

ERRATUM SLIP

Oughton Primary and Nursery School

Unique Reference Number: 133323
Contract Number: 249056
Date of inspection: 19/05/03
Reporting inspector: Dennis Maxwell

INSPECTION REPORT - the following paragraph should read as follows:-

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

56. The governing body takes an active role in shaping the direction of the school and it fulfils its responsibilities and statutory duties well. The governors have established good procedures to visit the school and form an independent view of its needs and progress. The financial planning is good in support of the identified priorities, such as making decisions to employ further support staff to help with pupils' personal development. The headteacher and governors have established good oversight of the finances and the budget. They have applied for and obtained additional grants for school improvements such as the Breakfast Club and for the removal of two mobile classrooms and their replacement by a new one. Specific grants are used well for their designated purposes. They make careful comparisons with local financial benchmarks and use these effectively in their decisions. In an example of good practice, the budget is spent prudently and is monitored monthly. Governors apply the principles of best value by making comparisons and obtaining competitive tendering when considering improvements and efficiency, with standards in mind. Very little funding is spent on normal staff absence, which relates to the strong support for and inclusion of staff to school developments. Funding for special educational needs is prudently and well used and money obtained through the standards fund is used effectively. The financial control is good. At the time of amalgamation there was a large carry forward figure from the budget of the previous year. Half of this represents liabilities and a further quarter relates to capital items. The excess of income over expenditure for the last financial year, representing 6 per cent, is a reasonably prudent figure when the governors have further financial decisions to make about the costs of setting up a new school.

INSPECTION REPORT

OUGHTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Hitchin, Hertfordshire

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 133323

Headteacher: Mr Robert Dean

Reporting inspector: Mr Dennis Maxwell
8864

Dates of inspection: 19 - 22 May 2003

Inspection number: 249056

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior Mixed Infant plus Nursery
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Mattocke Road Hitchin
Postcode:	SG5 2NZ
Telephone number:	01462 450716
Fax number:	01462 431990
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Joan Kirby
Date of previous inspection:	N/a

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
8798	Dennis Maxwell	Registered inspector	Physical education Foundation Stage English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? a) The school's results and achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
10329	Brian Sampson	Lay inspector		How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
8864	Peter Clifton	Team inspector	History Mathematics Music Religious education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
13805	Lynn Lowery	Team inspector	Art and design Design and technology Geography Science Educational inclusion	
18116	Christopher Taylor	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology Special educational needs	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Oughton Primary and Nursery is a new community school for pupils aged three to 11 years, formed from the amalgamation and development of the previous infant and junior schools. It is situated adjacent to an area of private housing and a large local authority housing estate close to the centre of Hitchin, Hertfordshire. Pupils come from a mixture of social and private housing and overall the socio-economic circumstances of the community serving the school are much less favourable than usual. There are 223 pupils on roll and a further 22 part-time children in the Nursery, with about equal numbers of boys and girls. The school is similar in size to the average for primary schools. A higher proportion of pupils than usual comes from ethnic minority heritages and the percentage of pupils whose mother tongue is not English is much higher than in most schools. The proportion of pupils known to be entitled to free school meals, at 27 per cent, is above average. More pupils than usual leave or join the school other than at the usual time and this has a lowering effect on standards. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs is average, and most of these have communication difficulties. Five pupils have a Statement of Special Education Needs, which is above average, and a Unit for pupils with emotional and behavioural needs is also placed in the school. The six pupils attached to the Unit each has a Statement. Overall, the children's attainment on entry to the school is well below average. The members of staff have put in a great deal of work to establish this as a primary school and they are working towards renewing the Investors in People Award and gaining the Quality Mark and the Healthy Schools Award.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a happy and busy school, with many good features, that is a focus for the whole community. It provides a satisfactory standard of education and has made great strides in the short time since the amalgamation as a result of the drive, vision and strong leadership of the headteacher. There is very good teamwork and a commitment by all members of staff for the pupils' welfare and education. Standards in English by Year 6 are judged as broadly average by the inspection team, indicating considerable success in raising pupils' attainment from entry to the school. Standards overall, taking account of all subjects, are below average. The quality of teaching in the school varies between the infants and the juniors and between subjects, but was good overall. Teaching is having a significant impact on pupils' learning in English and a number of other subjects by addressing the needs of all groups of pupils. Leadership and management are good overall. Many aspects of the school's life and work are running well - interesting work for the pupils, promotion of good behaviour, effective leadership for the direction of the school. However, several areas are not yet developed and operating consistently, which have already been identified by the school, such as procedures for checking pupils' progress. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The attitudes of the great majority of pupils to their work are good. Relationship between the staff and pupils are good.
- The teaching of English, and of reading in particular, is good so that pupils make good progress through the school.
- The curriculum for children in the Nursery and Reception classes is good.
- The school provides well for the personal development of all pupils and for their social and health education.
- Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and for those with English as an additional language is good. The learning needs of all pupils are treated with individual care.
- The school looks after pupils very well. It provides a safe and caring environment in which to learn. Teachers and support staff spend a lot of time helping children to overcome their personal difficulties so that they are ready to learn.
- The headteacher, the senior staff and the governors provide good leadership and management.

What could be improved

- Standards are too low, particularly in speaking and listening, handwriting in Years 5 and 6, mathematics and science.
- The subjects of the curriculum are not all planned sufficiently for coverage and progression year by year.
- Not enough attention is given to developing higher levels of skills and thinking, such as giving explanations and reasons.
- Subject leaders do not sufficiently influence the development of their subjects across the school.
- Teachers do not use sufficiently what they know about pupils' levels of attainment in planning for what they need to learn next.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

This section is not applicable since Oughton Primary and Nursery is a new school, formed in 2001.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	2000	2001	2002	2002	
English	N/A	N/A	D	C	well above average A above average B Average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	N/A	N/A	E	D	
Science	N/A	N/A	E	D	

Standards in current work as seen by the inspectors are broadly average in English and literacy, and below average in mathematics and numeracy and in science by the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils achieve satisfactorily although they make better progress than expected overall from the time they enter the Nursery to Year 6 as a result of the good teaching and care. Overall standards improve from well below average on entry to the school to below average by the end of Year 6. The higher-attaining pupils reach above average standards and generally produce examples of good quality work since teachers often give them more challenging work to do. Pupils with learning difficulties or with English as an additional language make progress in line with their peers. Standards in design and technology meet the expectation by Years 2 and 6, and standards in communication and information technology (ICT) meet the expectation by Year 2. Standards in the work seen in the other subjects are below the expectation by Years 2 and 6. This is often because pupils experience difficulty in explaining their ideas or methods, in giving reasons for why things happen and describing objects accurately. For example in Year 3 pupils were not able to describe mathematical shapes using simple properties. It also reflects weaker aspects of assessment and curriculum planning. Pupils have difficulty in applying their writing, numeracy and ICT skills to other subjects.

The table above shows that standards in the 2002 national tests were below the national average in English and well below in mathematics and science. These lower than average results are largely explained by the small proportion of pupils gaining the higher Level 5 in the tests, which was predicted by the school, and the numbers of pupils with learning difficulties. In comparison with schools having a similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals, which is a fairer comparison, standards were average in English and below average in mathematics and science. The school has a higher number than usual of pupils who leave or join the school other than at the usual times. This also has a lowering effect on national test results since some of those joining the school have learning, personal and behavioural needs

that affect their readiness to learn. As a result, more pupils than usual attain the lower levels in the national tests. At Year 2, standards in reading were well below average and standards in writing and mathematics were very low and in the lowest five per cent nationally. However, the school met its targets for English and mathematics in 2002 for the proportion of pupils gaining or exceeding the expected standard; and the value added from Year 2 to Year 6 was better than satisfactory. The school has also set challenging targets for 2003 and is on course to meet them through the effective teaching in Year 6. Since this is a new primary school there is no information for previous years to indicate trends.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. The attitudes of the great majority of pupils are good and contribute well towards the success of their learning. They take a good interest in their tasks although a significant minority of pupils finds concentration difficult without support.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good overall. The great majority of pupils behaves well and responds to the school's expectation. A significant number of children has severe behavioural problems which affect their learning, but which are handled well by the teachers and support staff. Pupils in the school's behavioural Unit are managed particularly well.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory overall. Relationships between members of staff and the pupils are good, which encourages them to learn. Many pupils are reluctant to take responsibility for their own learning although they willingly take on duties around the school. There is a newly formed school council to promote their personal development.
Attendance	The level of attendance was below the national average for the last school year but it has improved this year to broadly average levels through the school's efforts.

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.

The overall quality of teaching and learning in the lessons observed during the inspection and as indicated by pupils' recent work is good. The teaching of English and literacy, of mathematics and numeracy and of science is satisfactory in Years 1 - 2 and good in Years 3 - 6. A significant proportion of teaching is very good in the junior classes and has a direct, positive impact on standards. In their teaching, as well as around the school, members of staff have rightly promoted good behaviour as the highest priority towards raising standards. Parents comment that behaviour has improved significantly over the past two years and the good behaviour observed during the inspection has established the conditions where, effective learning can take place. The process of promoting pupils' independence begins well in the Nursery and Reception classes and continues through the school. It is reasonably successful but is affected by the difficulty many pupils experience in accepting responsibility for their own learning. In general, teachers prepare and provide well for all groups of pupils, although pupils of the same age but in different classes do not always receive work of a similar challenge. There are also variations in how well work is matched to pupils' needs, because arrangements to track pupils' progress are at an early stage. The teaching of basic skills is broadly satisfactory although opportunities are missed to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills, and

higher level skills such as explaining and reasoning. The teachers in the Nursery and Reception classes promote the development of all the areas of learning for young children. Some teachers lack confidence in the teaching of some subjects. This is explained partly by the very large turnover of staff in the recently formed school. Subject leaders except for those co-ordinating Mathematics and Literacy, are also at the early stage of developing their role and are only just beginning to provide good support for colleagues. Teaching is good in the Unit, and for pupils with special educational needs in school. Teaching for pupils with English as an additional language is also of good quality.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Broadly satisfactory. The current focus on English has resulted in good provision. The school's planned curriculum meets statutory requirements. Teachers usually choose worthwhile tasks but in art, geography and history not enough thought is given to the progressive development of skills.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils with learning difficulties receive good specialist attention and are well supported in lessons. The school fully complies with statutory requirements and teachers are versed in the requirements of the Code of Practice. More arrangements could be made to integrate pupils from the Unit into classes for some lessons.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. All pupils are included well in the activities. All adults consider pupils' individual needs carefully and give good attention to their communication skills. The pupils benefit from the expertise of committed support teachers.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The school provides good opportunities to encourage spiritual, moral and social understanding. Assemblies confirm the school's values well, shown well in a class assembly that we all rely on everyone's contribution to society. Provision for cultural understanding is satisfactory and visits help to broaden pupils' experience.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school looks after the pupils very well. The headteacher gives a strong lead in managing and supporting pupils' personal welfare. Teaching assistants give thoughtful support. The school has made a useful start in setting up assessment procedures but they are still unsatisfactory overall.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	Satisfactory. There is an improving pattern of parents' attendance at their child's consultation evenings although many parents still do not do enough to help their children's learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good overall. The headteacher gives very good, strong leadership so that there is a busy and purposeful atmosphere. The deputy headteacher provides perceptive guidance as part of an effective senior management team. Leadership and management combine strategic development well with the demands of daily problems. The current school improvement plan provides good direction although the school has yet to prepare a draft of the next one.
How well the governors fulfil	The governors make carefully considered and well-informed decisions that

their responsibilities	are designed to improve the condition of the school and raise standards.
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The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory overall. The senior staff has good insight about the school's strengths and weaknesses through good monitoring. They have taken insufficient action on some matters, however; for example, in the use of curriculum and assessment information, although this is planned.
The strategic use of resources	The teachers and assistants are generally deployed well to promote pupils' learning. Specific grants are used well and the school office runs smoothly. The school applies the principles of obtaining best value in financial decisions.

The level of staffing is satisfactory though there has been such a high turnover recently. The accommodation is very good with many interesting facilities such as a very good library that is used extensively. There are many attractive displays that show the value placed on children's work. The quality and range of resources are satisfactory overall; for English they are very good and for ICT good. There are insufficient resources for the Unit.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents find their children like school and that behaviour is good. • Teaching is good and children are expected to work hard. • The school is led and managed well and it works closely with parents so that they feel able to mention a problem. • There is a good range of after-school clubs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A few parents think their children do not make good progress. • A few parents think the amount of homework is not right. • A few parents think the school is not helping their children to become mature and responsible.

Very few parents returned the questionnaire and very few parents attended the pre-inspection meeting, so that the above views may not be fully representative. The inspectors found that the great majority of parents they were able to speak with had a good opinion of the school and appreciated the effort made by teachers and support staff. They agree with the parents' positive opinions. The school is still in the process of settling down so that progress has been uneven in some classes, but progress is satisfactory overall. Also, a suitable amount of homework is usually given. Inspectors find that the school works hard to help the pupils to grow into mature young people.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Standards of current work seen during the inspection are broadly average in English and below average in mathematics and science by Years 2 and 6. There is evidence of some uneven development of skills in several subjects and classes. This is as a result of variation in the quality of teaching, the high turnover of teaching staff and the time taken to put consistent provision together for the new school by the new headteacher and staff. The school's initial assessments of children as they enter the school in the Nursery, and inspection evidence, indicate that attainment on entry to the school is well below average, and particularly weak in language and literacy. Children achieve satisfactorily from entry to the school to the end of Reception, with elements of good progress. Standards are well below expected levels in speaking and early reading and writing skills and below expected levels in most other areas by the time they enter Year 1, although several children are on course to meet the expectations and a few higher-attaining children exceed them. Progress is also satisfactory in Years 1 to 2 and in Years 3 to 6 as pupils consolidate previous learning and acquire new skills. Overall, pupils are achieving a little better than expected from when they enter the Nursery to Year 6, with stronger achievement currently noted in English.
2. Standards in the 2002 national tests in Year 2 were well below the national average in writing and very low in reading and in mathematics, being in the lowest five per cent nationally. In comparison with similar schools, standards were well below average in writing and mathematics and very low in reading. The performance of boys and girls was similarly below the boys' and girls' national averages in all the tests. Relatively few pupils gained the higher levels in any of the tests and many more pupils performed at the lower levels and these results broadly matched the school's expectations for this cohort of pupils. The school has put procedures and planning systems in place to support teachers, and introduced early literacy support and additional literacy support for the pupils, all of which are beginning to promote pupils' learning well.
3. Standards in the 2002 national tests at Year 6 were below the national average in English and well below in mathematics and science. In comparison with similar schools, standards were average in English and below average in mathematics and science. A lower percentage than usual exceeded the expectation in all three subjects and more pupils did not reach the expectation, leading to the below average standards. The standards observed during the inspection represent an improvement in standards compared with the results of the national tests of 2002. This improvement is related to particularly strong teaching in Year 6 as well as the focus on improving behaviour. Pupils' progress over time is satisfactory but more recent progress as observed in pupils' work and in lessons is often good. There was no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls in 2002 although boys attained rather better in comparison with the boys' national average than the girls did in comparison with the girls' national average.
4. In many lessons in English during the inspection, pupils were seen to learn well as a result of good teaching. Many enter school with a poor vocabulary and have little confidence in speaking. Their speaking and listening skills are below average throughout the school. Despite the school's good focus on developing these skills, for example in class assemblies, significant numbers of pupils still lack confidence in speaking by Year 6. Pupils' handwriting skills are below average in Years 5 and 6 since they have not been taught effectively in the past, but pupils in other year groups are learning to write with a legible, joined script. Standards in reading are better and are close to the national average. By the end of Year 2 most pupils read with fluency and expression. Most pupils in Year 6 are confident and independent readers, indicating preferences for particular authors. The higher-attaining readers are beginning to discuss the interaction between plot and characters. Pupils' work illustrates good attempts at independent writing. There are examples of the good use of writing in subjects other than English. Information and communication technology, (ICT), however, is used to a limited extent to support the development of literacy skills.

5. In mathematics, standards are below average. Pupils' attainment across the school in number is slightly stronger than the other areas. There is a relative weakness in handling data, both in using and applying data and representing and interpreting data, because there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to practise and improve these skills. The progress that pupils make is better when they receive adult support directly since their capacity for personal study is limited. The Year 6 pupils are beginning to develop the confidence to tackle word problems on their own. Pupils' problem solving skills are weak and they have great difficulty in giving reasons and explanations, partly because there are too few opportunities for them to do so.
6. Standards are below average in science. By Year 2 pupils follow instructions to carry out simple investigations and are beginning to understand about controlling their tests. Pupils understand that some foods are healthy and know that substances such as ice and chocolate melt when they are heated. Their ability to use scientific terms to explain what they have seen is limited. By the end of Year 6, most pupils carry out investigations with reasonable fairness, making sensible predictions and recording their results following the teachers' instructions. Their limited skills in numeracy and literacy affect the standards they achieve adversely. They know how to separate mixtures by various methods but struggle to explain what they have done and their written work is a general weakness; teachers do not provide enough specific language support. Since January this year, the emphasis on practising for the national tests has reduced the time available for Year 6 pupils to develop their investigative skills to the required level.
7. Standards meet the expectation in design and technology (D&T) and ICT by the end of Year 2 and in D&T by the end of Year 6. Standards in all other subjects are below expected levels by the end of Years 2 and 6. By the end of Year 6, standards in ICT are below average. The school met its targets for English and mathematics in the 2002 national tests and is on course to meet the challenging targets for 2003. Pupils with learning difficulties make progress overall in line with their peers through the effects of good management and perceptive support. The headteacher and all members of staff have established clear expectations for behaviour based on strategies for positive behaviour management and these are having a positive impact on pupils' self-discipline and hence on their achievement and standards.
8. Pupils with learning difficulties are offered a good range of learning opportunities, which are appropriately planned. Support is particularly focused on literacy and numeracy but is given in other subjects where needed. Many pupils make good progress and some are removed from the special needs register once they no longer need support.
9. There are no significant variations in attainment among pupils of different ethnic groups, language, background or in relation to gender. The carefully planned activities and their full participation in lessons provide the pupils with English as an additional language with good support to develop their knowledge and skills alongside their friends. The good interactions with teachers, support staff and other children provides the support necessary for them to learn confidently.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. The pupils have good attitudes to their school and this is a strength. In the majority of the lessons observed, pupils concentrated well and showed a great deal of interest. During a Year 6 personal and social education lesson the class were talking about 'Things that frighten us'. They were so serious when they realised that everyone had private problems. When they had to write them down, the silence was intense. However, it is noticeable that pupils' concentration flags after lunchtime, particularly amongst the infant pupils.
11. Behaviour overall is good. During those lessons where management is very good and the lesson content is stimulating, behaviour is often very good. However, there are also significant variations between and within classes at times and good management and stimulating content do not always produce good behaviour. Some teachers are at a great disadvantage when trying to teach a class including one or more children with extreme behavioural problems. It is a good characteristic of the other children in such classes that they meanwhile maintain their own concentration and interest so well. Behaviour at playtimes and at lunch is also good. In between lessons, as the pupils walk to

assemblies, physical education or lunch, they are well controlled and usually self-disciplined. It was most noticeable how polite the majority of pupils are. They frequently stand back and open doors and enquire how you are. There were nine fixed period exclusions, involving four boys during the last school year, all for unacceptable behaviour.

12. Although bullying and other forms of oppressive behaviour do occasionally occur, overall, these are not frequent problems and most pupils do not engage in this type of behaviour. Most children are aware that the way they treat each other will usually be reciprocated and most therefore, get on well together. Class discussion times are helping pupils to understand that their friends may have different views or background to themselves.
13. Overall, the majority of the pupils do not take enough responsibility or show enough initiative, and this aspect is currently a weakness of the school. However, the school has recently set up its own democratically elected school council, which, under the guidance of the personal and social education co-ordinator, is gradually helping the pupils to learn to take on increasingly more relevant responsibilities. During the inspection the council discussed the use of personal lockers. In classes monitors willingly perform tasks of tidying up without being asked and most pupils take it in turn to return registers. Also, and significantly, pupils are proud of their school, which is a very tidy place and during the inspection no evidence of graffiti or vandalism was witnessed anywhere.
14. Attendance for the most recent reporting year is below the national average. Unauthorised absences are also well above national figures. However, from the school's calculations, so far for 2002/03 attendance figures are well up and above those for similar types of schools, so attendance is judged to be satisfactory overall. The majority of pupils comes to school on time and most lessons commence promptly.
15. The relationships in the school are good and a strength. The majority of the pupils gets on well together and appreciates and respects their teachers.
16. Overall, the attitudes, values and personal development of the pupils contribute well towards the success of their learning.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. The overall quality of teaching and learning in the lessons observed during the inspection and as indicated by pupils' recent work is good, though there are variations between key stages and subjects. Teaching is good in the Nursery and Reception classes, satisfactory overall in Years 1 - 2 and good overall in Years 3 to 6. The teaching of English, mathematics and science in the lessons observed was satisfactory in Years 1 - 2 and good in Years 3 - 6. The teaching of science was satisfactory overall when pupils' previous work is taken into account. In their teaching, as well as around the school, members of staff have rightly promoted good behaviour as the highest priority towards raising standards. Parents comment that behaviour has improved significantly over the past two years and the good behaviour observed during the inspection confirms the school is an orderly community and has established the conditions where, usually, effective learning takes place. Pupils enter the school with well below average-attainment particularly in language and literacy. The teaching is often better than the pupils' learning because many pupils are reliant on adult support and lack the skills for independent learning. The process of promoting pupils' independence begins well in the Nursery and Reception classes and continues through the school. It is reasonably successful but is affected by the difficulty many pupils experience in accepting responsibility for their own learning.
18. The teaching for children in the Nursery and Reception classes is good and prepares children well for the more formal learning further up the school.. The members of staff make good provision for the children's all round development and education, including those with special educational needs or for whom English is an additional language. They ensure that all children have full and equal access to the activities and choices planned for them. Well-planned teaching is focused on providing a rich quality of experience for the children in the Foundation Stage.

19. In English teachers have a good knowledge of the National Literacy Strategy and have adapted it appropriately for the pupils' needs. Teachers make a good choice of interesting texts to provide a good balance of activities and to develop pupils' reading and writing skills, although opportunities are sometimes overlooked in practice. The teachers' enthusiasm and skills ensure that pupils generally make good progress. In mathematics pupils make satisfactory progress through the school because teaching focuses appropriately on basic skills and this is usually effective. Most planning for lessons is good; it is detailed and matched well to the needs of the pupils, although the higher-attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged. Pupils' capacity for personal study is limited and they make better progress when adults support them directly. Teachers often work hard to encourage the pupils to talk about what they know and understand, although the emphasis is more often on factual answers rather than providing reasons. All teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour, but on a few occasions the pupils' lack of concentration affects their learning. Teachers have a sound understanding of each pupil's strengths and weaknesses, which they use well to direct their teaching. Teaching assistants are used well to support learning. They support pupils with learning difficulties and those with English as an additional language well.
20. In science, teaching is satisfactory throughout the school, with examples of very good teaching in Years 3 - 6. Insufficient account, however, is taken of the needs of pupils of different ages and abilities in the same class since teachers provide the same worksheets and activities for all pupils in the class. Teachers generally lead lively introductions and use questioning well to get pupils to apply their previous knowledge in new situations. Assessment is carried out inconsistently. Teachers do not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to plan their own investigations or enough specific language support. Pupils struggle to explain what they have done and their written work is a general weakness. In Year 6, insufficient opportunities are provided to develop pupils' investigative skills to the required level.
21. In art and design, the quality of teaching is very variable, and unsatisfactory overall. Pupils' previous work shows that teaching does not take sufficient account of previous learning. Teachers' expectations are too low in most classes. In design and technology, on the other hand, the quality of teaching is good and teachers have a good understanding of the subject. Teachers enable pupils to experience worthwhile activities and a broad range of materials.
22. The teaching of geography is unsatisfactory overall, though this masks some good teaching. Discussions with pupils and inspection of their previous work indicate that their experience is very variable. Teachers are not always sure of exactly what they need to teach to ensure pupils' learning is effective. Marking is very variable. In history, the overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The use of resources - for example, the provision of copies of old documents and photographs - challenges pupils to find out information about the past. The planning for history sometimes does not clearly link activities to what is to be learnt.
23. In ICT, the quality of teaching varies but is satisfactory overall, but planning does not always fit closely to the needs of the pupils. Teachers monitor and support the pupils well while they work at a computer, although pupils are restless at times. In music, the quality of teaching is satisfactory, although sessions are often too long for the younger pupils to hold their attention or too demanding at the end of the day. The quality of teaching in physical education is good overall since teachers make a good choice of task to provide challenge and skill development. They use good strategies to include all pupils so that they all learn well.
24. Teachers are beginning to take account of pupils' prior learning by drawing on the recently introduced target-setting procedures for pupils in writing and mathematics. In many lessons, teachers engage actively with the pupils in their learning. They circulate effectively amongst the pupils, picking up any misunderstanding or difficulties, and asking questions to help reinforce their learning. The teachers' management of pupils is usually good, more so in Years 3 - 6, so that pupils maintain good concentration and effort.
25. Some teachers raise the level of their questioning and their exposition in order to anticipate higher standards but too often they are pitched at an average level. Overall, there is insufficient attention to

building assessments of pupils' learning that provide sharply focused information that will help teachers in their planning. In general, there is varied practice in teachers' daily assessments; some are thoughtful and teachers' responses help pupils to overcome difficulties. Teachers provide suitable homework for pupils to consolidate their learning.

26. Teachers mostly make a good choice of task to provide worthwhile learning and a suitable level of challenge. There are weaknesses, however, in a few lessons, where the tasks are not sufficiently adapted to the learning needs of differing groups of pupils, for example the higher-attaining pupils. The teachers in the mixed-age classes are also experiencing difficulty in ensuring that equivalent

work is set for pupils in the same year group but who are in different classes. The teachers give appropriate attention to the teaching of basic skills, including literacy, mental calculations and ICT. The application of ICT skills in other subjects is developing now that the ICT suite is in full use.

27. Pupils with English as an additional language receive good specialist attention and are well supported by teaching assistants and support teachers in lessons. When pupils with special educational needs are identified, the special needs co-ordinator is informed and they are assessed immediately in order that they get the best possible help. Individual education plans are then prepared, which have appropriate targets and are reviewed twice every year. Wherever possible, these plans are fully integrated into classroom activities. Parents are involved in the reviews and close links with outside agencies are maintained. There are effective assessment procedures to ensure compliance with the Code of Practice. Classroom assistants and other support staff generally offer effective help to both pupils and teachers. The members of staff know their pupils well, and have good relationships with the parents. This means that any problems are picked up and dealt with early on in the child's school career. Teachers have a good sense of personal care for the pupils which promotes their personal development well so that they are ready to learn. The quality of teaching for pupils with learning difficulties is good.

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

28. The quality and range of learning opportunities are satisfactory for pupils in Years 1 - 2 and in Years 3 - 6. The National Curriculum requirements are in place but provision in some foundation subjects is inconsistent and the teaching time in Years 3 - 6 falls below national guidance. The provision of religious education is in accordance with the local agreed syllabus. The statutory curriculum is implemented and there is a good range of extra-curricular activities, with more planned for the future. The effective use of the literacy strategy and the good provision for personal, social, health and citizenship education are also having a positive impact. Helpful relationships with partner institutions generate ideas and opportunities for developing the curriculum. Subjects are allocated an appropriate amount of teaching time, but in some cases it is not used effectively. The planning for literacy skills is good and teachers allow for the progressive development of skills so that pupils make good progress. The planning of numeracy is also satisfactory overall, with a good focus on mental calculation, but not enough emphasis is given to data handling and problem solving. The planning for other subjects is less well developed. Targets for literacy and numeracy are in place and are reviewed regularly to help adjust planning. Science is planned appropriately, except that the pupils get few opportunities to undertake scientific investigations and experiments. There are effective links between the school's teaching programme and National Curriculum attainment targets and these are borne out in the long- and medium-term planning. A good feature is that all teachers use their lap-top computers for curricular planning, which is making the planning process more efficient as well as enriching the curriculum.
29. There is good provision for activities outside lessons. There are various clubs giving help to those most in need at breakfast time, a lunchtime club and after-school activities. There are lunchtime and after-school clubs which include information technology, football, chess and choir. There is a homework club, cycling proficiency and tuition on a range of musical instruments. The school is hoping to start an after-school care club, but this is subject to finance being available. Activities such as soccer coaching take place during the school holidays. The school offers a residential

experience, which is effective in promoting pupils' personal development; last year pupils went on an outdoor experience week in Norfolk. The local environment is used for visits.

30. The school attempts to ensure that all pupils have equal access to all aspects of learning and ensures that boys and girls have the same opportunities. Pupils of different ethnicity are fully included in all activities and receive support according to their needs. Good provision also embraces all the pupils with learning difficulties, no matter how severe. However, the split of some classes and inconsistencies within planning mean that some groups of pupils do not receive a similar curriculum. For example, the pupils in the Year 6 class have different lessons to those in the Year 5/6 class. There are a few examples where members of staff plan co-operatively but this could usefully be extended. There is some provision to introduce pupils to life

in a multicultural society, together with the use of displays and assemblies on this theme. The school ensures that dual language books of both fiction and non-fiction are included in all book orders.

31. The provision for pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHE), which includes sex and drugs education, is good. The local police service is involved in helping with drugs education. PSHE is taught throughout the school and it effectively encourages the pupils to behave well, care for each other and to take responsibility. Assemblies also support the PSHE programme and visitors from outside the school effectively contribute to the provision. Class discussion times are used effectively. This is a controlled discussion in which all have a chance to express their views and have a right to be listened to. It is used by teachers in PSHE lessons for influencing attitudes. This effective provision has a positive effect on the behaviour and attitudes of pupils across the school.

32. The curricular provision for pupils with learning difficulties is good. The school fully complies with statutory requirements and teachers are versed in the requirements of the Code of Practice. Classroom assistants and support teachers give effective help to both pupils and teachers. Members of staff know their pupils well, and have good relationships with their pupils. This means that any problems are picked up and dealt with early on in the child's school career. However, there are a number of pupils in the school with challenging behaviour problems. On a number of occasions these were observed causing problems for their teachers and disrupting learning for other pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are offered a good range of learning opportunities, which are appropriately planned. Support is particularly focused on literacy and numeracy but is given in other subjects where needed. Many pupils make good progress and some are removed from the special needs register once they no longer need support. At the time of the inspection, only one pupil had been identified as having particular talents and was being monitored so a suitable programme for extension could be devised. The curricular provision for pupils with English as an additional language is good and supported well by specialist visiting teachers.

33. The contribution of the community to pupils' learning is good. There are links with the local churches and the clergy come into the school regularly to contribute. The school has links with the local Sikh gurdwara, the police and fire service. Local businesses make contributions; one sponsored football shirts for the school, for example, and others contribute prizes to school fairs. The school makes contributions to various charities and also invites local old people into the Harvest Festival. Relationships with partner institutions are good. There are close links with local secondary schools and colleges. At the time of the inspection, there were several students in the school in training and on work experience.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

34. Spiritual provision is good. The school has a clear set of values about behaviour, co-operation and acceptance of each other as individuals. Whole school gatherings are particularly effective. They have a sense of occasion and are well organised and managed. Pupils come into assembly quietly, listen to music, join in and take part when invited with confidence. During one assembly on 'being unique', a pupil read to the whole school a blessing she had written. The pupils listened carefully. There are good opportunities for spiritual development in other areas of the curriculum. For example,

in music, pupils reflected on messages from the singing of the 'Hallelujah Chorus'. Nursery pupils respond to music playing and lights fading and brightening. In English, the pupils listen and respond to each other's poetry writing. Overall, the curriculum provides good opportunities for pupils to reflect on their own lives and that of others, and the school provides a safe place for them to explore their personal feelings and understanding.

35. The provision for moral development is good. Pupils are given clear choices about what to do. Personal behaviour is developed through an understanding of principles. For example, the headteacher challenges inappropriate behaviour by asking: 'What codes of behaviour have you broken?' and 'Whom have you hurt?' Teachers and teaching assistants support pupils well in class by encouraging them to think about how they are behaving and how behaviour can affect other pupils. Led very well by staff, assemblies have themes which foster values such as fairness, respect, truth and justice very strongly. For example, a strong moral message was delivered during an assembly on 'doing the right thing and making friends'. There are good opportunities to explore and express moral values in religious education and through personal and social education.
36. Provision for social development is good. The school is an orderly environment with a well-accepted set of rules. All teachers work hard through a whole school approach to develop a strong social ethos. They do this successfully. Pupils work well together and accept each other. When asked, they form different groups to work together without any fuss, and paired discussion is a feature of many lessons. There are very good relationships between teachers and pupils. Teachers and teaching assistants set a good example and deal with pupils in a respectful way even when they have challenging behaviour to deal with. Younger and older pupils are given responsibility for handing out materials in class and tidying away at the end of lessons. Year 6 pupils often go out of their way to help their teacher without being asked.
37. Cultural provision is satisfactory. Younger pupils learn about culture in the local area. They visit the local gurdwara and museum. Some opportunities to appreciate other cultures are provided. For example, in English they talk about and perform raps, in music they listen to a wide range of music. However, these experiences occur by chance rather than being planned into the curriculum as a whole. Pupils with learning difficulties and those with English as an additional language are fully included in the activities and discussions.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

38. The school has very good procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare. This is a major strength of the school. The special needs co-ordinator is the named and trained child protection person. The headteacher is also trained and well experienced. They have ensured that all staff have received their own relevant training. There is very close liaison with relevant local services and all necessary documentation is securely locked away. The school has one looked-after child for whom the special needs co-ordinator also takes full responsibility.
39. The deputy headteacher is the named health and safety person and she works closely with the governors' premises committee. Regular maintenance checks are made on the school site and where necessary relevant risk assessments are raised. The school has a detailed, up-to-date, written policy. All fire, physical educational and portable electrical equipment is checked annually. The school has caring and efficient procedures for dealing with accidents and the administration of medicines. The school makes good use of outside professional help, such as the police who lecture on alcohol and drug abuse and talk about 'Stranger Danger'. The school nurse, educational psychologist and behavioural support personnel make regular school visits. The school has a very comprehensive Internet Safety Policy.
40. The school has good procedures for monitoring and improving attendance, which are maintaining the improvement noted. Registers are kept well for each class, marked morning and afternoon and then returned to the office for checking. All parents are made well aware of their relevant responsibilities through a series of absence, holiday and lateness letters. The school does not

have a major problem with holidays in term times. The school has a very tight lateness routine and lateness is not a problem. There is very good liaison with the educational welfare officer and the local police. In cases of very poor attendance the headteacher visits homes and invites the parents into school for a meeting with the educational welfare officer and social services.

41. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and eliminating that of an oppressive nature are both good and strengths of the school. The school has a very good tracking system for bad behaviour, from teacher and/or support staff to the headteacher. The behaviour and discipline policy contains realistic awards and sanctions. However, the system is used inconsistently by some teachers who have very difficult children in the class. In certain cases witnessed, teachers just did not have time to use the system.
42. Oppressive behaviour is frequently discussed at assemblies, circle times and during personal, and social education lessons. The pupils are given the confidence to recognise and report incidents to an adult and all staff are experienced at recognising potential situations and dealing with them.
43. The school has good procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development. Some of the pupils are very challenging and procedures need to, and do, work well. The teachers know their pupils very well. Very detailed records are maintained in all pupils' personal record files from initial assessment in the Nursery to the day that they leave for secondary education. Such details are then passed on to their next school. Regular reports are given to parents, either verbally or within the end of year academic reports.
44. Overall, the school is a safe and caring environment in which all groups of pupils are able to learn and this significantly influences the success of the pupils' learning.

Assessment

45. There is a mixture of practice, amongst which there are some very useful strategies in place. The recently appointed co-ordinator has recognised and begun to address some of the issues and varied practice already. She has seen that the quality of marking of pupils' work is very variable. As a result she arranged for all staff to benefit from in-service training led by a specialist in this area. In addition she has led discussions which have enabled her to produce a new whole school marking policy. This is a very thorough and useful document, which describes good practice. However, it has not yet been fully implemented and is therefore not as effective as it should be. The school intends to adopt a sensible approach to monitoring attainment in all subjects, except literacy and numeracy where the current system is reasonably effective. This is based on national guidance and allows teachers to record whether pupils are achieving above, below or at the level described for a particular unit of work. Some teachers are already using this approach, but not in all subjects.
46. Formal procedures for monitoring attainment and progress have been very recently introduced for English and mathematics but are underdeveloped overall and they lack coherence. There is currently no whole school approach to assessment that is systematically implemented by all teachers. The co-ordinator and those of some other subjects have recognised the need to build up portfolios of assessed work in all subjects and have begun to work towards this. The school uses the information it collects on pupils to set whole school targets for literacy and numeracy and to identify groups of pupils who would benefit from additional support. However, the school has not yet reached the stage where it uses the information to set and regularly update individual learning targets for pupils. Teachers have not yet begun to analyse their results to identify strengths and weaknesses in pupils' understanding or in their teaching.
47. Teachers use the records they do keep to write pupils' annual reports. These contain useful information about what the pupils have done and their attitude, but not all the reports tell parents clearly what the pupils have achieved. However, most do suggest how pupils could improve and this is good practice. There are discrepancies between teachers in relation to the records they keep. Some keep careful records of what pupils have covered, but these do not indicate what they actually achieved. Others record whether the learning intention has been achieved. Clearly the latter provide more useful information about attainment.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

48. Evidence gained from the returned parent questionnaires and the school's own recent survey, as well as talking to parents at the pre-inspection meeting and during the inspection, shows that parents believe this to be a good school. In particular they think that the school is well led and the teaching is good, expecting their child to work hard, give of their best and become mature and responsible. They add that their child likes the school and is making good progress, of which they, as parents, are well informed, and overall, behaviour has improved immeasurably in the past 18 months. There were a few negative views on behaviour and the maturity of some of the children and the inspectors agree with the school that these views are justified.
49. The quality of the information that the school provides for its parents is good and is designed to communicate with all members of the parent community. Each parent receives an updated copy of the prospectus and the current annual governors' report to parents. The latter contains all current statutory requirements. However, the prospectus has one minor omission of which the school is now aware. The pupils' annual academic reports are good. They comment on all subjects taught and state clearly what a pupil can do. They are easy for parents to understand. However, although targets are discussed these are not always consistently clear. There are three parents' evenings a year and various open days. Educational evenings have been held for computer skills, sex education and assessment tests. The school's monthly newsletter is both friendly and informative and there is an 'open door' policy for any complaints or questions. The school frequently provides information leaflets to parents on aspects of health, behaviour and education.
50. Although a few parents do help in school with shared reading and trips out - for example, swimming - overall the contribution of parents to children's learning is unsatisfactory and a weakness of the school. The school realises this and does its utmost to encourage parents to come in more, by sending out leaflets and by using word of mouth. However, parents do appreciate the useful, two-way communication offered by the home/school diaries. As a result, some parents help with both reading and mathematics homework more now and are pleased to comment in these documents.
51. The general impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school is satisfactory. The school is indebted to its recently formed Friends of School, which, via social and sponsored events, has raised considerable sums of money. This has been very welcome towards a garage for the imminent purchase of a school bus. Overall the school has satisfactory links with its parents which it would like to improve. Such links are helping towards the success of the children's learning.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

52. The headteacher provides very good leadership through his clear purpose, vision, boundless energy and positive and inclusive approach to making decisions. He and the senior staff give very good direction for the development of the school which results in a determination by all staff to make the best possible provision for the pupils. The overall leadership and management by the headteacher and senior staff are good. They have achieved significant success in establishing the new school as an orderly and purposeful community. Parents comment that behaviour has improved significantly and the good behaviour observed during the inspection follows upon the whole school focus on positive behaviour management as a necessary step towards raising standards. The headteacher plays a major role in behaviour modification which sets the ethos for the whole school.
53. The senior members of staff give good, close attention to supporting all staff in practical ways. They also carry out longer-term exercises of monitoring and evaluation to make planned improvements. The senior members of staff have a good understanding of strengths and weaknesses and place a high priority on forms of support and the long-term professional development needs of all staff. Performance management is fully established and includes the non-teaching staff, several of whom have taken relevant further qualifications that are valuable for their work in school. The procedures and support arrangements introduced by the headteacher and senior staff are encouraging the

whole staff to work together and to share a clear vision for the school. They have worked very hard to put a basic curriculum in place with interesting and worthwhile tasks that promote good learning. This provides for the progressive development of skills through the school in most subjects although, with the recent emphasis on English and mathematics, art and geography are not sufficiently established for the even development of knowledge and skills year by year. The senior staff has introduced assessment procedures recently to track pupils' progress, with a focus on English and mathematics, but overall the arrangements are too recent and undeveloped across the school to be satisfactory.

54. The special needs co-ordinator manages the area well. She ensures that all correct procedures are followed and pupils are receiving support according to their needs. She is also involved in providing extra support, both in classes and individually; and she exercises considerable patience and care with the pupils in her charge. The management of provision for pupils with English as an additional language is also good.

55. The headteacher has a good insight for the priorities of the school. He has established clear expectations and made decisions that are having a clear, positive impact on standards. The introduction of good monitoring and evaluation procedures of teaching is having a good effect on the quality of provision. The headteacher's good approach ensures that all members of staff and the governors are included in discussions about forward planning so that the expectations placed upon them and their commitment are clear. The school recognises the need to develop further the effectiveness of subject leaders, for example in observing lessons and in having arranged times to give subject advice. The school has good monitoring and evaluation procedures although has been less successful in taking action over such matters as establishing a manageable assessment system for all subjects since the focus has rightly been on promoting positive behaviour management. There is a thorough school improvement plan for the current year that provides suitable direction for improvement and relates well to identified areas of weakness. The school has identified likely issues for the following year's improvement plan although the process of agreeing it is still at an early stage.
56. The governing body takes an active role in shaping the direction of the school and it fulfils its responsibilities and statutory duties well. The governors have established good procedures to visit the school and form an independent view of its needs and progress. The financial planning is good in support of the identified priorities, such as making decisions to employ further support staff to help with pupils' personal development. The headteacher and governors have established good oversight of the finances and the budget. They have applied for and obtained additional grants for school improvements such as the Breakfast Club and for the removal of two mobile classrooms and their replacement by a new one. Specific grants are used well for their designated purposes. They make careful comparisons with local financial benchmarks and use these effectively in their decisions. In an example of good practice, the budget is spent prudently and is monitored monthly. Governors apply the principles of best value by making comparisons and obtaining competitive tendering when considering improvements and efficiency, with standards in mind. Very little funding is spent on normal staff absence, which relates to the strong support for and inclusion of staff to school developments. Funding for special educational needs is prudently and well used and money obtained through the standards fund is used effectively. The financial control is good. At the time of amalgamation there was a large carry forward figure from the budget of the previous year. Half of this represents liabilities and a further quarter relates to capital items. The excess of income over expenditure for the last financial year, representing 6 per cent, is a reasonably prudent figure when the governors have further financial decisions to make about the costs of setting up a new school.
57. There is a satisfactory level of teachers and support staff to meet the needs of the pupils and the demands of the curriculum. Teachers have been deployed well to ensure that their expertise is used well. The classroom assistants make a good contribution in supporting pupils' learning, particularly of those pupils with behavioural or learning difficulties. The administrative staff are efficient and friendly, and ensure the school runs smoothly. The accommodation is very good, and provides an attractive environment. Children's work is valued and displayed attractively in classrooms and around the school. The level of resources is satisfactory overall, and is good for English and ICT.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

58. In order to raise standards and improve the quality of learning the governors, headteacher and staff should give attention to the following issues, which link closely with those already identified in the school's self-review:
- (1) Raise standards, particularly in English, mathematics and science by: (Paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 81, 83, 86, 102)
- Offering a wide variety of opportunities in all subjects for pupils' speaking and listening skills to encourage improved verbal and written expression.
 - Using the library and other resources more to promote pupils' independent learning and building identified weaknesses in standards into the school's improvement plan.

- Giving more opportunities for pupils to use their developing writing skills across the curriculum; and improving pupils' handwriting in Years 5 and 6.
 - Highlighting and extending opportunities for practical and investigative work in mathematics and science.
 - Taking greater care to match work to pupils' abilities in science.
- (2) Establish comprehensive and manageable assessment procedures for all subjects that are effective in informing planning and raising standards, and improve the use of assessment by: (Paragraphs 19, 20, 22, 25, 26, 45, 46, 53, 55, 91, 95, 101, 103, 114, 123, 124, 130, 139)
- Organising and developing the use of assessment to guide curricular planning, teaching and learning for all groups of pupils in all subjects, making appropriate use of the level descriptors of the National Curriculum.
 - Noting and identifying underachievement and having clear targets for pupils.
 - Tracking pupils' progress by using clear procedures to assess and record performance in all subjects.
 - Providing tasks that challenge all pupils at an appropriate level.
 - Making more consistent use of the school's marking policy.
- (3) Review, improve and implement the subjects of the curriculum to ensure the even coverage of subjects by: (Paragraphs 28, 30, 37, 53, 108)
- Ensuring that all subjects receive an appropriate time allocation.
 - Making provision for carefully planned progression year by year, with particular attention to mixed-age classes.
 - Ensuring that support is carefully targeted.
 - Reviewing and improving the structure of class timetables, and opportunities for writing, numeracy and ICT across the curriculum.
 - Providing subject support to improve teachers' expertise in art and geography.
- (4) Improve the level of co-ordination and influence of subject leaders. (Paragraphs 45, 46, 88, 95, 104, 109, 114, 119, 124, 134, 142)
- (5) Increase the opportunities for pupils to extend the range of their skills by: (Paragraphs 5, 6, 19, 20, 69, 74, 90, 97, 100, 102)
- Paying particular attention to higher order thinking skills such as reasoning and explaining.
 - Ensuring that pupils apply their skills, such as finding patterns, relationships and generalising, to problem solving.
 - Including teaching and learning notes on aspects of these skills within lesson planning.

Minor issues

The school should consider how to include the following minor issues within forward planning:

- 1) Ensure that children in the Foundation Stage have easy access to outdoor play. (Paragraph 63)
- 2) Extend the resources in the Unit and continue to create opportunities for liaison with classes in the main school. (Paragraph 61)

THE UNIT FOR PUPILS WITH EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIOURAL NEEDS

59. This Unit has been set up to accommodate pupils with a range of emotional and behavioural problems, some of whom are extremely challenging. The teacher in charge had only been in post for a few weeks at the time of the inspection, but had already developed good relationships with the pupils and had succeeded in providing a sense of direction and security. The Unit offers effective

teaching in the lessons seen, with good support from the support staff. Because of this, pupils learn well and relate well to the staff and each other. The Unit offers pupils a very secure and caring learning environment, and meets their individual and diverse needs. When pupils have settled into the routines of the Unit and the school, and have developed sufficient confidence, they are integrated into mainstream classes for some of their work. The pupils are progressing well, although because of their difficulties, their attainment is often below average. They do, however

make very good progress towards their individual learning and behavioural targets. For example one Year 3 child is reading successfully yet when he entered the Unit a year ago couldn't read any words and did not know any letter sounds.

60. In one science lesson, pupils were investigating what plants need to live and were seeing what happened to plants without leaves or flowers, having previously planted some seeds. They were engrossed in this activity. In another lesson, the children were learning about nonsense rhymes. They were focusing and on task until one child threw a tantrum, disrupting the flow of the lesson for the others. This was overcome by withdrawing the pupil concerned from the class. The quality of teaching in the Unit is never less than good and at times it is very good. The teacher knows the pupils very well. Work is set at the correct level, and very good use of praise helps to develop the pupils' self esteem. The learning support assistants work well with the pupils, both in the unit, and in mainstream classes where they are an important point of security for the pupils who are being integrated. All members of staff provide positive role models and show great respect for the pupils with whom they work.
61. The pupils' access to the curriculum is better than satisfactory, with the staff keen to ensure the pupils are involved in a wide curriculum. Any restrictions in breadth are based upon a thorough assessment of their most urgent learning needs. Resources, in terms of teaching materials, are not well developed. Some materials have been borrowed from the main school resource centre, but there were few specifically designed to cater for the pupils' needs. In addition to providing support for pupils who have been referred by the LEA owing to their emotional and behavioural difficulties, the Unit is increasingly successful in working with pupils from the mainstream classes who sometimes have difficulty managing their behaviour. The Unit teacher is a trained counsellor, and along with another member of staff offers counselling time to pupils who are in need of such support. At the time of the inspection there was little direct liaison between the Unit and the rest of the school, although there has been in the past. Pupils from the Unit join other classes for assemblies and some lessons such as physical education. There were occasions when some difficult pupils from the main school could have benefited from periods in the Unit to allow them time to calm down and work in a quiet environment with plenty of support. However, there are confirmed plans for the school to open a nurture centre in September to help with such cases in future.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

67

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

35

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	15	27	21	4	0	0
Percentage	0	22	40	31	6	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)	11	223
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	62

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	41

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	21

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	23
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	16

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.8
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.5
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	16	13	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	7	11
	Girls	11	11	12
	Total	22	18	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	76 (n/a)	62 (n/a)	79 (n/a)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	11	11
	Girls	11	12	13
	Total	22	23	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	76 (n/a)	79 (n/a)	83 (n/a)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	27	17	44

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	18	19	22
	Girls	11	10	11
	Total	29	29	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	66 (n/a)	66 (n/a)	75 (n/a)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	17	19
	Girls	11	10	10
	Total	25	27	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	57 (n/a)	61 (n/a)	66 (n/a)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

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

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
161	3	0
0	0	0
3	0	0
14	2	0
0	0	0
2	0	0
5	0	0
5	0	0
0	0	0
9	0	0
1	2	0
17	0	0
2	0	0
3	2	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
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)	10.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.9
Average class size	22.7

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	240
Total aggregate hours worked per week	322

Qualified teachers and support staff: Nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	0
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	16
Number of pupils per FTE adult	11

Financial information

Financial year	2001-02
	£
Total income	471,982
Total expenditure	443,761
Expenditure per pupil	1,607
Balance brought forward from previous year	101,572
Balance carried forward to next year	129,793

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	6
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	9

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	234
Number of questionnaires returned	10

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	60	40	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	20	60	20	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	10	60	10	0	20
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	20	50	30	0	0
The teaching is good.	30	60	10	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	70	20	0	10	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	60	30	0	10	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	50	40	10	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	50	40	0	10	0
The school is well led and managed.	70	20	10	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	40	40	20	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	40	40	10	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

62. The school makes good provision for children in the Nursery and Reception classes overall. At the time of the inspection the Nursery class was taught by a graduate trainee student and the Reception class was taught by a supply teacher. There was also a student on teaching practice from a nearby College of Education, who enhanced the children's experiences in the Nursery. The school has 39 places for Nursery children and admits them on a part-time basis after they have their third birthday. There are currently 27 children on roll. The children transfer to the Reception class in the September of the year in which they have their fifth birthday. The majority of children in the Reception class have attended the Nursery previously. There is a very wide range of attainment and experience amongst the children in the Nursery and, overall, their attainment is well below average. Many children have particularly poor speech and communication skills which adversely affects their learning and attainments in all areas. A minority of children is likely to meet the expectations of the Early Learning Goals for young children by the time they enter Year 1. On average, however, their attainment is below average in all areas except in Language and Communication where it is well below and in their personal development where the majority of children are on course to meet the expectation. A small number of children are likely to exceed the expectation.
63. The members of staff in the Foundation Stage classes work hard to promote the children's all-round development. The quality of teaching and of the curriculum is good and addresses all areas of experience by providing carefully planned activities. These encourage the children to become independent as well as to learn to work alongside others. The planned curriculum in both classes is structured well and provides many purposeful opportunities to meet the expectations of the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning. The good planning ensures that all children have full and equal access to the activities, including those with learning difficulties or English as an additional language. The good organisation and approach in the Nursery is built upon well in the Reception class by adding an element of formal work. For example, appropriate elements of the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are included in whole class activities before sending children to reinforce the ideas through focused individual work. In this way, the children often make good progress during specific activities. The teachers provide a good mixture of formal and free-choice activities, except that access to the outside tends to be restricted to times that are pre-determined. The facilities, resources and accommodation are good; and the outside area provides very good opportunities to experience the wider world.
64. The management of the Foundation Stage is satisfactory and is overseen by the deputy headteacher in the absence of the co-ordinator. The trainee teacher receives appropriate time for preparation and mentoring. There are also good arrangements for her to teach in classes with older children in order to complete the expectations for her course. There are helpful arrangements for the Nursery and Reception class teachers to liaise about provision so that there is continuity of experience. All members of staff are highly committed to making the best provision possible and have established good working relationships with parents and carers. They pay very good and careful attention to the children's welfare, taking close account of individual needs. The members of staff in the Nursery make observations of the children and complete an entry profile within a few weeks, which helps to identify their level of attainment and learning needs. The Nursery teacher has established a good, manageable assessment routine for recording observations of the children which builds a good profile of their abilities and helps to identify any area of concern. These notes on stickers help to support further planning but a regular, formal procedure to observe children in an organised way is not yet established.

Personal, social and emotional development

65. The quality of teaching and of the children's learning is good. The well-planned and attractive environment of the Nursery encourages children's personal development by providing a good mixture of tasks and routines. Children self-register on arriving at the Nursery, picking out their own names,

and most children understand and follow the expected routines. Some of these require the children to conform to classroom expectations in a group while others enable them to explore materials and make choices. A well-chosen group activity allowed children to taste different fruits, such as a piece of apple or plum, linked to the story of 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar'. Several children tried the fruits happily but many were reluctant to try anything new. During a music lesson, most children took part well. They used shakers they had made to match the fast or slow patterns of the music. However, there were several examples of unsocial behaviour, such as not letting another child into the circle. On another occasion, pupils were encouraged to sit on the carpet to look at books but only a few did this willingly, most being noisy and bickering with each other. During group work many children find it difficult to conform and a few use attention-seeking behaviour if they do not get their own way. Their personal and social development is weak. The teacher and support staff generally set clear expectations but on occasions the adults do not apply sufficient strategies to keep or recover the children's attention, or insist on the children doing as required before continuing. The adults provide good role models for positive relationships since they treat children politely and thoughtfully. Several good routines encourage the children to make independent choices.

66. Snack time in the Reception class offers a good social occasion. On one occasion, the children settled quietly at the tables, knowing the routine and saying thank you as the class teacher passed fruits around, presenting a good role model for them. There was a little chat, although opportunities for promoting the children's language skills were limited by the expectation that they should be quiet. The children helped each other when a drink was spilt. During a more formal language session, the teacher passed a variety of objects around for the children to examine and think about the initial letter sounds of its name. The children enjoyed the occasion, taking pleasure in identifying when their object matched the sound, as with 'magnet' and 'm'. They demonstrated good improvement in their concentration and social skills from that observed in the Nursery, and these helped to promote good learning. The children usually maintain good interest in the activities in the Reception class, helped by the teacher's good selection of work for the day. The children make good progress in their personal development through the Reception year. The children with English as an additional language are fully included and make a lively contribution to activities in both classes. By the time they enter Year 1, most children are likely to meet the expected levels in the development of their personal and social skills and, on average, their attainment meets the expectation.

Communication, language and literacy

67. The quality of teaching and learning for the development of children's communication, language and literacy skills is good overall, although a few opportunities are missed in encouraging children to talk. There is a good selection of appropriate books and other language material to meet the needs and developing interests of the children. The children enter the Nursery with well-below average speech and language skills. A few higher-attaining children are familiar with books, know that print carries meaning and have the language to talk about their activities. The majority, however, gives single word answers and most speak in a short sentence about what they are thinking, as in 'I don't like salami' or 'I've got lipstick'. Few children have the skills to hold a simple conversation with a friend or an adult where the response follows on from what the other says. The children pay limited attention to what others are saying. Their listening skills are under-developed, which is related to their difficulty in sustaining concentration. Members of staff in the Nursery read books and stories to the children regularly. This helps the children to recognise that pictures and text hold information and are to be valued. The Nursery teacher read a delightful book, bringing out the story-line with good expression so that the children appreciated the language and events - enhanced by excellent unfolding picture cut-outs for each page. This good story reading continues in Reception.
68. By the time they are in the Reception class several children take part spontaneously in early writing activities. Three girls, for example, were seen to fill a whiteboard with their 'writing', forming rows of squiggles and little shapes. They also asked each other such questions as 'What does this writing say?' when putting marks on paper, confirming their early understanding of writing. This indicates clear progress from the skills observed in the Nursery. The class teacher in the Reception class uses carefully chosen aspects of the National Literacy Strategy to develop children's early awareness and understanding of letter sounds and word building. For example, in a well-planned

and resourced lesson the teacher presented the children with a wide range of objects such as a sock, stone and cup. With prompting from the teacher, most children were

successful in identifying the initial sound of the name for their object - such as s, b, or c. The activity offered a good focus on letter sounds and early word building. The majority of children know the sounds for most letters, which the teacher's lively approach reinforced well.

69. All adults promote children's language development well during planned activities. For example, in the Nursery children were helped to make playdough and to talk about the flour, salt, water and colouring and to notice the changes while they mixed it. In the Reception class, children were able to explain clearly what they were doing in creating pictures of mini-beasts. During the children's free choice of activities the children talk about their observations or what they are doing but there is less evidence of adults promoting discussion and responses with the children. Higher level questioning is not undertaken that challenges the children to think and answer. Overall, the children's language and communication skills show satisfactory progress and improvement from the Nursery to Reception but are well below average by the time they enter Year 1. A few higher-attaining pupils exceed the expectation.
70. In both the Nursery and Reception classes, the good level of support enables children who may have learning difficulties or who have English as an additional language to develop confidence in speaking English. The adults give good attention to talking about their activities and to building early letter sounds during the focused activities. There are suitable on-going assessment procedures to identify needs and to track the children's progress, although formal recording is still developing.

Mathematical development

71. The teaching and learning of mathematical understanding and skills are good. Children enter the Nursery with well below average skills and understanding of early mathematical ideas. There is a wide range of activities in the Nursery that relate to and support children's mathematical understanding. For example, the sand and water play activities help develop their ideas of capacity, more, less and sharing between vessels. A computer program provided practice in early counting. Three girls were seen to use this confidently and had the skills to count to ten correctly. Many children choose construction material to build models and buildings, developing and extending their understanding of how shapes fit and their mental imagery. Although several children were reluctant to try unfamiliar fruits, the activity made very good links with mathematical ideas by setting out their likes and dislikes in the form of a graph of smiley or sad faces. The teacher used the results well to focus discussion on simple counting and comparisons, the chocolate cake proving to be the favourite.
72. Provision in the Reception class also supports children's mathematical understanding well. For example, in an activity that captured and held children's attention very well, the teacher slowly revealed a number from 1 to 20. Many children guessed the emerging number correctly, using clues about the shape of its top to identify the number. Most children identified 7, 19, 8 and 10 well, with some early incorrect guesses being reasonable. The lesson continued with a focus on comparing heights - of teddies or dolls. The children watched closely as three teddies were compared for height and most showed an early understanding, although several children described one as 'big' rather than using the comparative 'taller'. Other activities include becoming familiar with the sequence of the days of the week. Several activities, such as making playdough models, fitting and building with bricks or filling vessels with water during water play, encourage spatial understanding. There is a good variety of building materials and most children are beginning to know the meaning of taller. A computer program encouraged children to learn how to control the mouse by dragging shapes into position to build a three-dimensional model.
73. The Reception teacher introduces children to appropriate aspects of the numeracy strategy through counting activities and early ideas of addition and subtraction. They are beginning to record their answers and build their early numeracy skills. The higher-attaining children understand early

addition, for example. There is a good focus on number language and the supporting ideas, such as comparing. This provides a good level of support for all children, including those who may have learning difficulties or who are learning English as an additional language. Several children are likely to reach the expectation by the time they enter Year 1 and higher-attaining pupils are on course to exceed the expectation but overall attainment is below the expectation.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

74. The quality of teaching and learning for this aspect is good. In the Nursery, for example, the teacher and Nursery nurse emphasise and encourage children's independence well to help them to become familiar with the wide range of materials and their differing properties. Sessions are well-planned and are designed to provide a wide range of experience of materials and how they behave, of simple everyday things such as socks and toys, and of recent inventions. The computer is usually available for children to become familiar with how to control the mouse and the simple operation of a program, since for many children this is unfamiliar. The sessions which offer children choice enable them to learn about how water behaves when poured or how paint spreads on paper. They know that sand may sprinkle or pass through a sieve and that glue has useful properties to stick two things together. In their use of construction material, they experience how plastic and wooden building bricks have a fixed shape but fit together to build models, the small pieces gradually making the design they want. The children have gained a broad knowledge of these materials and recognise they must adapt how they use them, applying differing skills in their play. The early experiences in the Nursery are extended well in the Reception, where, for example, children were seen making pictures of mini-beasts and models. The teacher used effective management strategies to place the children in groups according to their learning needs. The children knew the main colours and could explain simply what they were doing. One child, for example, was making a finger puppet with broadly satisfactory skill while others made a variety of mini-beast models. The teacher promoted a purposeful atmosphere of confident engagement in the activities that encouraged the children to learn, supported well by adult participation.
75. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes have good access for outdoor play, although this is usually at agreed times. The experiences enable them to explore their wider world and the how the larger toys work. Children have some knowledge of how plants grow. They have an early understanding that people, animals and plants need water, food and warmth to grow. The children are learning the skills to control a scooter or tricycle safely.
76. The children make satisfactory progress overall in their development of this aspect of learning. They have access to a good range of materials and experiences, supported well by adults and a well-managed environment. However, around half the children are likely to meet the expectations of the Early Learning Goals by the time they enter Year 1, indicating that the overall level of skills and understanding is below average.

Physical development

77. The quality of teaching and learning for this aspect is good. The adults in the Nursery make good provision for children's physical development through a wide range of experiences that promote their skills of control. The children make steady progress as a result. They have many opportunities to hold and manipulate the equipment provided for sand and water play. Children use pencils and crayons to make simple pictures or marks as an early stage of writing, although these are generally unformed and children do not yet keep close to outlines. They use paint brushes, although many children do not have the expected control skills for the age. The children tend to use heavy, awkward movements and brush strokes during their painting. There are, however, delightful examples of children's work on display, on warm and cold colours, where they have produced pleasing effects through their choice of colour and mixing shades. The children are developing the early skills to use scissors, making a collage for example, but do not have the skills to cut along a clear, neat line.
78. Access to outdoor play is planned carefully into the programme for both the Nursery and Reception classes. Children are developing the skills to ride scooters and tricycles and show reasonable balance. Children in the Nursery have the opportunity to use the facilities of the school hall, which provide a good alternative space for them to explore and develop physical skill. During a well-controlled and imaginative lesson, children were encouraged to simulate the movements of a caterpillar, cocoon and butterfly. They were slow to understand and take on the expected movements but gradually most performed with reasonable style and skill, wriggling around, curling up like a cocoon then running around as butterflies, flapping their wings. Children in the Reception

class have access to a selection of apparatus. There are well- planned opportunities for children to develop their gross motor skills, such as running, jumping or climbing. All members of staff promote the development of physical skills well so that children gradually acquire a range of physical skills such as co-ordination and control, and they make appropriate progress. Several children are likely to reach the expected standards by the time they enter Year 1 but overall standards are below the expectation.

Creative development

79. The quality of teaching and learning for children's creative development is good. In both classes good organisation and imaginative ideas make for a stimulating and attractive environment. They had the opportunity to make prints of butterflies, showing early ideas of symmetry. Other children made bold pictures of butterfly wings by spreading paint, then pressing the two sides together to form a symmetrical pattern. There is a good emphasis on promoting children's independence which encourages them to explore and experiment with the materials. There is a good emphasis also on imaginative play to help create the conditions and stimuli for imaginative play so that the children develop their creative skills. All adults support the children in exploring materials or situations as a stimulating part of their experiences. The good planning arranges for a good mixture of carefully supported activities as well as many opportunities for free choice. In the Reception class, the activities build upon and extend the children's experiences in the Nursery to make a good focus on children's creative development and ideas. One child was helped to make a finger puppet using his own ideas for decoration. The focus of the session was to make models and pictures, for example of mini-beasts, and the children demonstrated growing ability to turn their ideas into expressive representations. There is evidence of artwork and simple constructions as a natural part of the organisation.
80. The perceptive and thoughtful support given by all staff promotes the children's creative development and results in good learning. All adults have a good understanding of the creative dimension in children's activities which helps them to value and develop the ideas. For example, the good use of literature is helping to build ideas and images in the children's minds that they can apply in other situations. In general, children make appropriate progress as they gain a variety of ideas and apply skills in imaginative situations or when using materials. The children enjoy artwork and explore the effects of colour mixing. The good teaching ensures that children learn well and understand how to shape and assemble materials, such as the large building blocks. The children also make music and sing together. For example, in the Nursery children listened to music with a very contrasting tempo. They used shakers to represent the styles and rhythms, indicating an early appreciation of fast and slow. The teacher had also prepared a light 'string' which she changed to flickering slowly or quickly to give an alternative stimulus. The children were transfixed at one point when she turned the lights off then allowed them to reappear and brighten slowly in a wonderful, spiritual moment. Through these experiences, the children are learning that music may have different forms. The repeating patterns of songs are helping them to gain language and mathematical skills - as in 'There's a tiny caterpillar on a leaf, wiggle, wiggle'. The teachers provide good opportunities for children to develop their creative skills in music. Several children are on course to reach the expectation by the end of Reception year but standards overall are below the expectation.

ENGLISH

81. Attainment on entry to the school is very low. However, children make good progress in English right across the school. The present inspection found that standards in English are broadly in line with the national average by Year 2 and also at Year 6. There are some aspects that are below average. Speaking and listening is below average right across the school. The pupils come in with a poor vocabulary and little confidence in speaking. The school works hard to develop this, but some are still lacking in confidence by the time they leave. Handwriting skills are below average in Years 5 and 6, with many of the pupils still printing text. This is because they have not been taught effectively in the past. However, it is a problem that has been overcome with pupils coming up through the school, and by Year 4, most pupils write with a legible, joined script. Standards in National Curriculum tests are also depressed because of the high proportion of pupils with learning

- difficulties. Although these are well provided for across the school, and make good progress, they have the effect of reducing the overall levels in tests. The school's inclusive approach shows that all pupils make good progress in English. There are no significant differences in standards in classes between boys and girls, or pupils of different ethnic backgrounds.
82. Most pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their targets and, where they have specialist support, their learning in lessons is good. Some of them have severe learning difficulties and are in the initial stages of learning to read and write. Pupils with English as an additional language are well supported in classes by classroom assistants and support teachers. They make good progress in English and quickly reach a functional level of speaking and writing.
83. Throughout the school, standards in speaking and listening are below average. Pupils listen attentively to their teachers and to each other when working in groups and make good progress in listening in classes where teachers are skilled in questioning and dialogue. For example, in one class the teacher used computer based presentations together with an interactive whiteboard to assist concentration and she allowed pupils to use this to explain their thinking. In Year 3, teachers involved the pupils in reading nonsense poems to reinforce the alphabet and the learning and retention of sounds. By Year 6, some higher-attaining pupils speak clearly and confidently, but many others use vocabulary that is limited for their age and make brief contributions to discussions. In one lesson, the teacher encouraged groups to perform a poem in the style of a rap to the rest of the class to increase their confidence at performance.
84. Standards in reading are close to the national average. By the end of Year 2 pupils can use a range of skills to decode unfamiliar words. They read their class story books with fluency and expression, conveying the full meaning of the text. Some of the pupils with the most serious special educational needs are still working hard to learn the basic connections between sounds and letters and cannot read independently.
85. Most pupils in Year 6 are confident and independent readers. They have preferences for particular authors and can place fiction books into different categories. Higher-attaining readers are beginning to discuss the interaction between plot and characters and can predict how the story will develop. Many pupils read at home for pleasure. The school is very well supplied with various reading schemes and appropriate non-fiction books and the provision of books in the library is very good. The availability of high quality books has contributed to the effective development of reading skills.
86. Progress in writing from Year 1 to 4 shows a marked improvement, but the quality of handwriting in Year 5 and 6 is unsatisfactory, with most pupils still printing their words. Work seen in books and on display in the classrooms and corridors illustrates good attempts at independent writing. As they progress through the school, pupils are encouraged to attempt different forms of writing, such as reporting and making brochures. Amongst the varied forms of writing undertaken, pupils in Year 6 had written letters as excuses for being late, accident reports for the police and ghost stories. Pupils in Year 5 had written autobiographies with satisfactory skill, retold the story of 'The Tempest' and written letters complaining about the condition of the local park. There is good use of writing in subjects other than English. Information and communication technology is used to a limited extent to support the development of literacy skills.
87. Standards in teaching and learning are good overall. Teachers show a good knowledge of the National Literacy Strategy and, where necessary, have adapted it to suit their situation. Where the teaching is particularly strong, work is well matched to the range of learning needs in the class. Teachers sustain a good pace and marking provides careful guidance. Interesting texts are well chosen to provide a good balance of activities and to develop speaking and writing skills. The enthusiasm of all teachers inspires interest and involvement and commitment to good quality work. Because of this, pupils generally learn well across the school and make good progress. They enjoy their literacy lessons, although in some cases the younger pupils become restless when they are expected to sit on the carpet for too long.
88. Management of the subject is generally appropriate and the school has implemented the National Literacy Strategy well. Although appointed recently, the co-ordinator is coming to grips with management of the subject. There has been some analysis of test results and pupils are given

additional support if needed. Across the school, work in subjects other than English contributes to the development of literacy skills. The school has furnished a very good library with a good range of resources to help teaching. Pupils have regular access to the library but further provision could be made to encourage pupils to use it independently. A good collection of resources for English has been built up with a broad collection of reading schemes that include books from other cultures and some bi-lingual books. There are some examples of the good use of computers to assist literacy, both in the computer suite and also in individual classrooms but there is further scope for development in this area.

MATHEMATICS

89. Attainment is below national averages by the end of Year 2. The proportion of pupils who exceed the expected level is very low. There is a similar picture by the end of Year 6, with fewer than average numbers of pupils reaching the expected Level 4 and very few reaching the higher Level 5. Although the attainment is low, progress made through the school is at least satisfactory and there are signs that some weaknesses are being tackled with vigour. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls. All the elements of mathematics are covered with due emphasis on number. Across the school, attainment in number is slightly stronger than the other areas. There is a relative weakness in handling data, both in using and applying data and representing and interpreting data. There are insufficient opportunities for pupil to practise and improve these skills.
90. Although most pupils are keen to contribute to class discussions they often do not have the vocabulary to explain clearly what they understand. In some lessons, mathematical language is taught well and when this happens, pupils make good progress and become more confident in using the correct terminology.
91. Younger pupils, aged 5 to 7, are taught mathematics in the mornings. During the inspection satisfactory, good and very good teaching was seen. Overall teaching is good and pupils make satisfactory progress. The teaching is generally better than pupils' learning because many pupils are reliant on adult support. Most planning for lessons is very good, being detailed and matched to the needs of the pupils. However, occasionally planning takes insufficient account of the needs of the most able pupils with the result that they 'coast' during lessons and are not sufficiently challenged. Pupils' capacity for personal study is limited. The progress that they make is better when either the teacher or teaching assistant supports them directly. The best teaching seen is particularly noteworthy. Pupils' learnt about the properties of two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes. Building on practical experiences, the lesson was very well led by the teacher to develop understanding. Mathematical vocabulary was taught, practised and repeated. The final part of the lesson was used imaginatively to apply and reinforce the ideas learnt. Pupils used information about the number of sides, edges and corners of different shapes to identify a range of objects.
92. The pupils' behaviour is usually good, although there are a small number of instances where they do not listen carefully enough or they interrupt the teacher and this inhibits the pace of learning. Teachers work hard to encourage the pupils to talk about what they know and understand, but are not always successful.
93. Teaching of the older pupils, aged 7 to 11, is good. Class planning is generally well targeted and linked to previous learning. All teachers have strong expectations of pupils to work hard and use the time available. Despite this, there are a few occasions when a lack of concentration and effort affect the pace of learning in the class. Due attention is given to introducing vocabulary although this is not readily used by some pupils when answering questions or giving explanations. Individually the teachers have a sound understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of each pupil and this knowledge is used well. The pupils' capacity for personal study although still a weakness, shows improvement from that of the younger pupils. The Year 6 pupils are beginning to develop the confidence to tackle word problems on their own and set each other tasks. For example, pupils worked out combinations for the number of rides they could have on a fairground and how much money they would have left over. In the best lesson observed, the teacher concentrated on developing the understanding of the pupils and encouraged them to apply this to different situations.

The pupils' interest, enthusiasm and respect for the teacher was very evident and contributed well to a very positive learning environment.

94. Teaching assistants are utilised well to support learning. Working with both individual and groups of pupils, they make a significant contribution. They support pupils with special educational needs well.
95. The co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership and has reviewed mathematics provision throughout the school and has identified several areas for development. These include the development in the use of ICT to support individual pupils and introducing individual targets. Other areas for improvement are to analyse school assessment data and to identify areas of strength and weakness, and developing a school-based portfolio of work.
96. This provides a sound basis for the development of an action plan. Additionally the recently agreed whole school record keeping system needs to be implemented and strategies developed to enable pupils to have a greater understanding of their own strengths and weaknesses. Work in books is usually ticked but there are few comments which help pupils deepen their understanding.
97. The National Numeracy Strategy is in place satisfactorily throughout the school. Overall the final parts of lessons are less well taught although there are some notable exceptions. The use of number and data handling across subjects are currently unsatisfactory. Pupils' problem solving skills are weak and there are currently too few opportunities provided for pupils to explain reasoning, find different ways of tackling problems and investigate general statements.

SCIENCE

98. An examination of pupils' work during the inspection indicates that the current Year 2 pupils are working at a similar level to the 2002 national test and that results are likely to be much the same this year. Although attainment is below the national average, these pupils have generally made satisfactory progress. Their knowledge and understanding of the world was well below average on entry to the school. In addition, they are more competent orally than their written work suggests.
99. An examination of pupils' work indicates that standards are likely to be similar this year to the Year 6 national tests of 2002, which were below average overall and where fewer pupils exceeded the expected level. Results this year are likely to be closer to the mean with fewer pupils achieving either above or below the national average. Given the attainment on entry to the school and at the end of Year 2, this represents satisfactory progress.
100. By the end of Year 2, pupils can follow instructions to carry out simple investigations. They are beginning to understand that they need to make sure their tests are fair. With adult prompting, most can suggest how they will make sure they are fair. In practice, they forget what they have said because they are enthusiastic and keen to get on with their practical work, so their tests are often unreliable. Teachers help pupils to predict what might happen and to explain what did happen. Most pupils are able to make reasonable suggestions orally, but are unable to write their answers down. During the inspection Year 2 pupils demonstrated a secure understanding of different push and pull forces during the introduction to the lesson. They generally answered correctly when asked whether twisting and squashing 'blu tack' involved a push or a pull. When it came to writing their answers down, many pupils made mistakes. Pupils understand lifecycles, such as those of spiders and birds. They can name a good range of insects and know that they live in different places. However, they struggle to explain why. They understand that some foods are healthy and others are not. They know that substances such as ice and chocolate melt when they are heated. Most can sort a small range of materials according to whether they are hard or soft. Their ability to use scientific terms to explain what they have seen is limited. Pupils have an understanding of what electricity is used for. They can make simple circuits to light a bulb, but they find it difficult to explain why they do or do not work.
101. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language receive useful help from learning support assistants which enables them to take a full part in the lessons

and make appropriate progress. However, at times not enough thought is put into the work set by the teachers for these pupils and they are often expected to complete the same worksheets as the rest. They receive good support which enables them to tackle the tasks but some are too difficult and much of their work remains unfinished. Higher-attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged. Teachers plan all their work at an average level and rarely provide extension activities which would enable these pupils to achieve the next level.

102. By the end of Year 6, most pupils carry out investigations with reasonable fairness, making sensible predictions and recording their results following the teacher's instructions. They can generally say what happened but find it difficult to suggest reasons for it. Pupils lack opportunities to plan their own investigations or to decide how they will record their results. Although they use standard measurements such as centimetres, degrees centigrade and litres, they make frequent mistakes and this affects the accuracy of their findings. Their low attainment in numeracy and literacy adversely affects the standards they achieve. Pupils' books and folders indicate that they do a reasonable amount of work in the time available, particularly in Year 6. They have a sound understanding of the lifecycle of plants. They know how they reproduce and what the best conditions for growth are. They learn how to separate mixtures by various methods. Although they are generally able to choose the appropriate method for their mixture, as was observed in the Year 4 class during the inspection, they struggle to explain what they have done and why when they have to write it down. In fact, written work is a general weakness and pupils struggle to use appropriate scientific vocabulary in it. Teachers currently do not provide enough support in identifying key words and using them consistently from an early age so that pupils build up an appropriate range of scientifically accurate vocabulary. From January onwards, Year 6 pupils' work consists of a large number of questions from past National Curriculum tests in order to prepare them for the end of year tests. Although these do show that their ability to answer test questions improves, the work is monotonous and there are few opportunities to develop investigative skills to the required level.
103. The quality of teaching is satisfactory at both key stages, although it varies considerably from a very small amount of unsatisfactory teaching to a small amount which is very good. During the inspection, teaching was predominantly good. However, an examination of pupils' books during the inspection indicates that even in the very best lessons, insufficient account is taken of the needs of pupils of different ages and abilities in the same class. Teachers generally teach at the national average and all the worksheets and activities are the same for all pupils in the class. Consequently, lower-attainers frequently find the work too hard and are unable to finish, while the more able pupils are not given the chance to extend their thinking in order to move up to the next level. Despite this, teachers plan their lessons carefully in terms of what is to be covered and the teaching strategies to be used. They plan interesting activities, except towards the end of Year 6. They are well organised and pupils have easy access to all the resources they need. Teachers generally lead lively introductions and use questioning well to find out what pupils already know and to get them to apply it in new situations. Teachers follow the nationally suggested guidance when planning their lessons and this ensures that all the requirements of the National Curriculum are covered. However, assessment is inconsistently carried out at the moment and teachers do not always have the information they need to ensure that their work consistently builds on what has gone before. Marking is done very conscientiously by some teachers and tells pupils what they have done well and how it could be improved. A few simply tick the work, even if it is inaccurate, and do not always mark the work that pupils do. Homework is set occasionally and when it is, it is relevant to what pupils have been doing or will be doing in the next lesson.
104. The very recently appointed co-ordinator has a good understanding of the subject and how it should be taught, but has not yet had time to make much impact on standards. She has already examined teachers' planning and pupils' books. Through this, she has accurately identified all the strengths and weaknesses in the subject. She has produced an action plan which is sensible and achievable. She has improved the range of resources and made them more accessible. She has also recognised that teachers only make limited use of computers to support learning in science and intends to suggest where they could be used when she comments on their planning. She realises the need to include more visits and visitors in order to make the subject more interesting. To this end she has already organised a fun 'Forces Day' for the younger pupils later this year.

ART AND DESIGN

105. Attainment at the end of Year 2 is close to the national expectation. By the end of Year 6 attainment is below the expectation.

106. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 learn to express their ideas and feelings through drawing, painting, clay work and collage. They experiment with mixing colours in paint and folding, tearing and weaving paper to create different effects. Year 1 pupils during the inspection produced very good teddy bears from clay and used a wealth of natural materials to make a wide variety of creatures. Their skills in selecting appropriate materials and in moulding clay were developed well and their finished work was better than that of pupils of the same age nationally. However, this class achieved standards better than those of other Year 1 and 2 pupils and their skills are insufficiently extended by the work undertaken in Year 2. Pupils are given opportunities to observe closely what they are expected to draw. However, they are given little advice on how to do this and, consequently, most of their work lacks accuracy and attention to detail. Pupils are able to colour realistically, but their ability to do so neatly is weak. Pupils' knowledge of the work of a range of artists is very limited.
107. In Years 3 to 6, pupils are introduced to a wider range of media including pastels, mod-roc, charcoal and threads and fabrics. They have the chance to use computers to produce interesting repeating patterns in Year 4 and pupils in Year 5 were developing the skills to create pictures in the style of Matisse. In Year 3, they look at famous sculptures and this stimulates some real enthusiasm. However, the pupils' ability to draw what they can see or would like to produce is weak. By Year 6 pupils drawing skills have improved to only a limited extent. This restricts their attainment in other media. Pupils have a limited knowledge of the work of famous artists. Their knowledge of non-western art is weak. Pupils learn how to print, but they do so at a level more normally seen in much younger pupils. Their work using different paper folding techniques is much better as it does not rely on their ability to draw. They learn a good range of techniques and take care when using them, so their finished containers are of an appropriate standard.
108. The quality of teaching is unsatisfactory overall and it is very variable. Only a limited amount of teaching was seen during the inspection and it was all satisfactory or better. However, an examination of pupils' work revealed that the breadth of the curriculum was very narrow and that teachers did not consistently build upon previous knowledge and skills. As a result, skills such as drawing and painting were under-developed and showed limited improvement over the six years in the school. Sketch books are used inconsistently and opportunities to use them to practise new skills are missed. Too little attention is given to looking at and using the work of famous and non-western artists. Teachers are well organised in lessons and manage pupils well. They explain clearly what they want pupils to do and share the intended learning outcomes with them. Teachers plan interesting activities based on recent national guidance. However, they have not put sufficient thought into matching the nationally suggested units of work to the ability of pupils at Oughton School. Consequently, pupils often have insufficient skills to tackle the planned activity and would derive more satisfaction and better results if they worked on units intended for younger pupils. Not all teachers provide competent demonstrations of new skills so that pupils can see what is expected of them and how to achieve it. Expectations of what pupils can do are too low in most classes.
109. The art co-ordinator is currently absent and consequently there is a lack of direction for the subject. Teachers are insecure in their own skills and are unclear about what they should expect from the pupils. They need guidance on how to teach basic skills and someone with an overview who can ensure that each teacher knows how to build upon what has gone before. There are adequate resources to teach the subject, but they are currently not put to best use. There is a lack of high quality work around the school to stimulate pupils' ideas.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

110. In design and technology pupils attain standards by the end of Years 2 and 6 that are similar to those of pupils of the same age nationally.
111. By the end of Year 2, pupils are familiar with the design process. They draw simple diagrams of what they intend to make and label them to show the materials they will use. They choose appropriate materials from a limited range. They take care when cutting and sticking materials. They know that there are different ways of joining materials and that they are suitable for different

purposes. Pupils follow instructions to make different objects, some independently and others with adult support. Pupils learn to make simple mechanisms to create movement. During the inspection, they showed that they knew how to make winding mechanisms with cotton reels.

They used the skill to make an 'Incy Wincy Spider' climb up a spout made from a cardboard box. Pupils say what they like or don't like about their finished products and with support from the teacher they suggest how they might improve their designs.

112. Pupils make sound progress as they move from a below average-attainment at Year 1 through the school and achieve appropriate standards by the end of Years 2 and 6. They acquire a broad range of skills with the full range of materials required by the National Curriculum. Their drawings develop steadily so that by the end of Year 6, they are carefully annotated and drawn from different viewpoints. Pupils understand the need for a design specification, as was seen in their descriptions of what their biscuits must be like. Pupils carried out research into existing products and customers' likes and dislikes. This resulted in the successful production of some very imaginative biscuits. During the inspection, pupils in Years 5 and 6 showed that they could follow quite complicated sets of instructions to make models with Lego Dacta. They made electrical circuits using switches so that the buggies they had designed would be able to move backwards and forwards. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 learned a good range of stitches so that they could join their pencil case material securely and apply an attractive decoration.
113. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. It is never less than satisfactory and some is very good. Teachers have a secure understanding of the subject. They plan their lessons carefully and are well organised. They follow recent national guidelines when planning. As a result, pupils experience an interesting range of activities and have the chance to use a broad range of materials. Teachers demonstrate new skills carefully and give pupils the chance to practise them before using them to make their final products. Learning support assistants make an effective contribution to lessons, ensuring that lower-attaining pupils get the help they need to achieve success. Teachers make the subject more interesting by inviting visitors into school so that pupils have the chance to take part in technology challenges. Links with other subjects are made whenever possible. Last year pupils had a chance to design and make tepees linked to their history topic on homes. Few opportunities are provided for pupils to use ICT to support their work in this subject.
114. The co-ordinator for the subject has a good understanding of the subject and has attended a good range of relevant courses so that she is having a positive impact on standards. She has ensured that resources are adequate for all the new topics and are easily accessible. She checks teachers' planning to ensure that there is appropriate adherence to the scheme of work. However, she has not yet had the chance formally to monitor teaching or the quality of pupils' work. She is aware of the need to agree a common system of assessment which all teachers use to inform their planning of subsequent lessons and to make informed judgements about pupils' levels of attainment.

GEOGRAPHY

115. Standards attained by pupils at the end of Years 2 and 6 are lower than those of pupils of the same age nationally.
116. Year 2 pupils have studied the fictitious island, Struay, in the Katie Morag stories. They have done quite a lot of work in the time available. Most know what an island is and know that it is different to Westmill. They know that there are similarities and differences between the two places. However, although they have spoken about them, they have insufficient understanding to record them on their worksheets. Pupils have some understanding of the jobs people do in Struay and the way they travel around. Their ability to compare these with Westmill is limited. Pupils' knowledge of their own locality is weak. This restricts their achievement in the subject and poses difficulties for them when they are working. Pupils found it difficult to identify the physical and human features on a photograph of the seaside in a lesson during the inspection. This was partly because a significant

number of pupils had never been to the seaside. Pupils know why we use maps, but their own ability to do so is weak.

117. Pupils extend their knowledge as they move through the school. They begin to learn about more distant places. Older pupils begin to use maps to find out about different places and climate. They know what the Equator is, but they have no idea what the temperature would be like in countries that are on or near to it. They can find the British Isles on a world map and can name the different countries within it. Most know which the major continents are. However, they have limited understanding of how to use maps. They are unsure how to use grid references and do not have a secure understanding of basic compass directions. They cannot explain what contour lines are or what they show. They have made little use of maps and are unfamiliar with map symbols and what they mean. Pupils have a patchy experience in geography. In Year 4/5 pupils have done some thoughtful work considering whether the High Street in Hitchin should be closed to traffic. This has involved them in carrying out traffic surveys, using computers to record their results. They have undertaken appropriate fieldwork, gaining useful information from their observation of pedestrians, types of vehicle and parked cars. They used local street maps to identify key features such as supermarkets and car parks. They also identified the most common routes into Hitchin and then used their maps to suggest alternatives. This work was very carefully planned and tightly structured. As a result, pupils were able to work at nationally expected levels. However, pupils studying water in Year 6 have missed much of the geographical content in their work. They have spent a lot of time finding out why we need water, what it is used for and how much is used for different activities. They understand the water cycle. However, they have not addressed the issue of access to sufficient water throughout the world and considered the different methods of dealing with the problems of drought. By the end of Year 6, pupils know the names of rivers throughout the world, where they are and which is the longest. However, they do not know about the different features of rivers and how they are formed. Pupils have planned routes to places in other countries, but it is at a very low level. They have little understanding of how life in a less economically developed country is different to theirs.
118. The teaching of geography is unsatisfactory overall, but there is some good teaching in the school. Almost all the lessons observed during the inspection were satisfactory or better. However, discussions with pupils and an examination of the work in pupils' books indicate that the experience is very variable. Although teachers are now following the nationally suggested schemes of work, teachers are not always sure of exactly what they need to teach in order to develop pupils' geographical skills and knowledge. Consequently, some of the work is interesting and enjoyable, but its link to geography is tenuous. Opportunities for pupils to undertake fieldwork are limited, although pupils have made relevant local visits to look at traffic patterns for example. This is a significant weakness as the pupils need to 'see' what they are talking about in order to understand it. Insufficient use is made of videos to bring the subject to life. Within the lessons, teachers are well organised and generally manage pupils well. Learning support assistants help lower-attaining pupils so they are able to take a full part in the lessons. Some teachers mark work very thoroughly, indicating what pupils have done well and how they could improve. Others rarely mark work, or, it is only in the form of ticks and does not always identify incorrect answers.
119. The recently appointed co-ordinator has a secure understanding of the subject. She has already identified that pupils' mapping skills are particularly weak. She has sorted out the resources and purchased additional ones to ensure teachers have all they need to teach their units of work. She monitors medium-term plans to ensure teachers are covering the units of work agreed for each year group. However, she has not yet had time to do this in the detail necessary to ensure that the topics are being taught as the national guidance intended and that there is progression in the level at which the different knowledge and skills are taught. She has identified the need to organise some in-service training for the staff so they have a better understanding of what is expected of them. The co-ordinator has suggested a sensible approach to assessing pupils' attainment, but this is not yet consistently implemented across the school.

HISTORY

120. Attainment is below expectations by the end of Year 2 and the end of year 6. Year 2 pupils study the Great Fire of London and compare life in the seventeenth century with life today. They explain why the fire spread so quickly. They write about using leather buckets to get water from the River Thames to put out the fire. Pupils sequence pictures of fire engines that were in use at different times.
121. Pupils also study the life and work of Florence Nightingale and they write about what it was like in hospital at that time. This writing shows sound understanding of hospitals in times past and those of today. More able pupils produce work at the higher level because their writing shows a good understanding of historical fact and they make logical suggestions. Overall standards are below expectations because there are too few pupils, both girls and boys, working at the expected levels. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress.
122. In Year 4 pupils study how the Second World War affected the local area. They use a wide range of information to ask questions about the past and draw conclusions. The Year 6 pupils study the Victorians and write about what life was like. The writing shows an appreciation of how industrialisation has changed our lives. Overall, although essential elements of history are covered there is too little work in the pupils' books and much is at a level lower than expected.
123. During the inspection only two lessons were observed. Pupils' work in Years 2, 4 and 6 gives some insight into how the subject is taught and the quality of teaching overall is judged to be satisfactory. Teachers have provided the pupils with copies of old documents and photographs - for example to find out information about the past. Some of the teaching challenges their expectations. For example, when looking at a photograph of a city, which had been bombed during the War they made several suggestions about which city it was. They were surprised when they were told that it was not in this country. There are weaknesses in teaching that need to be addressed. The planning is sometimes too general and does not clearly link activities to what is to be learnt. Pupils of different abilities are not always appropriately challenged.
124. The co-ordinator has been appointed very recently and has made a good start in identifying the strengths and weaknesses in the subject. These include topic planning across the school to ensure that pupils in each year have the same entitlement; planning for the even development of skills and understanding; and addressing resource issues, particularly for historical enquiry and interpretation.
125. In addition to these, the marking of work does not help pupils understand what they need to do to improve and at school level, there is no information available to evaluate the quality of work. There is good information about useful Internet sites to support the teaching but these are not yet sufficiently used. Training has been limited and there is a need to develop teachers' understanding so that they do more to promote pupils' skills of enquiry. Management of the subject has recently improved and is now satisfactory.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

126. By the end of Year 2 standards in ICT are in line with national expectations but at the end of Year 6 they are below national expectations. By Year 2, pupils write and correct short passages using a word processor and can control a small robot to travel round a course by programming a set of instructions. By Year 6, they can use a spreadsheet to work out a set of accounts for a tuck shop and draw graphs. In one classroom, pupils use the interactive whiteboard to explain their thinking. Because the computer suite is a recent innovation, pupils higher up the school have not had time to develop the necessary skills to use it effectively. In one class, pupils aged nine were typing with one finger and had to hunt across the keyboard to find the correct letters. In the lessons seen, the suite was being used effectively to develop skills in the subject and also to enhance learning in other subjects, including literacy and numeracy skills. Another recent innovation is to provide teachers with laptop computers, which are being used to help with planning as well as to help with their classroom teaching, but have not been used so far to help with assessment.

127. Only three lessons were seen in the computer suite. In one of these, the teaching of the subject was satisfactory and in the others very good. However, the classroom teachers did not teach the lessons seen. Although they did the planning, lessons were taught by the headteacher as a part of his teaching commitment. Those teachers seen were generally confident in using a range of applications. When pupils are working on the computers, the teachers monitor and support them well. However, in the satisfactory lesson at the end of the afternoon, the children were very restless and the teacher had difficulty getting them to listen to her instructions. When the evidence from these lessons is considered alongside that from other sources, such as computing done by the pupils in classrooms, teaching is judged to be satisfactory, overall.
128. Across the school, learning using ICT is satisfactory. The computer suite, as well as the computers in classes, has provided good opportunities for access. Despite this, many pupils still have to develop sufficient skills to use them effectively because their typing skills are rudimentary. However, they have no anxieties about using the technology; they log on and access work done previously. Pupils in Year 4 were learning to use a database to store and search for information. Pupils in Year 5 were learning how to create pictures in the style of Matisse and in Year 6 they were learning to search the Internet to find information about where to go on holiday. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language learn at the same rate as others in the class. In lessons on other subjects, pupils in Year 1 were using the computers to write stories and in Year 4 they were searching the Internet for adverts about cars to go with work they were doing about persuasive writing.
129. Across the school, pupils' attitudes to the use of ICT are generally good. Pupils enjoy opportunities to use the technology and get great benefit from it. They work well in pairs or small groups when asked to, they share ideas and help each other. In one lesson, at the end of the day, they were restless and this affected their concentration.
130. The subject is co-ordinated effectively. The teacher in charge has only recently been appointed, but has good subject knowledge and is enthusiastic. She is supported ably by a colleague who manages the computer room, ensures it is working effectively and undertakes some of the teaching. The headteacher has ably supported developments in this area and ensures that there are the resources to provide for future developments. The technology is being used to support other areas of the curriculum. At present there is no assessment system for the subject across the school, however a system has been drafted but has still to be implemented.

MUSIC

131. Attainment is below national expectations by the end of Years 2 and 6. All aspects of the programme of study are planned for, with a current emphasis on developing performing through singing and playing. This has been successful. Singing assemblies provide an opportunity for pupils in Years 3 to 6 to come together and perform a range of songs. These occasions are well organised and very well led. Sessions start with simple warm-up exercises. Some songs are linked to an assembly theme. During these assemblies, the girls sing with more enthusiasm than boys do. All the staff join in with the songs and help to make it have a sense of occasion and the enthusiasm of the teachers is transmitted to the pupils. These occasions can provide moments of inspiration. During singing assembly, the story about the work of Mother Theresa helped to capture a mood when the pupils sang about peace and understanding. Other occasions include Year 1 pupils singing with enthusiasm and joy.
132. Overall, the quality of teaching is broadly satisfactory, with some weaknesses for pupils in Years 1 - 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 – 6. Sessions in Years 1 and 2 are sometimes too long to hold pupils' attention or too demanding at the end of the day. When this occurs, teachers struggle to maintain an adequate pace of learning. Additionally the planning is too general and the level of the work is sometimes inappropriate. In one lesson, the pupils were expected to read the words of a verse of a song which were too difficult.

133. Pupils in Years 3 - 6 study the 'Hallelujah Chorus' and develop their ideas about musical notation by clapping out simple sequences. Whilst listening to the 'Hallelujah Chorus' pupils were provided with simple prompts to help both listening and understanding. Singing in two parts is beginning to develop. The boys generally are much more reluctant to be involved than the girls are. In one lesson, the teacher did not accept this and persisted well to get both boys and girls to join in appropriately.
134. The school has recently purchased some new resources to support the teaching of music and these are yet to be evaluated fully. There are no records kept of what pupils can do, therefore planning is currently general with too little account taken of the specific needs of pupils. The co-ordinator has identified composing and the use of ICT as areas for development. She plans to review the scheme of work and provide some training for staff. Together with monitoring across the school, these appropriate actions will help to improve standards of attainment. She has the skills and the understanding to support the development of the subject well.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

135. Standards in physical education in the lessons observed are below the expectation by Years 2 and 6. These standards are largely explained by the large number of children who enter the Nursery with under-developed physical skills and experience, and by the high number of pupils with learning difficulties through the school.
136. In Years 1-2, the teachers give the pupils well-chosen warm-up activities. Pupils have learnt to follow simple commands though do not always respond quickly. They are developing skills such as moving in a zig-zag pattern and working at different levels - high or low. In a carefully-planned lesson in Year 2, the pupils developed their high and low movements on floor apparatus by travelling on their hands and feet over, under or through the apparatus. Most pupils worked hard to develop their ideas though few took account of others, tending to push in to where others were already. They demonstrated an overall lack of control and co-ordination, and the skills to create interesting simple sequences. Their attitudes and behaviour were satisfactory overall during the lesson. A few higher-attaining pupils demonstrated developing skills and responded well to the teacher's expectations.
137. In Year 3 pupils enjoyed throwing a bean bag and running or jumping to reach it, most running easily. They were less skilled at controlling a ball around markers by bouncing or dribbling it. In a very well managed dance lesson in Year 4, the teacher's very good subject knowledge led pupils to create imaginative movements. From a sleeping position half the children were lions, and when the lions awoke they were searching for something. Several children made good interpretations as the tambourine added tension. By Year 6, the pupils have made satisfactory progress over previous years but their level of skill and fitness is below average. In a well-run circuit training session the pupils were arranged in groups to do several varied tasks to improve fitness and basic skills, such as step ups, skipping and star jumps. Only a minority of higher-attaining pupils demonstrated good control, fluency of movement and the necessary fitness to sustain the task. Many pupils did not perform the task correctly, taking an easier version, or had to stop for a moment to regain strength. Some pupils were not able to carry out their task without adult intervention. Overall, the pupils demonstrated unsatisfactory skills.
138. Overall, the pupils enjoy their physical activities and want to take part. Most pupils have satisfactory behaviour, and this enables them to make satisfactory progress during lessons. There is no significant difference in pupils' learning by different groups of pupils. Those with learning difficulties, including those from the Unit, and those learning English as an additional language are supported carefully and make sound progress. The quality of the teaching observed indicated good teaching overall in the school. Teachers plan carefully and make a good choice of task to provide interest and skill development. The teachers use good behaviour strategies to encourage the pupils to work hard and improve. Teachers also have good strategies to include all pupils. Their good practice of inviting pupils to demonstrate and evaluate their work helps to improve their performance. The teachers are aware of health and safety issues.

139. The school provides a good range of experience and activities in physical education over the course of the year and the subject meets statutory requirements. A physical education specialist provides a six-week course of instruction for girls in aerobics followed by a six-week course for boys in circuit training during the autumn term for pupils in Year 6 as an after-school activity. This was established as a result of concern to improve pupils' physical fitness and is proving most successful since over 80 per cent of pupils take part. Pupils go swimming in the junior years and most reach a satisfactory standard. There is a satisfactory selection of resources and the hall provides a suitable space for gymnastics and other activities. The subject leader provides good direction. There are no whole school assessment procedures at present to record pupils' skills and progress, although these are planned to be introduced.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

140. Attainment is just below expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6. In Year 2, several pupils' work is in line with expectations but there are very few above. They write about the Christmas story and why it is such a special event and describe some of the special features that can be found in the local church. Some of the writing describes the experiences that they have had about going to church and how they have to 'sing and pray'. Year 1 pupils talk about the Creation, and Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. They learn about temptation through listening to the story of the snake and the eating of the forbidden apple. By Year 4, the pupils have developed their understanding, and retell the story of the Hindu Creation, making appropriate comparisons with the Christian Story. In Year 6, the pupils write and talk about the Holy Trinity. They have studied Buddhism and Hinduism and can demonstrate knowledge about the religions at a very basic level – such as the name of a Hindu God - but do not yet show much understanding of the significance of religious beliefs. Pupils' understanding of moral elements is stronger. They can ask questions about matters of right and wrong and suggest appropriate answers. They have a strong sense of fairness which is encouraged through teaching in the classes and assemblies.
141. Overall teaching is good. Pupils make satisfactory progress since many are dependent on adult support in their learning. Planning is sufficiently detailed and there are adequate resources to provide stimulating experiences for the pupils. Most lessons involve the reading of stories and discussion about key ideas which enable the pupils to develop their understanding. A strong moral theme runs through all lessons and school assemblies. Pupils are asked to consider and express their own feelings and reflect on what is right and wrong behaviour. Pupils with special educational needs are supported appropriately. Both boys and girls have positive attitudes to the subject and are keen to share what they know. They behave well and respect each other's opinions and ideas.
142. Some monitoring of the subject has taken place. The subject is well represented in the school through display and there are strong links to what pupils learn in the personal, social and health aspects of the curriculum. The curriculum covers both aspects of learning about religion and learning from religion appropriately. Some local visits have taken place to further the pupils' understanding and the co-ordinator plans to extend these opportunities. There are currently no records kept across the school identifying pupils' attainment. Therefore, there is insufficient information at school and class level about what needs to be done to improve attainment.