts. The higher attaining pupils can multiply and divide by 10, 100 and 1000 whole numbers and numbers with remainders. The average and higher attainers know the relationship between percentages, fractions and decimals and can use brackets in simple equations appropriately. Lower attaining pupils are beginning to multiply two-digit numbers by a one-digit number with confidence.

64. In their work on shape, space and measurement, Year 2 pupils can describe the properties of two-dimensional shapes and simple three-dimensional shapes using the appropriate vocabulary. By Year 6, they can calculate the area and perimeter of shapes and the average and higher attaining pupils can calculate the angles of a pass in a game of football when the ball is kicked from one player to another. Lower attaining pupils are not confident when classifying three-dimensional shapes by their attributes. The majority of pupils can tell the time using hours, half hours and quarter hours and the average and higher attainers can tell the time on a 24-hour clock. In their work on data handling, Year 2 pupils can construct simple bar graphs of the most popular pets in the class or the outcome of throwing a die a number of times. By Year 6, pupils can construct bar and line graphs of their results and can interrogate the graphs for information. Sound use is made of data handling in other areas of the curriculum. For example, in geography they produce graphs to show the relationship between the speed of flow of a river and the depth and width of the river and in science, a graph of the time of sunset and sunrise over a given period of weeks.
65. Mathematics and numeracy are used satisfactorily across the curriculum but opportunities are not always planned for. In science, Years 5 and 6 pupils use data to produce graphs of water used in the home and of the flow of a river. In design and technology Year 3 pupils design and make photo-frames and measure the dimensions of the frames when planning and the materials used to construct the frame. In history pupils use simple time lines. The co-ordinator manages and leads the subject well. He has a good understanding of the strengths of the subject and areas to develop. He has had the opportunity to monitor teaching and learning and has given staff feedback on strengths and areas for further development. He has identified a personal target to become more familiar with teaching in Years 1 and 2. The use of information and communication technology to support the subject is satisfactory. Not all classes clearly display number lines at touch height and number squares for pupils to refer to. The subject makes a good contribution to the spiritual, moral and social development of pupils. For example, pupils work well together and in the best lessons there is a tangible feeling of success. Pupils are presented with certificates in assemblies for personal success in mathematics. Resources are good.

SCIENCE

66. In the 2002 tests of pupils at the end of Year 6, results were well above the national average and the best of the three assessed subjects. In the same year's teacher assessments of pupils at the end of Year 2, results were below the national average – although in comparison with similar schools, they were average in terms of the percentage reaching the expected Level 2. Standards do vary from year to year as a result of the specific attainment of different groups of pupils. In science, standards are currently around the national average at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. As pupils enter the school with lower than expected knowledge and understanding, this represents good achievement. Girls performed much better than boys in the 2002 tests – but no gender differences were noted during the inspection. The school has managed to keep a reasonable balance between investigative science and the more knowledge-based aspects of the subject through, for example, concentrating on investigative science in Year 6 after the largely knowledge-based tests have been completed. Also, investigations are used to explore scientific information throughout the school. Some aspects of investigative science are not, however, as well developed as they might be.
67. Year 1 pupils are able to name the different parts of plants. By Year 2 they are beginning to recognise that seeds are part of a plant's reproductive system. Year 2 pupils can also construct simple circuits, sort materials according to whether they are natural or man made and make relevant predictions about what will happen when materials such as sugar and chocolate are heated. Year 3 pupils have a sound understanding of the functions of some parts of plants – including stems and roots - although a significant number still do not understand the purpose of others – such as the leaves. By Year 4, the pupils understand the function of switches in electrical circuits. They also have a developing appreciation of which materials make good heat conductors or insulators. Year 5 pupils successfully investigate the conditions needed for successful seed germination. They make appropriate predictions and know key ways in which they can achieve scientific reliability in their experiments. In a very successful Year 6 lesson seen during the

inspection, pupils devised relevant research questions related to air resistance prior to designing an investigation to examine these. Several higher attaining pupils were already thinking about the research implications of their hypotheses. The Year 6 pupils also have a sound understanding of a range of scientific issues such as habitat, adaptation and states of matter. Many, however, find it difficult when asked to define previously learned concepts related to forces such as 'upthrust' and 'balanced forces'.

68. Pupils' attitudes in science lessons are very good overall. Most enjoy the subject and are sometimes enthralled by it. They are usually attentive during preliminary discussions, being prepared to listen to their teachers and to one another – as well as to make their own sensible contributions. When working in groups, they focus well on their tasks and co-operate well with one another. Occasionally, a few pupils chatter inappropriately. Overall behaviour, however, is good. Teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good, but is good overall. Particular strengths of the teaching include the way that the pupils are managed and the methods that are employed. These impact well on attitudes and motivation. Conversely, one weakness seen during the inspection was that discussions are sometimes allowed to go on too long, leading to some pupils becoming restless. Some investigations are too teacher-directed, with pupils not having enough input into the planning. Also, in some cases, the tasks set are not matched finely enough to the needs and attainment of different groups of pupils in the class. This detracts from the development of their scientific skills. In one very good lesson seen during the inspection, there was a very good balance between the different elements and activities proceeded at a very good pace. Discipline was very effective, being largely based on mutual respect. Pupils' opinions were clearly valued and as a result they felt able to express their ideas with confidence. The tasks set contained a good level of scientific challenge.
69. Planning is appropriately based on national guidelines and there are sound assessment strategies in place. There is some use of information and communication technology to support the subject with, for example, Year 6 pupils using a CD-ROM to study aspects of the human body and Year 5 pupils accessing Internet sites to study the water cycle. The school has recently purchased a computer-linked microscope. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and has a good idea of where the subject needs to be developed further. He has scrutinised pupils' work, supported other teachers in lessons and observed some teaching. There is scope, however, for his role in the formal monitoring of teaching in science to be developed further. The school's provision of resources is enhanced by an attractive and regularly used conservation area.

ART AND DESIGN

70. The school's provision for art and design is good. Standards are as expected at the end of Year 2. By the end of Year 6, they are above the expected levels and achievement is very good. There are examples of good and sometimes very good quality art work being produced at all stages of education in the school. In addition to lessons seen during the inspection, judgements are based on the evidence provided by displays and portfolios of pupils' previous work.
71. Year 1 pupils successfully produce pastel drawing of cross-sections of various fruits and vegetables and still life drawings in pencil and crayon of plants they have found in the school grounds. Following a discussion on the work of Monet, Year 2 pupils paint effective textured pictures in the same style using a mixture of powder paint and glue. Throughout the school, the work of major artists – both European and non-European – is used to stimulate and inspire the pupils. Year 4 pupils, for example, construct abstract drawings in the style of Kandinsky, while pupils in Year 6 produce effective paintings that are influenced by the work of Van Gogh. There are examples of good quality work that has been inspired by that of Lowry, Picasso and a number of African, Asian and Aboriginal artists. Media other than paint, pencil and pastel are also employed to good effect. Pupils, for example, have the opportunity to weave and print, and to create designs using batik. During the inspection, Year 4 pupils were beginning to construct relief masks out of 'art-mache' in a 'Viking' style (although these were still of variable quality), while Year 6 pupils produced very effective designs in preparation for the creation of clay pots in the 'art deco' style of Clarice Cliff. Other three-dimensional objects produced by Year 6 pupils include successful wire

and papier-mache figures in the style of Giacometti and imaginative abstract clay models depicting family life, which are reminiscent of the sculptures of Henry Moore.

72. The pupils enjoy art and design. The attitudes and behaviour of most pupils in lessons are consistently good, and are sometimes very good. They listen carefully during initial discussions. When carrying out practical work, they concentrate hard and co-operate well with one another. Teaching is good overall. In one lesson seen during the inspection it was very good. A particular strength of the teaching is the way that the pupils are managed. Discipline is firm but fair and friendly. Explanations are clear and informed, being related usually to the learning objectives of lessons. Questions are open-ended and often challenging, supporting pupils' gains in knowledge. Relevant skills are specifically taught. In an occasional lesson, however, the work provided is not challenging enough.
73. Planning for art and design is relevant and up to date. There is some use of information and communication technology to support the subject – the Internet being used, for example, to look at examples of the work of famous artists. Provision is enhanced by visitors to the school and by visits to places such as the American museum near Bath. The subject co-ordinator is enthusiastic and has a clear view of where the subject now needs to be developed further. Due to other priorities – including the construction of a new topic-related scheme of work for Years 3 to 6 – she has not yet had the opportunity to monitor teaching in the subject. Management in art and design subject is, therefore, sound.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

74. Standards are broadly as expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Most pupils are achieving well in this subject. In a Year 1 lesson seen, pupils were designing a fruit salad. They decided who the salad was for and what fruits they would use. For example, one pupil wanted to create a green fruit salad and chose green grapes, green apples and kiwi fruit. Higher-attaining pupils justified the reasons for their choices. In a Year 2 lesson seen, pupils were making wind-up mechanisms from labelled drawings of their designs. Pupils were inspired by the rhymes of 'Incey Wincey Spider', 'Hickory Dickory Dock' and 'Ding Dong Bell'. They selected from a range of materials and tools for their models. They used suitable tools and techniques to cut, join and assemble materials. They produced effective mechanisms for raising and lowering a spider or a mouse.
75. In Year 4, pupils design and make purses. The design has to be safe, strong and attractive. Pupils choose a range of fabrics for their design including brightly coloured felts. Pupils measure accurately and cut the fabric well. Stitching is used to join the fabric but this does vary in quality. In Year 5, pupils design and make different musical instruments. They make realistic plans of their intentions and produce labelled sketches to communicate their ideas. Different instruments, including drums and maracas, are made using a range of materials including wood, card, rubber and wire. Appropriate cutting and joining techniques are used and the products are attractively finished in paint. Pupils in Year 6 design and make chairs. They produce clear annotated drawings of their designs. Pupils choose a range of materials and tools. One pupil made a model of a deck chair of wood and fabric. In another Year 6 project, pupils design and make slippers. The slippers are designed to be comfortable, practical and fashionable. Pupils measure, cut and join a range of suitable materials. In Year 6 pupils control construction kit models by computer.
76. The quality of teaching is generally good and as a result, pupils make good gains in designing, making and evaluating. Lessons are well planned and clear learning objectives are identified. These are effectively shared with the class - so pupils know what they are to learn. In a good Year 1 lesson seen, pupils were given good opportunities to identify a range of fruits including banana, grape, kiwi fruit and apple. The teacher used the introduction well to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills. Effective questioning was used to check pupils' knowledge of different fruits. For the main task of designing the salad pupils were appropriately organised into groups of similar ability. The task sheets were well matched to pupils' attainment and needs. A student helper was effectively deployed to help groups and individuals. Pupils with special educational needs received good support from the teacher and student and this enabled them to make good progress. In a

good Year 2 lesson seen, pupils were making winding mechanisms. The teacher effectively recapped on previous learning. Pupils were provided with a very good range of material and tools to construct their designs. They were motivated and productive as they worked well individually or in pairs. A student helper was effective in assisting pupils with some difficult techniques such as making a neat hole in a tube. The teacher moved efficiently between groups providing good instruction and feedback. The end of the lesson was used well to share pupils' work and celebrate achievement. Pupils had good opportunities to talk about their work.

77. The leadership and management of the subject are sound. The school has adopted a number of units from national guidelines. While the planning of the design and technology curriculum is satisfactory overall, there are insufficient opportunities in Years 5 and 6 for pupils to work on projects involving cams, gears and pneumatics. Through effective review of the curriculum, the school is aware of this and plans to address this for next year. Learning resources are good. They are well organised and accessible.

GEOGRAPHY

78. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory in this subject. They reach standards similar to most pupils of their age by the end of Years 2 and 6. Only two lessons were observed during the inspection. However, judgements are based on an analysis of a sample of work and discussions with staff and pupils. The satisfactory standards and achievement are helped considerably by the planning for the subject, which is based on national guidance and organised into 'six step' topics. These plans ensure that pupils work their way systematically through the subject. By the end of Year 2 pupils describe the landscape of the fictitious Isle of Struay. Although they identify how characters on the island earn their living, they understand that it is not a real community but is based on a real island. Most pupils use suitable geographical vocabulary to explain that Scotland has 'mountains' and the island is 'off the coast' of Scotland. They add features to an outlined map of the island but do not use a key. However, they describe their routes to school and draw a route that reflects changes of direction as well as significant buildings. They know the names of the main compass points but do not remember their sequence accurately.
79. While younger pupils learn about weather by planning a trip for 'Barnaby Bear', in Year 3 they apply mathematical skills to record temperatures on line graphs and keep a weather diary. This helps them to develop an understanding of climate and its effect on people's lives. This understanding is extended the following year when pupils study Chembakolli in India. This topic provides opportunities for pupils to use a wider variety of maps in atlases to extract information. However, this work is at a superficial level. For example, while listing features of life in Bath and Chembakolli they do not identify similarities and differences. In Year 5, pupils use maps of different scales, such as local maps and maps of the British Isles - but recorded work is very limited and indicates that pupils have very little experience of using grids and coordinates. However, in Year 6 the topic of rivers is supported well by fieldwork, which increases pupils' depth of understanding. During this year pupils also debate the reasons for and impact of changes on a community. This gives them a suitable opportunity to pose and respond to geographical questions. They begin to develop opinions about conservation and pollution that make a good contribution to their moral development. While in their discussions about the impact of traffic on the environment, pupils use arguments that are similar to the level of debate expected for their age, earlier work on the 'water cycle' and mountains and deserts is not as confidently explained. This is because there are often long breaks of more than a term between geography topics. Although standards are broadly average and provision for the subject is satisfactory, insufficient regular contact with the subject prevents standards from being higher.
80. At the time of the inspection the subject co-ordinator was working in the Margaret Coates Centre and senior managers had agreed that - on a temporary basis - leadership of geography would be suspended. However, this decision has been made with the full acknowledgement that the subject is a focus for whole-school development in the next academic year. The school recognises that the subject is not fully exploited. Limited written work means that it does not make the contribution to other subjects that it should. Pupils are not using their literacy skills sufficiently in the subject. During the inspection older pupils spoke of their enjoyment of an old interactive screen

geography resource and it was apparent that the school has software to support the subject in the new computer suite. However, there was no evidence of computer work in geography books - which indicates that the links between the subjects are not made consistently throughout the school.

HISTORY

81. During the inspection week, it was not possible to observe lessons in Years 1 and 2. Therefore, judgements for Years 1 and 2 are based on teachers' planning, assessment records, analysis of pupils' work and discussion with teachers, pupils and the subject co-ordinator. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards are in line with the national average and the achievement of pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, is good. They soundly recall their work and are developing a satisfactory understanding of chronology and of historical facts. Pupils' attitudes to the subject and behaviour in lessons are good.
82. By Year 2, pupils know the main events of the Great Fire of London, the Gunpowder plot and the important moments in the life of Florence Nightingale. They are developing a sound understanding of the differences between past and present. For example, Year 1 pupils compare toys past and present and homes of now and long ago. Year 2 pupils compare objects found in the home today with those found in homes a hundred years ago. Pupils are able to soundly recall their knowledge of important people studied in history; for example Neil Armstrong and the Wright brothers. By Year 6 pupils are able to describe the importance of using historical evidence to compare different aspects of the past, and they understand that evidence can be used to explain the cause and effect of people's actions; for example when explaining the factors that contributed towards a rise in immigration and migration after World War II. They can soundly describe life in Ancient Egypt and Ancient Greece, the life of the rich and poor in Tudor and Victorian times and describe the social changes in Britain from World War II to the present day. Pupils are less secure when describing the difference between primary and secondary sources. Analysis of pupils' work shows that research skills are underdeveloped because of the limited opportunities they are given to research information from books, the school library, CD-ROMs and the Internet.
83. As no lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2, it is not possible to make an overall judgement about teaching. Scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that teaching is at least satisfactory. However, work is often similar in content for different attainment groups within a class and opportunities for extended writing and links to English are missed. Work is generally well presented, which reflects high expectations by teachers. In Years 3 to 6, teaching is good overall and results in good progress in lessons and good achievement by Year 6. Analysis of pupils' work indicates that opportunities for pupils to extend and practise their skills in writing and to research information are not always planned for, with similar work being set for all ability groups within a class. This limits pupils' opportunities to produce structured work from selected sources, to develop their enquiry skills and for the subject to contribute to the pupils' development of literacy skills. Assessment of pupils' work does not always inform planning or support the match of work to meet the different groupings in a class, especially the higher attainers. For example, in an otherwise good Year 4 lesson on the Vikings, all pupils were set the task of ordering pictures and text to sequence how a Viking longboat was built. Pupils were grouped so that higher attaining pupils could support lower attaining pupils. Although the pupils were thoroughly engaged by the tasks, in a minority of groups the lower attaining pupils were not actively involved as the higher attainers led the groups and did the majority of the work. This also restricted the progress of some higher attaining pupils within the lesson. Teachers have good subject knowledge, which often supports good use of questions within a lesson. For example, in a good Year 3 lesson on evacuees, the teacher used questions well to guide pupils to a good understanding of how it must have felt to be a child evacuee during the war. She also drew from an old suitcase items that an evacuee might have taken to his or her new home. As well as items from the 1930s, such as a ration book, a gas mask, a wooden toy and a teddy bear, the teacher also included twenty-first century items such as a mobile phone, suntan oil and a pound coin. Pupils were very quick to discount these items and could explain why, showing a good awareness of chronology. The lesson also contributed well to the spiritual and

social development of the pupils in their empathy for evacuees and provided good opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills

84. The management of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator is well qualified to lead the subject and has identified the strengths and areas for development in the subject. However, she has not yet had the opportunity to monitor teaching or to work alongside colleagues, especially in Years 3 to 6. The use of assessment to inform planning and to track pupils' progress is satisfactory. The use of English, mathematics and information technology to support the subject is satisfactory overall but opportunities are missed. For example, workbooks show limited opportunities for extended writing and few classrooms display timelines to support and develop pupils' sense of chronology and number. However, in a good Year 4 literacy lesson, the teacher linked the work on tenses to the history topic on the Vikings and a group of pupils used laptops to access a Viking web site to research information. Good use is made of visits to support the subject and to give pupils first-hand experience of the topic being studied. For example, Years 3 and 6 visit the Roman baths in Bath and Year 5 visit a Victorian school where they role-play a school day for a Victorian child. Some parents also generously lend artefacts. For example, a Year 3 display used photographs and artefacts from World War II provided by parents. In Year 1 pupils use old toys from home to set up a class toy museum.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

85. By the end of Year 2, standards are at the expected level, while by the end of Year 6, standards are above this. Most pupils, including higher attainers and those with special educational needs, are achieving very well in this subject. A well-planned curriculum and the good and better teaching contribute to the above average standards and the very good achievement. Furthermore, the school has very good information and communication technology facilities and these are used very well. Standards and provision in information and communication technology are one of the school's many strengths. Pupils in Year 2 use word processing to create sentences. They have basic keyboard familiarity and use the shift, space bar and return keys correctly. They use a paint program to create pictures. Pupils choose and paint with different colours and select different brush sizes and different styles such as a spray. For example, one pupil produced a colourful butterfly and other pupils produced bright and attractive firework images. Pupils use a computer program well to identify named parts of the human body.
86. In a Year 4 lesson seen, pupils were creating a booklet on habitats in the computer suite. They produced a contents page and altered their presentation by aligning text. Pupils changed the size and colour of fonts to enhance their presentation. Higher attaining pupils added a table to their text. Pupils in Year 4 have established a partnership with a primary school in Perth, Western Australia. They send and receive emails and have received digital photographs of school activities. Pupils in Year 4 access the Internet to find information about the Vikings. In a Year 5 lesson seen, pupils created a database of results of different football clubs. They set up different fields such as the division, games played, wins, draws, losses, points and the league position. They entered the data from newspaper tables into the fields. Pupils discovered that a computer database is used to sort information. Pupils in Year 6 produce a digital video presentation showing the development and use of information and communication technology at St Martin's Garden. In two Year 6 lessons seen, pupils were creating multimedia presentations on topics such as myself, my family or my pets. They produced attractive backgrounds to their slides. Text editing facilities were used confidently and they imported images from the computer's bank and imported scanned photographs.
87. Pupils with special educational needs use computers well to support their learning. For example, pupils in Year 5 with special educational needs use 'talking book' programs to help develop their vocabulary, reading and comprehension. The quality of teaching seen during the inspection was good overall with an example of excellent teaching, and pupils make good gains in the acquisition and application of information and communication technology skills. Lessons are well planned and clear learning objectives are identified. Teachers' explanations, instructions and demonstrations are clear and informative. Pupils are attentive. They watch demonstrations carefully and listen to teachers' instructions well. When in the computer suite, teachers make good use of the digital

projector and screen to demonstrate information and communication technology skills and techniques to the class. For example, in a very good mathematics lesson in Year 5, the teacher used the digital projector and screen and a computer program very well to demonstrate the reading of a measuring cylinder. The filling of the measuring cylinder could be controlled by the teacher and the scale could be altered. Pupils made very good gains in reading a measuring cylinder and in the understanding of scale. Pupils are given very good opportunities to practise and develop information and communication technology skills. For most activities, pupils work in pairs at computers and their skills of collaborative working are very well developed. Pupils enjoy information and communication technology. They are highly motivated and show very good levels of concentration. They are productive and apply considerable effort to tasks. Teachers and learning support assistants move efficiently between pairs and individuals providing clear instruction and feedback. In an excellent lesson seen in Year 6, there were high levels of challenge and the lesson maintained a brisk pace. The teacher was very effective in monitoring the progress of the whole class. He moved between pairs and individuals, providing high quality tuition and constructive feedback. Praise was used very well for outstanding work and this motivated pupils further. Pupils made excellent progress in practising and applying the skills of editing text and importing images. There are some very good examples of information and communication technology being used to support teaching and learning in other subjects, particularly in mathematics and history. The improvement of writing is a priority in the school's planning. However, pupils are not using word processing sufficiently to develop their writing skills. The power of word processing for drafting and editing writing is not yet fully realised.

88. The subject is very well led and managed by an enthusiastic co-ordinator who possesses considerable expertise. The monitoring and evaluation of the subject are very good. This includes class observations, viewing teachers' planning and the study of pupils' work. The co-ordinator also teaches information and communication technology throughout the school. As a consequence, he has a very good overview of standards and provision across the school. The school uses the nationally recommended guidelines for its schemes of work. These are well implemented and help to ensure that pupils acquire knowledge and skills in a steady and systematic way as they move through the school. The school has an effective and manageable system for assessing and recording pupils' attainment. All teachers have received recent training using New Opportunities Funding. In addition to this, there is effective sharing of expertise among the staff. The effective training and good support have increased teachers' confidence and expertise and these have contributed to the successful development of the subject and the above average standards attained by the end of Year 6. The school has a very good computer suite with 15 networked computers. A digital projector and screen are used well in the suite for demonstrating information and communication technology skills. There are computers in all classrooms and each class has a digital camera. In addition to this, there are 30 laptop computers with the latest wireless technology. These are housed on a trolley and are used well as they are moved from class to class to support teaching and learning across the curriculum. The governors have been proactive and supportive in the development of information and communication technology at the school.

MUSIC

89. Standards in music are at the expected levels at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils' achievement is good. Most Year 1 pupils, for example, can differentiate between rhythm and beat – although many find it difficult to explain their rationale for this. They accompany familiar songs with rhythmical sounds and body percussion. Year 2 pupils can recognise the difference between long and short sounds in a piece of music and successfully replicate these – again using body percussion. By the time they reach Year 4, pupils are able to identify repeating patterns in a piece of music and have a developing understanding of the use of simple notation. Year 5 pupils exhibit a good sense of rhythm when performing a short piece of African music and song. Year 6 pupils interpret an excerpt from a piece of music by Vangelis and hum it well. The overall quality of singing – in assemblies for example – is sound and often enthusiastic. Assemblies are also used successfully to explore the background and particular qualities of the work of well-known composers.

90. Pupils' attitudes in music lessons are always at least good and are often very good. Most thoroughly enjoy the activities that are provided for them and participate with confidence and enthusiasm. Their behaviour and relationships are good overall and, when appropriate, they share instruments well with one another. Very occasionally, their very enthusiasm leads to them becoming over-excited and a little noisy. Teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good, and is good overall. Pupil management is usually firm but very positive, contributing well to the behaviour seen in lessons. The most successful lessons are delivered confidently and to clear objectives. Tasks are clearly explained and the teacher's own enthusiasm impacts very well on pupils' motivation and pace of learning. Stimulating resources such as African instruments and recorded music are employed effectively to interest the pupils. In an occasional - relatively less successful - lesson, tasks provided are not challenging enough for some of the pupils.
91. The school has recently introduced a commercial scheme of work that fully complies with the requirements of the National Curriculum. It has yet, however, to fully embed successfully into classroom practice. Overall provision is enhanced by whole-school productions, peripatetic instrumental tuition and extra-curricular recorder clubs. A significant number of pupils have the opportunity to play instruments during assemblies. There is some use of information and communication technology to support the subject and the school improvement plan has identified this as an area that is to be developed further. The co-ordinator is very knowledgeable and has a significant advisory role within the school. He has, however, only had limited opportunities so far to observe music teaching in a structured way and overall management of the subject is, therefore, satisfactory.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

92. During the inspection, a games lesson was seen in Year 2 and swimming lessons were seen in Years 3 and 6. Discussions with staff and the study of teachers' planning indicate that a full range of physical education activities is provided. Standards are average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and most pupils are achieving well in this subject. Pupils achieve well because the teaching is good and a very good range of extra-curricular activities enriches the physical education programme. In a Year 2 lesson seen, pupils demonstrated catching and throwing skills appropriate to their age. They applied the skills of sending and receiving a ball to a team game situation. Skills in evaluating their own and each other's performance are less well developed. By the end of Year 6, most pupils are confident in the water and perform safely. Pupils demonstrate a range of swimming strokes such as front and back crawl. Higher attaining pupils swim with additional style and speed. They easily exceed the expected standard of swimming 25 metres. Pupils measure and record the speed of pupils' swimming accurately using a stopwatch. They appraise each other's performance constructively.
93. The quality of teaching is good overall and pupils make good gains in developing skills. Lessons are well planned with clear learning objectives and an appropriate range of activities. Teachers' instructions and demonstrations are clear and informative. Pupils listen and watch these attentively and follow instructions well. Teachers use other pupils well to demonstrate skills to the class as a model to others. Pupils are given good opportunities to practise and refine skills. Teachers give effective feedback on pupils' performance and this helps them to improve further. Pupils show interest and enthusiasm for games and swimming and apply concentration and physical effort to their work. Pupils are well managed by teachers and as a result, behaviour is good. Pupils operate safely and responsibly. Equipment and learning resources are well used to promote learning. In Year 2, pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to discuss the differences in performances and suggest improvements.
94. The subject is effectively led and managed by the co-ordinator. The planning of the curriculum is good and is appropriately based on national guidance. Assessment and recording of pupils' attainment is an area for further development. A very good range of extra-curricular activities including basketball, cricket, dance, football, gymnastics and netball enriches the school's physical education programme. The school has good links with the local secondary school. For example, a teacher from there runs the gymnastics club. The school also has effective partnership with local sports organisations such as Bath Buccaneers Junior Hockey Club and Somerset

County Cricket Club. Coaching from specialists enhances the teaching of physical education. The accommodation and facilities are very good with two large halls, an enclosed swimming pool and spacious and well-maintained playing fields. Learning resources and equipment for physical education are of good quality.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

95. During the inspection week it was only possible to observe one lesson in Years 1 and 2 and three lessons in Years 3 to 6. Therefore, judgements are based on these lessons, scrutiny of pupils' work, teachers' planning and discussions with teachers and pupils. By the end of Years 2 and 6 standards are in line with the expectation of the Somerset Locally Agreed Syllabus and their achievement has been good. By the end of Year 2, pupils know the importance of the Bible to Christians and enjoy retelling their favourite stories such as Jonah and the Whale or Ruth and Naomi. They are able to explain what they think is important in the stories. For example, they think that 'Ruth is doing the right thing by staying with Naomi'. Pupils are learning about themselves and are developing sensitivity and understanding. They can talk about their feelings and what is special to them; for example their families and the natural world. They know that the Church is a special place and that Christmas and Easter are special times for Christians.
96. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a sound knowledge of the key beliefs of Christianity, Judaism and Islam. They are able to identify and compare some features of religious practice in daily life. For example they know that Shabbat is designated a day of rest in Jewish belief and that this is different from Christian practice. They explain the meanings contained in religious stories and although they are not able to identify 'The Sower' as a parable, they talk about the meaning it would have for Christians. Pupils demonstrate factual knowledge of all three religions. For example, they explain that the Koran is the sacred book of Islam and know how it should be stored and handled. Pupils understand that there are connections between their personal experiences and those of others. They show empathy with those that grieve when they explain the reason for the Memorial Garden at school and how they feel when they visit it. In the lessons seen, the quality of teaching and learning was at least satisfactory. In a good lesson observed in Year 5, the teacher's skilful use of drama techniques and sensitive support enabled the pupils to articulate the links between Martin Luther King's religious belief and his leadership of the civil rights movement. Pupils listened well to one another and were eager to contribute their ideas sensibly. The lesson also contributed very well to literacy and to the development of speaking and listening skills. In a lesson seen in Year 1, the teacher had assembled a very carefully chosen selection of special and everyday objects for the pupils to sort and sound links were made between these items and the special events in the life of a Christian, such as Christmas and marriage.
97. The co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator is new to the role and has updated the policy and monitored resources, which are satisfactory, since her appointment. She has yet to monitor planning, pupils' work or teaching in the subject. There is no evidence that pupils use the library for research purposes in this subject and book provision in the library is not sufficient. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution to the pupils' moral, social and cultural development through opportunities provided in lessons for reflection and discussion. There is no evidence that information and communication technology is used to support religious education. The assessment of pupils' progress in religious education is not satisfactory. There is no system for assessing pupils' learning in the subject either at the end of a lesson or of a unit of work and no records are kept of pupils' attainment.