

INSPECTION REPORT

STOCKTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Southam, Warwickshire

LEA area: Warwickshire

Unique reference number: 125523

Headteacher: Mrs Phyllis King

Reporting inspector: Ms Jo Stevenson
15628

Dates of inspection: 7th – 9th October 2002

Inspection number: 249916

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

© Crown copyright 2002

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

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: School Street
Stockton
Southam
Warwickshire

Postcode: CV47 8JE

Telephone number: 01926 812483

Fax number: 01926 812483

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs Karen Boucher

Date of previous inspection: 13th November 2000

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
15628	Jo Stevenson	Registered inspector	English; Geography; History; Religious education.	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9545	Kevin Greatorex	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
18198	Roger Sansom	Team inspector	Science; Information and communication technology; Music; Education Inclusion; Foundation Stage.	Pupils' attitudes and personal development;
5020	John Burnham	Team inspector	Mathematics; Art and Design; Design and technology; Physical education; Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

The inspection contractor was:

Northamptonshire Inspection and Advisory Service (NIAS)
Cliftonville Centre
Cliftonville Middle School
Cliftonville Road
Northampton
NN1 5BW

Telephone no: 01604 259876

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

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

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	11
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	12
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	14
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	16
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	18
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	18
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	22
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	27

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Stockton is a growing village a few miles from Southam and within easy reach of commercial centres such as Leamington Spa, Coventry, Oxford and Birmingham. The school is a smaller-than-average primary school with 124 children on roll aged from four to eleven. At the time of the inspection ten children were attending the reception class in the mornings only. There are sixty-three boys and sixty-one girls almost all of whom are from white European backgrounds. No pupils take free school meals; this is well below average. An above average number of pupils have special educational needs, including five with statements of special educational needs, which is also above average. The pupils have a wide range of specific needs including autism, behavioural, learning and language difficulties. Two recently qualified teachers took up posts at the start of the autumn term, as did the new headteacher and senior teacher, both of whom were appointed from the existing staff.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school where standards continue to rise. The overall quality of teaching is good, with consistently high quality in the classes with the oldest pupils. The new headteacher has already established herself as a decisive and perceptive leader who manages efficiently. She is well supported by the school staff and a well-informed and effective governing body, led by a very able Chairperson. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Achieves very high standards in information and communication technology and above average standards in English, particularly writing, and mathematics and science
- The leadership and management of the headteacher, governors and key staff is very effective
- Pupils' attitudes to school, their learning and their behaviour are very good
- Promotes pupils' social and moral development very well and has excellent relationships, based on mutual respect and the valuing of individuals
- Procedures for assessment and the use of the information gathered are very well established and effective; in addition, pupils have a very thorough understanding of what they can do well and how to improve on weaker areas
- Cares very well for all its pupils by providing very high quality support for all round personal development and provides very well for pupils with special educational needs, helping them make good progress

What could be improved

- The range and quality of experiences within the Foundation Stage
- Spelling and the presentation of work, particularly in Years 3 to 6
- Communication between school and home regarding the nature and purpose of homework
- The range of opportunities for pupils' spiritual development and their awareness of cultural diversity

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in November 2000. Since then, improvement has continued apace and good progress has been made on the key issues raised.

There has been rapid improvement in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science in the last two years to bring standards in national tests up to the average for all schools. This is particularly noticeable in mathematics in which standards have risen from amongst the lowest in the country (E*) to be average. Subject co-ordinators now play a significant part in monitoring and evaluating standards and in setting targets for further development. The school is well on course to meet and even exceed the overall targets set in English and mathematics.

Teachers are planning the start of lessons to take into account the range of ability in their classes. In almost all cases, introductions for the whole class are well paced and to the point. Much hard work has

been put into improving writing. This is paying dividends with higher standards and quality in different types of written work.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools in England and Wales			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	E	E	C	D
mathematics	E	E*	C	E
science	E	E	C	D

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

NB. Similar schools are those in England and Wales that have a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals.

When making comparisons with similar schools, the small numbers of pupils in each year group, and therefore the high percentage each pupil represents, should be taken into account. Improvement based on pupils' prior attainment is above average in mathematics and science and well above average in English. The results of national tests for seven year olds show even greater improvement. From being well below average from 1998 – 2000, in 2001 the results for reading were above average, those for writing were well above average and in mathematics they were in the highest five per cent nationally. These results compare very favourably with those of similar schools.

Results in 2002 for seven year olds show that standards continue to rise. Targets were exceeded in writing and mathematics and almost achieved in reading. Provisional results for 11 year olds 2002 indicate further raising of standards. The target in English was achieved and that in mathematics was very nearly achieved. The very ambitious target for science was not achieved despite a high proportion of pupils reaching high levels. High standards of work were seen during the inspection in English, mathematics, science and in information and communication technology in which standards are well above those normally seen. Standards in geography, history and religious education are above those normally seen. In all other subjects standards of work seen were average.

All pupils achieve well in acquiring key skills in literacy and numeracy and in applying them across the curriculum. Children in the reception class are well on course to meet the Early Learning Goals in personal, social and emotional development, communication language and literacy and mathematics. While the children show the relevant capabilities they are unlikely to achieve fully the Early Learning Goals in knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development unless the curriculum for the Foundation Stage is broadened.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very good attitudes to school and are eager to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils behave very well at all times.

Personal development and relationships	Relationships are excellent throughout the school community. Pupils and adults treat each other with respect at all times.
Attendance	Attendance is very good and is well above the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good

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

The quality of teaching overall is good. The teaching of English and mathematics is good in all classes. Teachers have good knowledge of, and show strengths in developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. They meet the needs of all pupils in their classes, with valuable support from teaching assistants. A very high proportion of the teaching of seven to eleven year olds was of very high quality.

Pupils have a very good knowledge of their own learning through individual targets and clear feedback from assessment. They are aware of what they have learnt and respond well to new challenges. They are not afraid to try ideas and strategies and, if they make mistakes, they learn effectively from them. Pupils with special educational needs and those who are more able make good progress in their learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad, balanced and generally well matched to pupils' needs. There are carefully planned links between National Curriculum subjects. In their learning, pupils are successfully encouraged to undertake investigations and solve problems. The school has formed very good working partnerships with other schools in the area.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The processes of identifying and reviewing pupils' special educational needs are very good. Pupils receive high quality support from teachers and teaching assistants.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. The social and moral aspects of pupils' personal development are very good and are a strength of the school. Provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides good quality support and guidance and very effectively promotes the welfare, health and safety of the pupils in a warm, secure and caring environment.
How well does the school work partnership with parents	Very well. Parents and members of the community are made welcome in the school and make a positive contribution to school life. Parents are well informed about their children's' progress and about school events.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very effective. The new headteacher has continued the good work begun by her predecessor and has introduced new initiatives successfully. The senior teacher and subject co-ordinators provide valuable support and assistance.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very well. The governors continue to play an important part in the school's improvement.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Extensive and informative. Very many approaches to observing, analysing and evaluating the school's work are carried out and the information gained is used to good effect in identifying priorities for development.
The strategic use of resources	Excellent. All elements of funding are used extremely well. Staff, accommodation, despite problems with the building, and learning resources are all used extremely effectively in raising standards.

The leadership of the headteacher and governors ensures clear educational direction. A shared commitment to improvement runs through the whole school community, leading to confidence and effective teamwork. There is a willingness to accept new challenges. A strength of the management is the way in which new initiatives are sensitively introduced and carefully managed to avoid overload, while still maintaining momentum. Best value principles are applied as appropriate.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school • Their children make good progress • Teaching is good • The behaviour of pupils is good • The school is well led and managed • They are well informed about how their children are getting on • The school helps children to become more mature and responsible • They are comfortable about approaching the school to discuss issues • The school works closely with parents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework • The range of activities outside lessons

A very high proportion of parents responding to the questionnaire is extremely supportive of the school and confirms that it has many strong features. However, a few were concerned about the amount of work to be done at home and the range of activities outside lessons. Inspection evidence does not support these concerns.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. This is a small school in which the number of pupils in each year group is below average. Consequently, each pupil represents a high percentage in overall school results. This should be borne in mind when any comparisons are made.
2. After several years of low attainment, standards improved dramatically in 2001. When compared to all schools nationally, the results of statutory tests for seven year olds were above the national average in reading and well above average in writing. The results in mathematics were among the top five per cent in the country. In comparison with similar schools, reading was average and writing and mathematics were well above average. Teacher assessments in science were very high in comparison with all schools although a lower than average proportion achieved the higher Level 3.
3. Girls achieved higher results than boys in each aspect of the tests. Girls and boys both exceeded the national average, particularly in mathematics. The overall trend in attainment in reading is upwards after several years of low attainment. After dips in attainment in writing and mathematics in 1998 and 1999 respectively, both now show an upward trend.
4. National comparative information for 2002 was published at the end of October but it has not been used in this report. The school's results for seven year olds show a high percentage of pupils achieved Level 2 and above with a significant proportion achieving Level 3. The school's targets were exceeded in writing and mathematics and almost achieved in reading.
5. Attainment at the end of Year 6 in 2000 was well below average. The results of the tests taken by eleven year olds in 2001 showed considerable improvement in the proportion of pupils achieving Level 4 and above in English, mathematics and science. Results in each of the three subjects were average when compared with all schools. When compared with similar schools, the performance in English and science was below average; in mathematics it was well below average. However, the improvement on the results achieved by the same pupils when they were aged seven was above average in mathematics and science and well above average in English. The year group was very small, only nine pupils.
6. Provisional results for 2002 indicate that standards continue to improve in all three subjects. The school's target for English with a very high proportion of pupils achieving Level 5 was achieved and that for mathematics was almost reached,. The extremely ambitious target for science was not achieved but, as in English, over a third of pupils gained Level 5.
7. Above-average work was seen in progress in all aspects of English, in mathematics and in elements of geography and history. Work of a very high quality in science and information and communication technology was evident. Standards in all other subjects are in line with what is expected for pupils of similar ages. Attainment in religious education meets that laid down by the locally Agreed Syllabus.

- 8 All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who show specific gifts and talents, make good progress. They are meeting their individual targets, and thus contributing to overall targets, within reasonable timelines. Targets at all levels are suitably challenging and a great deal of information is collected and analysed to evaluate whether progress is being made quickly enough.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

- 9 Pupils' attitudes to learning and to the school community are very good and are a strength of the school. The level of attendance (96.5% in 2000/01) is well above the national average, and the level of unauthorised absence is below the national average. The school monitors attendance very effectively and takes positive steps to encourage punctuality and to deter family holidays during term-time. Parents' opinion that almost all of their children enjoy coming to this school is reflected in pupils' cheerful demeanour throughout the day. Pupils are attentive and concentrate well in lessons, showing that they enjoy learning. Their response to opportunities to make choices or show initiative is excellent. They demonstrate considerable maturity and a well-developed ability to organise themselves.
- 10 The standard of behaviour has, if anything, improved since the last inspection. During lessons it is mostly very good. Pupils' confinement to the building because of rain, during breaks and the inconvenience caused by impending building repairs, does not cause the friendly atmosphere to deteriorate. Pupils whose behaviour declines respond very well to teachers' strategies for calming and refocusing their attention on the lesson. Pupils know the meaning of right and wrong and accept teachers' guidance regarding what is and what is not acceptable.
- 11 Relationships are excellent throughout the school community. Pupils relate very well, both to each other and to adults. They work well individually, in pairs and in larger groupings, showing good mutual support and consideration for others. This helps pupils to feel confident, so they are all able and willing to express their opinions or feelings. Pupils are enthusiastic about work and are keen to answer teachers' questions, but everyone in a class would always expect to be able to contribute.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

- 12 Teaching overall is good. The quality has, at least, been maintained, and to a large extent improved, since the last inspection. All lessons were at least satisfactory and four out of five were good or better. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is consistently very good.
- 13 Teachers teach literacy and numeracy well. Having established the acquisition of basic skills such as phonics and number recognition, they rapidly introduce more complex work so that pupils have continual challenge alongside reinforcement of existing skills, knowledge and understanding.
- 14 Teachers have thorough subject knowledge across the curriculum. They plan and prepare lessons well, taking full account of pupils' prior achievements, share the objectives clearly with the class, returning to check what has been learnt at the end of lessons. This strategy has a very positive impact on pupils' learning as pupils understand what is expected of them and rise to the challenge of meeting the objective. Teachers maintain a brisk pace and vary the teaching approaches to

encourage the development of thinking skills.

- 15 Lessons almost always begin with a recap of what has been learned in the previous session. Teachers match tasks well to the needs of all pupils, taking full account of age, capabilities, gender and special educational needs. Teaching assistants play an important part within the teaching team, interacting with teachers and pupils to provide effective support and challenge to pupils with specific learning needs, including the most able. Teachers from the neighbouring secondary school take specific lessons to enrich further the learning of pupils in Year 6.
- 16 Alongside their more established colleagues, the teachers who are very new to the school have introduced very smooth classroom routines and work habits that encourage high productivity and effective learning. Teachers set appropriate targets in small steps so that pupils can succeed within a short time and then rise to the next challenge. Work is marked with clear reference to its objective and teachers provide extremely helpful comments that show what has been achieved and what pupils should do next. This high level of challenge is set within a supportive and relaxed ethos in which achievement is celebrated without over-praising.
- 17 Teachers provide very effective role models for pupils with their oral and written language; they show respect and care for pupils and other adults. This ensures excellent relationships that bring out the best in everyone. Teachers deal sensitively with pupils' errors and misunderstandings and turn them into teaching points to move individual pupils and the class forward in their learning. They listen attentively to pupils who, in turn, are confident to pose questions and make comments that show a mature and sensible attitude to learning. Teachers take positive steps to involve pupils in their learning and to give them some responsibility for it. Pupils respond very well to these approaches. They organise themselves well and work successfully in a range of different situations. They stay focused within group discussions, for example, and show a mature attitude to such activities.
- 18 Teachers are sufficiently confident and skilled to take risks to make lessons more exciting. They adopt roles and provide interesting resources to stimulate discussions, demonstrate specific skills and join in activities enthusiastically. They prepare thoroughly and go to great lengths to make learning fun.
- 19 Teachers make clear links between subjects and, as a result, pupils acquire and apply key skills in a wider context, making greater sense of their learning. Teachers display pupils' work sensitively and imaginatively so that classrooms are stimulating and interesting, and in which learning is purposeful and fun. Although, in some classes, tasks set for homework are varied and helpful in reinforcing work done in lessons or in encouraging additional research and extended study, there is not yet a consistent whole-school approach.
- 20 Good and very good teaching was observed in English, mathematics, science, geography, history and music. An excellent information and communication technology lesson with Year 5 and 6 was observed. The teacher skilfully demonstrated key processes to the whole group and then carefully managed pupils in various locations throughout the school without losing sight of either the lesson objectives or of the pupils' learning needs. The lesson was exciting and stimulating, inspiring pupils to learn quickly. This lesson was a very good example of the ways in which teachers raise standards of attainment and ensure rapid progress through high expectations and direct, well-focused teaching.

- 21 Pupils learn enthusiastically; they work conscientiously on an individual, small group and whole-class basis. They collaborate very effectively, sharing tasks such as recording ideas and taking turns within discussions.
- 22 They ask suitably-worded questions and locate relevant information from a wide range of sources, drawing out comparisons and contrasts through careful analysis of data. They are confident in giving reasons for their opinions and using precise language to explain their thoughts. They employ innovative ways to solve problems and are beginning to evaluate their work and that of others.

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

- 23 The school's curricular aims are clearly stated, and all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education are provided. The curriculum offered to pupils is broad. The current weighting of time favours the development of the basic skills of English and mathematics, but the school is maintaining a sense of proportion through the development of a topic approach. As a result, the rigour, challenge and depth of the National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies have been maintained and these provide effective support for work across the curriculum.
- 24 Topics are carefully planned and evaluated on a regular basis to ensure that links between subjects are well founded and serve to raise standards further. These topics themselves provide a good framework for the development of basic skills. The result of this is a broad curriculum, and one that achieves an appropriate balance, both in terms of the way time is spent, and the means through which pupils learn and express themselves. The school continues actively to promote the arts through its curriculum.
- 25 There is an effective, whole-school approach to planning, and teachers plan collaboratively across the year groups. Short-term plans clearly identify the learning intentions. The longer-term planning reflects the schools adoption of national strategies and guidance and the continued evolution of topic approaches. The curriculum is regularly reviewed and informed by assessments of pupils' progress. This ensures a relevant curriculum that provides good continuity of learning for pupils.
- 26 The wider provision for pupils with special educational need is very good. Within the school's inclusive, caring ethos, the process of identifying special educational needs is very good, as are the arrangements for the allocation of learning support staff. The individual education plans of these pupils provide an effective focus for their teaching and support, and teachers translate these effectively into sharp objectives to meet their needs. Teachers meet the needs of pupils well in all subjects of the curriculum, and good support from teaching assistants provides high quality guidance. As a result, these pupils make good progress.

- 27 Strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy skills are good. The National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy have been fully embraced by the school. Their implementation is contributing effectively to improving the quality of teaching and learning opportunities for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. The school has also taken full advantage of extension schemes in literacy and numeracy to target improvement for identified groups of pupils.
- 28 The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities. These activities include football, cross-country running, athletics, netball, art, cross-stitch club, gardening club and a school choir. A positive feature of this work is the involvement of many teaching and support staff. Pupils benefit considerably from this additional provision which is taken up eagerly by boys and girls alike.
- 29 Equality of opportunity is addressed successfully. Teachers and support staff work conscientiously to ensure that pupils are not disadvantaged. Arrangements for withdrawing pupils with special educational needs and those who attend extra music tuition are carefully monitored to ensure that pupils do not miss significant amounts of their class lesson time.
- 30 The school's provision for the personal, social and health education of pupils is good. This is achieved both through the subjects of the curriculum, as well as through the excellent relationships fostered at all levels within the school community. The oldest pupils consider important aspects of personal relationships, including sex education lessons, during their last years at school.
- 31 Pupils' learning is additionally enhanced by opportunities to join residential visits, as in the Year 5 and 6 visit to Exeter. During the course of the year, visitors from the local community, including the minister from the local church, who also leads assemblies on a regular basis, make a good contribution to the provision for pupils. There have been good links with the parish council over aspects of environmental education, and with the local post office in respect of learning about simple money matters.
- 32 There are very good links with other local primary schools and with the local secondary technology college to which most pupils transfer at the age of eleven. These support each other in a variety of ways and provide additional training opportunities for teachers in each school. This strengthens links, and works for the benefit of all pupils. In particular, the links with the secondary technology college substantially enhance provision for design and technology, mathematics, science and ICT.
- 33 Overall, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Aspects of social and moral development are very good: those for spiritual and cultural development are satisfactory. Social development is very good and is a strength of a school community which is fostering an expectation that all pupils, whatever their ability, strive for their best. While reward stickers in books and certificates presented at family assemblies signify and rightly praise good work by the pupils, the intrinsic satisfaction of behaving courteously, taking care of others, and doing your best, is paramount. Throughout the school there exists an atmosphere of genuine mutual respect in which everyone feels valued. Both in classes and at playtimes and dinner times, social relationships are harmonious, and older pupils show genuine care for the younger ones.
- 34 Moral development is very good. The provision within the curriculum supports the

school's aims and values, and teachers take opportunities to explore the feelings and responses of others when opportunities arise, particularly in English and religious education lessons. Strategies are used successfully to help pupils understand the feelings and reactions of others and to distinguish right choices from wrong ones in the way they behave. Pupils' actions are guided well by school and class rules to which pupils adhere. All adults provide consistently good examples so that children have a clear appreciation of how to behave. As a result, the standards of behaviour and respect in the school are high.

- 35 Provision for spiritual development, while still satisfactory, is less distinct and less well embedded within the curriculum. Pupils display a sense of empathy with others, and genuine concern, for example, if friends are hurt or anxious. Whole-school assemblies provide opportunities for pupils to come together in song and worship, but, currently, there are limited occasions for reflection and expression of joy and wonder. Assemblies and religious education lessons promote an awareness and understanding of their own and others' beliefs. Within the curriculum, planned opportunities to explore and extend spiritual development are not often indicated, nor are spontaneously arising opportunities always taken. However, there are a few good examples of expressive and creative work, such as the impact of photographs taken on a residential visit, which suggest that this is an aspect of the school's provision which could easily be developed.
- 36 Similarly, cultural dimensions of the curriculum are satisfactory but remain underdeveloped. Pupils have a good awareness of their own cultural assumptions and beliefs. The school provides opportunities for the celebration of Christian and other festivals, and this is important. There are also occasions when visitors work in school and share their lives and experiences. There have been visits to a temple as part of the study of Sikhism, and pupils in Year 3 have studied aspects of Buddhism. All this helps pupils to empathise. However, the resources, in terms of books, musical instruments and artefacts, for example, are limited, giving pupils insufficient insight into different cultures. Pupils have a growing appreciation of their role as global citizens; this is promoted through links with Kenya and Ethiopia through charitable organisations and local contacts from within the community. However, there are too few planned opportunities for pupils to participate in, and respond to, broader multicultural issues through music, drama, art and writing.
- 37 The good features and strengths identified in the last inspection have been maintained. Investigative and experimental aspects of the curriculum remain a central focus, and these have a positive impact on pupils' attainment and their attitudes to learning. Good progress has been made in refining and extending the links between subjects within the topic framework, whilst retaining the rigour of approaches to literacy and numeracy.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- 38 The school provides very good support and guidance and very effectively promotes the welfare, health and safety of all the pupils in a stable, caring and secure environment. The level of care is a strength of the school and contributes very positively to pupils' personal and academic development.

- 39 In this small school most members of staff know the pupils well and have a clear picture of their strengths and weaknesses. Newer staff are quickly building their knowledge of, and their relationships with, the pupils. All teachers are sensitive to the needs of the pupils and consistently monitor well their personal development and their ability to cope on a day-to-day basis. The daily contact continues to allow parents to be made aware of any emerging strengths or weaknesses.
- 40 There are very effective procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and monitoring their progress. The information provided by the pre-school setting and from assessment as they enter school provides a clear picture of children's developing skills and abilities in relation to the Early Learning Goals. In all year groups information is gathered by ongoing assessment of pupils along with formalised testing, as appropriate. Statutory assessment at the end of each stage is carried out as prescribed and pupils' progress towards National Curriculum levels is carefully tracked. Pupils with special educational needs are identified at the earliest possible stage and suitable programmes of work are planned for them. Their progress, too, is monitored with care. Teachers use assessment information effectively to plan work to meet the diverse needs of pupils in their classes. Long and medium-term curricular plans are adjusted accordingly, and individual lesson plans are adapted to take account of pupils' responses and the pace of learning.
- 41 The headteacher is currently the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO). As she does not have a class-teaching commitment, she is enabled to carry out her role efficiently by having suitable non-contact time for meetings, reviews and monitoring. The provision for all pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements, is very effective.
- 42 The school has very good systems in place to monitor and promote attendance. They support very well the very high levels of attendance at the school. Registers are marked speedily, correctly and efficiently, at the start of the school day and after lunch. All absences are properly noted, and contact is made with parents so that they can explain the absence. Attendance figures are properly aggregated and correctly reported to parents.
- 43 There was no unauthorised absence last year.
- 44 The staff provide very good examples in promoting high standards of good behaviour. Very good procedures are in place for monitoring and promoting discipline and good behaviour. The school's rules are exhibited throughout the building and are clearly understood by all pupils. The behaviour policy is consistently applied by all members of staff who were seen to pre-empt incidents of possible misbehaviour with calm intervention, maintaining good control.
- 45 Child protection issues are handled very effectively. All members of staff are aware of the need for vigilance and the steps to take if suspicions are aroused. Health and safety is promoted effectively in the school. Potential hazards are identified and remedial action taken as necessary. All members of staff are safety conscious and watch for the security of the children. They work hard to create a secure environment in which the wellbeing of pupils is promoted effectively. This was well demonstrated during the inspection when a section of perimeter fencing was immediately coned off, to avoid further accidents, after a pupil was slightly injured by protruding wire.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

- 46 Analysis of the questionnaires returned shows that parents are highly supportive of the school and consider that it has many strong features. All those responding to the questionnaire confirm that their children like school. They also think that the teaching is good and the children are expected to work hard. Virtually all parents feel comfortable when approaching the school with a problem and feel that the school is well led and managed. They feel that the school is helping their children to become more mature and responsible, that behaviour is good and they are making good progress. They also believe that the school works closely with them and keeps them well informed about how their children are getting on. Inspection evidence confirms these positive views of parents.
- 47 A few parents did not feel that the school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons or that the amount of work to be done at home is right. These reservations are not supported by inspection evidence. The range of extra- curricular activities is appropriate for a school of this size. The amount of homework is consistent with the age and ability of the children. However, the communication with parents regarding the quantities of work and the school's expectations is insufficient to enable all parents to be fully aware of what is required.
- 48 Parents and other adults are encouraged to involve themselves in the life of the school and many respond enthusiastically by participating in a range of activities. They help in the classrooms, in the preparation of resources, around the site and on trips. In addition, many parents are supportive of the work that their children are expected to do at home. The Friends of Stockton School Association is highly active in organising fund-raising activities and events in support of the school. The school values highly the contributions made by parents that materially enhance the children's learning and personal development.
- 49 Information to parents is good overall. The school prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents are clear, comprehensive and meet statutory requirements. These publications give parents a good overview of the school's values and its curriculum. The regular contact with the teaching staff enables parents to give and receive regularly updated information about the children and their progress. Parents of children new to the school, especially in reception, are given plenty of information and have opportunities to get to know the teachers and school routines so that they and their children know what to expect. Those who have children with special educational needs are fully involved with discussions about their needs and reviews of progress. Reports to parents provide good information about attainment and progress and also include clear and specific areas for improvement. The analysis sheets completed by the children demonstrate the clear understanding that they have of their own learning, progress and achievement.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 50 The headteacher displays excellent qualities of leadership. She has only recently taken up the post, having previously been senior teacher at the school. She supported her predecessor well in successfully leading the school through much change and is well suited to lead the school towards further success. She has established very good working relationships within the staff team and with governors, several of whom are new to the school and who share with her a commitment to, and desire for, whole-school improvement. She leads by example, spending a substantial amount of her time both in supporting pupils and developing her colleagues.

- 51 The aims of the school are very well reflected in all its work. The aims express a commitment to valuing and respecting all individuals, encouraging confidence, independence and high esteem while setting high expectations for work and behaviour. Emphasis is also placed on high quality teaching that fosters enthusiasm for learning within and beyond the National Curriculum in a stimulating environment. Underpinning all of this is a positive partnership with parents and the community. The school has worked very hard to build its reputation after a period of limited success. The previous inspection confirmed that many of the strategies were beginning to have a positive impact on raising standards and, since then, a system of continuous improvement has been firmly established.
- 52 A notable feature of this improvement is the involvement of pupils in their own learning by teachers providing clear feedback to aid pupils' self-knowledge and increase their motivation and commitment to learning. This enables pupils to take responsibility for their learning and to become more mature. The school places great emphasis on the promotion of pupils' self-esteem, confidence and care for each other.
- 53 The overall school development plan gives a clear overview of all school improvement initiatives by drawing together key aspects from the relevant action plans. Each initiative's plan identifies the persons responsible for delivering the plan and the success criteria by which the plan is evaluated. Plans are costed and set within very clear timelines. They are drawn up each year by co-ordinators who are responsible for an evaluation of previous actions, an analysis of the standards that the pupils achieve and the results of monitoring teaching and learning. The resulting action plans contain comprehensive details of improvement strategies including schemes of work, guidance on assessment and approaches to monitoring standards of attainment and the quality of teaching and learning.
- 54 The headteacher, senior teacher and subject co-ordinators undertake systematic monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning. Strengths and areas for development are fed back to staff, and targets for improvement are set. The results of this process are then taken into account when determining the professional development programme of the school. The school management plan identifies the need for all subject co-ordinators to have an opportunity to monitor standards of teaching and learning within their subject responsibility.
- 55 The head teacher, senior teacher and subject co-ordinators, particularly of literacy and numeracy, undertake careful analysis of the standards that pupils achieve. The results of this analysis are shared with staff and governors, and targets for improvements are set. The 2002 test results had been analysed and account had been taken of areas of weakness in pupils' learning and in curriculum delivery.
- 56 The quality of teaching has been at least maintained since the last inspection and, to some extent, it has improved. The quality has been sustained despite changes of staff. Improvement has been brought about by the successful implementation of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy, the establishment of a more systematic process for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, and by increased knowledge, understanding and application of how children best learn. A consequence of this improvement in teaching is that standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science are improving throughout the school.
- 57 The provision for pupils with special educational needs is effectively and efficiently co-ordinated by the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO). Pupils' specific

needs are identified early in their school life. Class teachers are responsible for drawing up individual education plans for pupils in their classes. The SENCO monitors these and the quality of experiences that pupils receive. She organises and attends review meetings, consults representatives of outside agencies and involves parents and pupils fully in the setting of targets and their review. She provides good support for teachers and advises them on suitable resources.

- 58 The SENCO keeps detailed records of pupils and their progress and ensures that the register of special educational needs is up to date. She oversees and co-ordinates the work of the specific teaching assistants employed to support individual pupils. The governor with responsibility for special educational needs is a teacher at a special school and is extremely well qualified and experienced,. She plays a full part in supporting the current SENCO and in keeping governors informed of developments. She and the SENCO have worked on updating the school's practice in line with the revised Code of Practice.
- 59 Several new governors have been appointed to the school since the last inspection. The governors meet very regularly as a full governing body. There is also a number of sub-committees that take particular responsibility for aspects of school work, for example the curriculum and resource management. The governors are fully involved with the work of the school. In recent years they have undertaken a considerable amount of training to ensure that they carry out their duties and responsibilities. As a result, they are in a very good position to identify and understand the strengths and areas for development of the school. Several governors are linked to an area of the curriculum; whenever possible governors visit the school to support it in its work. After each visit feedback is given to the governing body.
- 60 Governors are involved in determining and monitoring the school management plan. They are aware of the school's standards as reflected in its test results and they discuss the school's work from a well-informed viewpoint. Governors receive regular reports, both from the headteacher and other staff. The governors both challenge and support the school.
- 61 The effectiveness of the school's induction arrangements are borne out by the way in which the new teachers have settled quickly into the life of the school and are making valuable contributions. Comprehensive induction arrangements for newly-qualified teachers are in place; they are receiving appropriate support and guidance. The headteacher and senior teacher carry out performance management arrangements appropriately. Following an interview, members of staff agree improvement targets. These are not only linked to whole-school improvement targets but also to individual improvement targets for each teacher. Training needs are determined following these interviews. All staff are encouraged to undertake effective professional development. The school's management systems have been validated by its achieving the 'Investors in People' award in 2001.
- 62 The governing body and headteacher carefully prepare the budget, taking due consideration of the desired developments and improvements. Governors monitor any specific grants that the school might be given, for example for information technology, for much-needed building development and for providing support for pupils with special educational needs.
- 63 The governors and headteacher take a keen interest and pride in the way the school is perceived locally. They are beginning to apply the principles of best value. They

make good use of the analysis of assessment results, including comparisons with other schools. They target spending to bring about improvements in standards; for example, in improving the quantity and quality of reading materials in order to bring about improvement to the standard of pupils' reading, and to enhance mathematics resources and equipment. The headteacher and governing body challenge themselves regularly and are driven by the desire to provide the highest quality of education for the pupils. The headteacher and governing body have put aside funds and accrued additional monies to enable them to improve the early years area. In all their spending decisions they take steps to ensure value for money. The school finances and administration are well managed. The local authority audit reflects this and its minor recommendations have been carried out.

- 64 Staffing is sufficient to ensure that the pupils receive their entitlement to the National Curriculum programmes of study. Teaching assistants support the teachers very effectively and play a full part in all aspects of school life. At lunchtime, supervisors support pupils well and share responsibility for the very good behaviour of children, both within the school and outside.
- 65 The school building is very clean and well looked after. Together with the grounds, it provides a suitable, safe and secure environment for all pupils. The classrooms are of an appropriate size. The accommodation in the main building is adequate; that in the separate block is soon to be updated. The main school is in good decorative order and provides sufficient opportunities for the school to deliver a broad curriculum. The outside accommodation is good. The attractive grounds are looked after and used well. A large field, sufficient playground space and an environmental area provide opportunities for all the pupils to enjoy. Facilities for children in the Foundation Stage to explore the outdoor environment and to use large-scale toys and equipment are very limited at present; otherwise, learning resources for the youngest children are satisfactory.
- 66 Resources to support learning are good. The school has significantly increased the numbers of reading books and equipment for mathematics. There are plenty of computers and other ICT equipment, associated software and hardware including an interactive board and multi-media projectors. The conversion of a small teaching room into a computer suite has enhanced the technical facilities.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

67 In order to raise standards of attainment and improve the quality of education further, the headteacher, governors and staff should:

1. Improve the quality and broaden the range of the Foundation Stage curriculum so that it encompasses more fully the investigative and creative elements of the six areas of learning by:
 - planning a better balance between child-initiated and adult-directed activities so that children can explore and pursue their own interests within clearly defined objectives;
 - making more appropriate use of the outdoor environment as a source of exploration and investigation in its own right as well as a setting for other learning; and
 - ensuring that the classteacher and classroom assistants work with children across all the areas of learning so that all pupils receive their entitlement to the teacher's time and attention.(Reference paragraphs: 81,84,85,87,88)
2. Raise overall standards in spelling and presentation, particularly in Years 3 to 6, so that written work is neat and not marred by simple errors by:
 - extending a structured approach to the teaching of spelling to all classes;
 - ensuring that pupils are secure in their knowledge of high-frequency words appropriate to their age group;
 - adopting a whole-school strategy for the teaching of handwriting so that all pupils learn to form and join letters correctly and fluently; and
 - establishing clear guidelines to show clearly how work ought to be presented.(Reference paragraphs: 103,104)
3. Increase the range of opportunities for spiritual development and pupils' awareness of cultural diversity by:
 - ensuring that medium-term planning promotes a wider range of opportunities for spiritual development;
 - making more use of opportunities that arise spontaneously in day-to-day teaching situations; and
 - planning for a broader range of experiences of diversity, especially focusing on non-white non-European cultures, within the curriculum.(Reference paragraphs: 44,45)
4. Improve communication with parents regarding work completed at home by
 - clarifying the school's expectations in relation to homework; and
 - providing guidelines on the frequency and time allocated to tasks carried out at home, appropriate to each year group.(Reference paragraph: 56)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

43

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

24

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	8	24	10	0	0	0
Percentage	2%	19%	56%	23 %	0%	0%	0%

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

YR – Y6

Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)

124

Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals

0

FTE means full-time equivalent

Special educational needs

YR – Y6

Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs

5

Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register

29

English as an additional language

No of pupils

Number of pupils with English as an additional language

0

Pupil mobility in the last school year

No of pupils

Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission

4

Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving

0

Attendance

Authorised absence

%

Unauthorised absence

%

School data	3.5
National comparative data	5.3

School data	0.1
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	Total	
	2001	Boys and girls	19

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
	Total	16	19	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (67)	100 (67)	100 (75)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
	Total	19	19	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (75)	100 (75)	100 (75)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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	Total	
	2001	Boys and Girls	9

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
	Total	7	5	8
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	78 (60)	56 (40)	89 (80)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
	Total	4	6	9
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	44 (50)	67 (60)	100 (70)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	122	0	0
White – Irish		0	0
White – any other White background	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean		0	0
Mixed – White and Black African		0	0
Mixed – White and Asian		0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian		0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani		0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi		0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background		0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean		0	0
Black or Black British – African		0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background		0	0
Chinese		0	0
Any other ethnic group		0	0
No ethnic group recorded		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

Financial information

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	5.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	1 : 21.4
Average class size	24.8

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	179

Number of pupils per FTE adult	10.3
--------------------------------	------

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial year	2001 - 02
	£
Total income	289,206
Total expenditure	279,396
Expenditure per pupil	2,291
Balance brought forward from previous year	16,331
Balance carried forward to next year	26,141

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	124
Number of questionnaires returned	53

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	74	26	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	68	28	2	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	55	42	2	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	28	49	11	2	9
The teaching is good.	40	55	4	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	58	38	4	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	72	28	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	40	57	0	2	2
The school works closely with parents.	40	57	0	2	2
The school is well led and managed.	62	36	0	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	51	45	2	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	21	32	28	4	15

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

- 68 Children are admitted to a mixed Reception/Year 1 class at the beginning of the school year in which they become five years old. Almost all come from the neighbouring locality and have attended the pre-school provision on the school site, with which there is very good liaison. The ten reception children were attending only in the mornings and, consequently, only a limited number of observations of work in the Foundation Stage was possible.
- 69 Children feel secure and settle in quickly because the school and pre-school staff work carefully to ensure that pupils and parents are well prepared for the start of school. The programme of induction includes joint activities, taster sessions and full parental involvement.
- 70 Children are assessed on entry to the reception class using the Warwickshire Baseline Assessment scheme, soon to be replaced by the national Foundation Stage Profile at the end of Reception Year. The baseline scheme shows that, in recent times, attainment on entry has been broadly in line with levels expected, though this year the small intake of only ten children has better-than-average attainment levels.
- 71 Children make satisfactory progress in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, personal, emotional and social development, and physical development so that, by the end of the year, many will have exceeded the Early Learning Goals. They communicate with each other and with adults clearly and express their preferences and views confidently. They handle books well and are beginning to recognise letter sounds and some whole words. Almost all are happy to try writing their names and they do this and other pieces of written work with some success. They count confidently to ten – and a few go beyond ten; they match objects to numbers and are beginning to gain understanding of simple addition and subtraction. Having settled in to school well on a part time basis, the children are keen to come for longer; they relate well to one another and to the older, Year 1, pupils in the class. They show a mature attitude to learning and they co-operate successfully with other children when needed. They usually share space and equipment without a fuss and help each other.
- 72 The children are beginning to learn about places and buildings around them and some differences between how things were in the past and what happens now. They are also using computers very competently and discuss relevant issues such as the weather and seasonal changes, drawing upon their experiences and prior knowledge. They use a small range of media to create drawings and paintings and they join in with songs and other music making led by adults. Thus, in knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development, whilst progress is satisfactory, the range of activities offered is narrow and restricts the development of natural curiosity, independence and choice. As a consequence, the Early Learning Goals are less likely to be achieved fully in these areas.

- 73 Baseline results, on-going observations and other assessment information are used to inform the high quality planning that underpins the Foundation Stage curriculum. Assessments are linked accurately to the steps within the Foundation Stage leading to the Early Learning Goals and they illustrate progress well.
- 74 The team of staff works well together to create a calm, secure and purposeful working atmosphere. Children are eager to learn and respond well to the adults who work with them. Even when the pace of activities is too slow, which involves long periods of relative inactivity, almost all children show good behaviour and respect. Children respond very well when the activities are exacting. For example, a group searching for “naughty numbers” in the enclosed garden area was animated and eager. However, many lessons observed were very structured, allowing too few opportunities for children to make choices, to take decisions and to assume greater responsibility for their own learning.
- 75 The Foundation Stage setting is currently accommodated temporarily in the main school building whilst much-needed improvements and alterations are made to the Early Years Base. This restricts opportunities to use the outdoor facilities, larger construction and wheeled toys and other activities. Once alterations are completed, there will be a covered outdoor play area, an improved wet play activity area and easier access to the garden. During the inspection the children under five were subject to restricted activity space. Consequently, opportunities for the outdoor curriculum to be an integral part of the daily learning environment that enhances and complements the indoor curriculum were hindered and unsatisfactory.
- 76 The quality of teaching in all the areas of learning in the Foundation Stage is at least satisfactory, with some good features. Relationships are very good and the support of teaching assistants is extremely valuable and valued. Good features of teaching included high quality planning, good pupil-management strategies and good support for pupils with special educational needs and behavioural difficulties. When teaching was satisfactory but not good, this was due to lack of pace and poor match of activity to learning objective. For instance, in a “topic” activity focusing on examination of photographs to identify differences between now and the 1950s, children spent over thirty minutes passively seated while the activity was introduced. They then moved to a task which had lengthy elements irrelevant to the lesson objective, such as laboriously writing the day and date.
- 77 Behaviour in the Foundation Stage was very good, even when the pace was slow. Children responded well to the school’s high expectations of behaviour and respect. Children are happy and enjoy school. Adults lead learning diligently, but opportunities for making links across all areas are not seized well, as the planning is closely followed. Spontaneity is rare, and, planning for the learning that children initiate themselves needs to be given further consideration.
- 78 Pupils’ language skills are good and their response to questioning is also good. Much of the questioning observed was closed in nature and did not encourage pupils to use their speaking skills to maximum effect. Contributions that children would have liked to make were often missed or dismissed too hurriedly and, consequently, learning opportunities were also missed.

79 The co-ordinator for the Foundation Stage is based in Key Stage 1. While she is involved in planning for the Foundation Stage, she is not in a good position to give fully her wider experience to the less experienced Foundation Stage team. The school has plans to develop the Foundation Stage, and a training programme is already mapped out. This will enable the Foundation Stage to develop more fully the wider curricular entitlement for children aged under five years.

ENGLISH

80 The results of tests for seven year olds in reading in 2001 were above average when compared with all schools. They were average in comparison with similar schools. Results in reading have previously been very low but they improved dramatically from 2000 to 2001. The results of the writing tests in 2001 were well above average when compared to all schools and with schools in similar contexts. This shows considerable improvement since 2000 when they were very low, and particularly since 1999, when they were amongst the lowest in the country.

81 In 2001, the results of tests in English overall for eleven years olds, at the end of Year 6, were in line with those for all schools. They were below the average for similar schools but indicated that the pupils involved had made very good progress since they were formally assessed at the end of Year 2.

82 In 2001, standards for seven year olds in English overall exceeded those in mathematics tests and teacher assessment for science. Standards in all core subjects were similar by the time pupils reached Year 6, although English shows the most improvement in relation to prior attainment. The results in English and science are slightly better than mathematics, although they are all below average when compared with those for similar schools.

83 The school's results for 2002 show the pattern of improvement continuing. The outcomes of tests for seven year olds indicate increasing capabilities in reading, writing and spelling. The targets for pupils achieving Level 2 and above in reading were exceeded and the proportion of pupils reaching Level 3 was, at thirty two per cent by far in excess of the target of twenty three per cent. The target of seventy-six per cent for Level 2 and above for writing was well exceeded as ninety per cent of pupils achieved it. Slightly fewer pupils than expected reached Level 3. Spelling results were also good with over a third of the pupils achieving Level 3.

84 In the 2002 tests for eleven year olds, the target for Level 4 in English as a whole was very nearly achieved, falling short by only two per cent. A far higher proportion, well over a third, achieved Level 5. Attainment in the other core subjects has improved to bring them more in line with English. Although the number of pupils taking the tests was low, making any comparison between boys and girls unsafe, it seems there are few differences in attainment in relation to gender.

85 Current achievement in the subject as a whole is above that expected, particularly so early in the academic year. Writing continues to develop and it is a strength of the school. There are no significant variations in the attainment of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress due to carefully planned provision and effective support.

- 86 All subjects make valuable contributions to achievement in English. Pupils apply and improve a wide range of oral and written communication skills in mathematics, science, history, geography and religious education. Pupils' advanced skills in using information and communication technology add significantly to their literacy skills, knowledge and understanding. From Year 1 onwards pupils use word-processing programs with confidence and soon become adept at searching for information from electronic sources.
- 87 Teacher assessments of speaking and listening in 2001 showed attainment to be average. Current achievement in all aspects of speaking and listening is above average. From an early stage, pupils speak freely and confidently to each other and to adults. They express their ideas, opinions and preferences clearly and articulately, using relevant vocabulary and providing sensible explanations of their reasoning. They discuss topics within groups and whole-class settings, listening carefully to others, responding sensitively to suggestions and reporting back key points to the whole class when appropriate.
- 88 The school has chosen to take some aspects of guided reading out of the literacy hour and to start the afternoon sessions with pupils reading individually or in small groups, either independently or with an adult. There are also opportunities for older pupils to read with younger ones. This focus on reading has been successful in raising standards. These separate sessions are complemented in lessons by further discussions about shared texts, focused phonic work and the teaching of spelling based on the recommended lists of words for different year groups.
- 89 Younger pupils apply a variety of approaches to tackling unfamiliar words, drawing upon their knowledge of phonics, using picture clues and working out words within the context of the narrative. They also take good note of punctuation to give clues on expression and different voices, resulting in lively reading aloud. When talking about their reading, they show a good understanding of meaning. Higher attainers often take this beyond the literal. They explain their preferences for different types of fiction and authors clearly, citing events from stories they have read. Older pupils have broad reading habits, and higher attainers read complex texts with ease and enjoyment. A few of the boys in Years 5 and 6 prefer to stick to non-fiction related to their interests and, through this, have extensive knowledge of, for example, football and motor sport. The pupils reading 'Goodnight Mister Tom' as part of the history focus in Years 5 and 6 engage in lively discussion of the book and its characters. They show clear understanding of the evacuee boy's dread and confusion on being placed in a quiet village with a seemingly strange man. They draw readily on previous reading matter to illustrate and explain their opinions.
- 90 Pupils use non-fiction texts to good effect, selecting key points of information and forming opinions that they back up with well reasoned arguments and listening carefully to the views of others. They are fully aware of how to access information from reference books, posters and the Internet, and they confidently use index and contents pages to find what they are looking for. Only a few, older pupils use skimming and scanning techniques to retrieve information quickly and efficiently.
- 91 A multi-faceted approach to writing results in high quality work throughout the school. Pupils write in a wide range of styles and for many different purposes. Examples of imaginative and factual writing abound. Pupils in Year 3 have written carefully-constructed pieces about autumn and have used information and communication technology to present their work in a very attractive and appropriate manner. Some examples of this writing are:

‘Dawn. The sun was rising from its sleep as it peeped through the decaying leaves...’

‘Dying leaves fall in my hand and I crunch them in my fingers...’

‘I breathe out, my breath flaring ice as if I’m a dragon attacking...’

- 92 Similarly, Year 5 and 6 pupils have created diaries and letters home connected with their topic on World War II. These express movingly the feelings of individuals in tense and difficult circumstances, and effectively evoke a sense of the time. In addition to imaginative narrative pieces, pupils also produce good examples of letters, accounts of visits, humorous poems, note-taking and writing for a variety of audiences.
- 93 Pupils in Years 1 to 4 use a suitable range of punctuation including question marks, commas, exclamation marks and speech marks, making their work more interesting. Spelling of commonly used words is generally accurate. Occasionally, teachers prefer pupils to record their ideas rather than pay close attention to spelling. Pupils use dictionaries and thesauruses effectively to extend their word repertoire.
- 94 A significant minority of the oldest pupils has gaps in knowledge in, and lack understanding of, elements such as spelling, punctuation and grammar due to inadequate provision earlier in their schooling. Teachers are sensitive to this and use supportive strategies to fill these gaps while, at the same time, encouraging the creative aspects of writing. Older pupils still find writing too much of a chore, however. Their attitudes are positive but they do not exude the confidence and joy of writing exhibited by, for example, Year 3 pupils.
- 95 There is room for improvement in the standard of presentation of written work. Currently there is too much variation in quality. Pupils practise handwriting but do not always take care to transfer what they have learned when completing everyday work. Finished work in books is not consistently tidy in all classes, particularly in those with older pupils. This applies to all subjects across the curriculum. However, work on display is carefully written and attractively set out. Many pupils have begun to use a neat, joined script by the time they are seven. Work produced by pupils in Year 3 often exceeds the quality of that usually seen later in Key Stage 2.
- 96 Teaching in English is consistently good. In each class, all lessons have good, and sometimes very good, features. In the most effective lessons, teachers plan well-structured lessons with relevant learning objectives that build upon pupils’ prior attainment. They provide very good role models in oral and written English, using precise grammar and vocabulary when talking to pupils. They ask pertinent, carefully-worded questions that enable pupils to give full answers and explain their reasoning. All teachers write clearly and neatly on white boards and flip charts, using uniform, well-formed letters, joined when appropriate. Teaching assistants and teachers work very effectively together to ensure that all pupils have access to activities. Consequently, pupils with special educational needs achieve the objectives set for them and make good progress in meeting the targets within their individual learning programmes.

- 97 Teachers mark work regularly, providing helpful, positive and encouraging comments to pupils in written and oral form. Written comments are clearly linked to objectives and to individual targets. These help to give pupils guidance as to what they should do next to improve further. Teachers carry out informal assessments and adapt their lesson plans accordingly. All teachers have very good subject knowledge and are effective in teaching basic literacy skills. They show enthusiasm and enjoyment in lessons, often joining fully in activities by taking on a role. Thus the Year 4 teacher added considerable interest and inspiration by answering her class's questions as 'Six Dinner Sid' – a rather cheeky cat who takes on six different personae in order to live in each of six houses in a neighbourhood. This characterisation enabled pupils to transfer parts of the story into play scripts using highly appropriate speech and stage directions.
- 98 The subject co-ordinator is extremely knowledgeable. She gives strong leadership in developing the effectiveness of the National Literacy Strategy within and beyond the school. She manages the subject successfully by supporting colleagues in planning, providing resources and analysing standards of attainment. She monitors the delivery of the English curriculum and the Literacy Strategy in particular, by evaluating lesson plans, observing lessons and by scrutinising samples of work. Through careful, detailed analysis of completed test papers, she identifies areas that need more attention. Very useful guidance helps teachers to assess pupils' writing throughout the school, and an extremely helpful folder of moderated samples of work ensures consistency of assessment judgements.
- 99 Resources for English are good. There is a very plentiful supply of reading materials from a wide range of publishers, including 'big books, picture books, short stories, short novels and longer ones for sustained reading, group readers, poetry and plays. The number of reference books in the central library area is low and the range is fairly narrow but they are of good quality and suitable to the reading ages and interests of pupils. The library is gradually being developed into a more useful resource. Each classroom has a good range of teaching and learning materials to support literacy.

MATHEMATICS

- 100 On the basis of results for the national tests in 2001, the percentage of pupils reaching Level 2 or above and the higher Level 3 at the age of seven was amongst the highest five per cent nationally. Overall, the test results were amongst the highest five per cent nationally and well above the average for similar schools.
- 101 Results for 2002 were not as high, and provisional comparisons with national indicators suggest results that are closer to the national average. Over the past three years, however, standards at the age of seven have risen at a better rate than the national rate of improvement.
- 102 In the tests for eleven year olds for the year 2001, results in mathematics were in line with the national average. The percentage of pupils reaching Level 4 or above was well below the national average, but above average at the higher Level 5. In comparison with similar schools, results were well below average, but improvement based on pupils' prior attainment is above average for schools in similar contexts. The small numbers of pupils in this year group, however, should be taken into account, since each pupil represents a relatively high percentage.
- 103 Results for 2002 show an improvement at Level 4 or above over the position in 2001,

although fewer pupils achieved the higher Level 5. Once again, the number of pupils in the year group was relatively small. The Level 4 results represent a further year-on-year improvement. Over the past three years, overall standards in mathematics at the age of eleven have risen.

- 104 The implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has been successful and has contributed to pupils taking a more active part in mathematics lessons. The three-part lesson pattern is soundly established. Planning is good, and short term plans clearly indicate the detailed provision which teachers make for pupils of all abilities, including the most able and those with special educational needs.
- 105 Pupils in Year 1 show good familiarity with number bonds to ten, and more-able pupils are becoming familiar with bonds to twenty. By the age of seven, pupils show increasing flexibility with mental arithmetic, counting on and backwards confidently. This is supported by the importance given to practising addition, subtraction and multiplication facts, and the good opportunities taken by teachers for talking about number patterns and the relationships between numbers. Pupils make good gains in their ability to add single and double-digit numbers. Their increasingly secure grasp of the relationship between numbers, and their flexibility and confidence with addition and subtraction, are significantly increased through interesting games and activities set by the teachers.
- 106 By the age of seven, standards are above those normally expected at this age. Pupils investigate and know the names of common two and three-dimensional shapes. They describe with accuracy three-dimensional shapes in terms of the number of faces, sides and corners for each shape. In a Year 2 lesson, for example, one pupil explained that a pyramid could fit on top of a cube "because it's a square based pyramid - it doesn't fit any other way because the other sides are isosceles triangles".
- 107 Pupils in Years 3 and 4 consolidate and build on the good gains made in previous years. In Year 3, pupils predict and measure their handspan and head circumference with good levels of accuracy. They are becoming familiar with measurements of less than a centimetre. By Year 4, most pupils work confidently in centimetres and metres for larger lengths when measuring perimeters, using skills of doubling and halving to assist their calculations with increasing confidence. More-able pupils readily find several different possible combinations of length and width for a rectangle of given perimeter, although other pupils need some encouragement to achieve this. There are many opportunities for them to apply the full range of their mathematical knowledge and skills when undertaking investigations and problem-solving activities and this aspect of their mathematical learning is good. Pupils across the key stage collect and interpret data, using charts and graphs with accuracy to display their results. A particularly good example of this was seen in the use made of a survey of parental preferences for a design and technology project to make jam tarts. Pupils collected the data on preferences expressed by parents, such as size, flavour, thickness and texture of pastry. They constructed charts and represented the results graphically, using information and communication technology successfully. They then interpreted the data and used these to inform their designs for the tarts.

- 108 Pupils in Years 5 and 6 make rapid progress in relation to their prior learning, with activities planned to develop specific basic skills which have been identified as relatively underdeveloped. As a result, they are gaining confidence and flexibility within the mathematics curriculum. Many of them work confidently with larger numbers, and the mathematical challenges presented to them offer ample opportunities for this. Year 5 pupils understand how to round three-digit numbers to the nearest hundred.
- 109 By eleven, standards are generally above those expected for pupils of this age. Many pupils are confident with converting from simple fractions to their decimal equivalents, and eagerly seek out more complex examples. Here, too, their good number skills are enhanced through mathematical games that are carefully matched to their ability. Pupils make correct use of mathematical language and provide the thinking behind their answers, explaining their methods and offering hypotheses. Year 6 pupils make particularly good progress in 'master class' lessons, taught in groups on a weekly rota basis by a teacher from the local secondary school to which most pupils transfer at eleven. They are given particularly challenging tasks in these lessons, such as constructing more complex tables and predicting and plotting graphical relationships where the resulting graph is a curve rather than a straight line. On these occasions, attainment in the groups is consistently above average.
- 110 Throughout the school, lower-attaining pupils, gifted and talented pupils and those with special educational needs receive very good support from teachers and teaching assistants. Many of the pupils, particularly those in the top two years, make significant gains at their level in their use of number, and in work on shape and space. They show a genuine enthusiasm for their lessons and collaborate well.
- 111 Information and communication technology is used well to support the teaching of mathematics. This promotes further enjoyment of the subject and complements and extends pupils' mathematical skills, particularly in respect of handling data, manipulating and changing shapes, and the promotion of flexible mental strategies for work with number patterns.
- 112 Throughout the school, pupils usually demonstrate very good attitudes to mathematics. They are interested in their work and quickly settle to tasks. They work enthusiastically on investigative tasks, collaborating and co-operating well. Relationships within classes are of a high order. Behaviour is never less than good, and is often very good, during whole-class activities and when working in groups or individually. Pupils listen attentively to staff and to each other, contributing ideas and explaining their thinking.
- 113 Overall, teaching was never less than good, and one in four lessons were very good. Throughout the school, basic numeracy skills are taught well. Whole-class mental arithmetic at the start of each lesson is interesting and challenging. Teachers have a secure and often good knowledge of the subject, and of the requirements of the National Numeracy Strategy. They make very good use of assessment information, including feedback from marking, and use this to inform their planning. As a result, they have clear expectations of what pupils should achieve in lessons, both in terms of oral and mental activities at the start of the lesson, and in the main part of the lesson.

- 114 Work is carefully planned for pupils of different abilities, especially in the top class, where the gap between some pupils' levels of achievement and the requirements of the National Numeracy Strategy is greatest. More able pupils receive good levels of challenge, and the oldest pupils receive sustained levels of high challenge, to which they respond very well. As a result, many of them are making very good progress. Plenary sessions at the end of lessons are used well; they provide opportunities for pupils to reflect on their learning, revisiting the learning objectives for the lesson, and providing information about what they will be doing in the next lesson. Homework tasks are usually practically based, requiring some form of research; these usually make a valuable contribution to the next steps in learning.
- 115 In a very good lesson on decimals with the oldest pupils, the teacher devised pertinent questions for all groups during a very well-paced introduction to the lesson. Pupils made good use of individual whiteboards, eagerly displaying their answers to quick-fire questions which gradually increased in difficulty for each group. This increase in challenge was very well matched to the needs of each group, so that all in the group could attempt an answer. Older pupils were asked to find a decimal between two others: for example, "What's half way between 2.58 and 2.62?" On each occasion, pupils received good feedback about their answers, which were valued by the teacher. Very good relationships ensured that other pupils also valued the answers given. No stigma was attached to incorrect answers, which pupils used constructively to inform their thinking for the next question. The teacher remembered those whose answers were not correct and returned to them later on with another question, sometimes at the same level and sometimes at a slightly lower level, and continued in this vein until the pupil was confident at the target level.
- 116 All pupils receive good oral and written feedback. Work is marked up to date and usually indicates how pupils might improve their work. With younger pupils, teachers provide useful contextual information that helps both the teacher and the teaching assistant to judge progress in specific areas and to set tasks for the next steps in learning. Pupils are set clear targets for their work, and usually know what they have to do to meet these.
- 117 The subject is very well led. The subject co-ordinator has worked hard to improve the quality of teaching and learning and the mathematics curriculum. There is a high degree of commitment to the National Numeracy Strategy. Staff have attended training, both in school and off-site. The present co-ordinator is handing over the role to another colleague who has already undertaken a significant amount of training in preparation for the co-ordinator's role. The school has audited pupils' skills carefully and has made good use of schemes such as Springboard to help provide extra, focused support for pupils from the age of eight until ten. The monitoring of teaching and learning is good. Lessons are observed, pupils' work is sampled and teachers' planning carefully scrutinised. Assessment is good; the results of national and other standardised tests are used effectively to inform planning, and teachers also make good use of their own assessments to fine tune the next steps in learning for pupils. As a result, senior managers have good information about pupils' progress, which is used well to inform any necessary changes to the curriculum. Teaching assistants are deployed very effectively, and they make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. There are sufficient resources of good quality, and these are used well to support learning.

- 118 Since the previous inspection, the school has made good progress in mathematics. Standards have continued to rise at both key stages. The school has been successful in reducing further the gap between the requirements of the National Numeracy Strategy and pupils' levels of skills, knowledge and understanding. The oldest pupils in the school now work confidently on tasks which involve investigation and problem solving, and are more confident in their work on shape and space.

SCIENCE

- 119 Results in the national tests for eleven year olds in 2001 were broadly in line with those achieved by eleven year olds in all schools, though below those of similar schools. Although there is clearly further improvement to be made, these results represent good progress from a low base over recent years. The results of statutory teacher assessment of seven year olds equally show good improvement. Some very good achievement was observed during the inspection that was commensurate with the high proportion of eleven year olds who reached high levels in the tests – eighty-nine per cent of pupils achieved Level 4 or better in the 2001 science tests with thirty-three per cent achieving level 5. Confirmed results for 2002 were not available at the time of inspection, but indications are that these levels will have been exceeded.
- 120 In the lessons observed and taking account of the work seen in pupils' books during the inspection, pupils attain good standards throughout the school, with very good attainment achieved in Years 5 and 6. All pupils work well and make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs are supported extremely well, often by competent and skilled teaching assistants, and make equally good progress. There is no significant difference in the standard being achieved by boys and girls. Differentiation of a high standard is a strong feature of teachers' planning in all year groups and this serves to eradicate any potential differences in progress or attainment.
- 121 The school has concentrated most recently on developing the investigational content of the science curriculum and is having significant success. Pupils discuss their work sensibly and appropriately, have a thorough understanding of the meaning of "fair testing" and are capable of adjusting their experiments to make them more reliable. For instance, a group in a Year 4 class, testing the properties of a variety of soils, showed the ability to question their results because they appeared to challenge their expectations. They suggested how to refine the experiment to ensure that variables were discounted and that the end result had validity.
- 122 Groups in a mixed Year 5/6 class were equally competent and were also confident in explaining to others the results of their work – such as that observed on filtration. These pupils indicated a sound level of understanding of their work. A helpful, progressive, well-documented scheme of work ensures that good progression is being made. The scheme is in accordance with QCA guidelines and goes beyond these, as the school has to plan a cycle of programmes of study in order to accommodate the mixed year groups without unnecessary repetition.
- 123 The quality of teaching and learning was at least good throughout both key stages, and, often, was very good. The features of the very good lessons were meticulous and detailed short and medium-term plans; sound subject knowledge; very good differentiation; high levels of expectation; and extremely good relationships in the classrooms. Teachers' plans always identified the key learning objectives for each session and these were effectively communicated to the pupils at the beginning of the

lesson. Plenary sessions were skilfully used to reinforce the learning achieved and to assess the success of the lesson in order to inform future planning. Good differentiation ensured a good match between learning intentions and individual ability. Teaching assistants were well briefed and able to support effectively a significant group of pupils with learning difficulties. Good subject knowledge was evident in all lessons observed and in all of the planning scrutinised, and this gave rise to lessons where open questioning was a strong feature. Teachers had the ability and confidence to handle any questions that emerged from some high quality discussion sessions.

- 124 Resources for science are good. All lessons observed had practical elements, and a good selection of appropriate resources - in good condition - was on hand. Opportunities were frequently taken to use a range of ICT skills to enhance both the learning and the recording. Graphical interpretation of results, making full use of good quality computer provision, was a common feature.
- 125 The science co-ordinator has a high level of interest, knowledge and expertise in the subject, despite this not being her specialist area. She has taken her role seriously, has striven to extend her skill and understanding through a comprehensive training schedule and she manages the subject competently. She has analysed, with the headteacher, the results of both statutory and non-statutory testing and has identified areas of weakness in the learning. As a result, a range of compensatory strategies has been put in train to strengthen identified areas and, consequently, to raise standards. The main focus has been to develop the investigational opportunities within the science curriculum to raise skill levels and understanding. The co-ordinator supports her colleagues well both formally and informally and though she has not yet had an opportunity to monitor teaching and learning directly through classroom observation, she is well aware of the contents of the planning and of the range of activities available to pupils. Assessment has also been a priority to the co-ordinator and a good programme of assessment that informs planning is in place and being used effectively. Already this is being reviewed and simplified, without losing its effectiveness and impetus. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.

ART AND DESIGN

- 126 Attainment in art by the age of seven is broadly in line with expectations. Pupils make steady progress in the development of their skills and, by the age of eleven, standards of attainment are in line with those expected nationally. No lessons in art and design were observed during the inspection; the judgement on standards is based on discussions with pupils and teachers, displays of pupils' finished work and scrutiny of teachers' planning.
- 127 By the age of seven, colour mixing, using paint to create different shades, shows steady development. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, show good levels of creativity in their work, and make steady progress in the use of collage, using an increasingly wide range of textures and colours. Some good examples of work from Year 1 involved pupils in using fabrics to make a pattern imprint on the wings of dragonflies made from clay. The development of their skills and techniques for drawing are generally sound, and observational drawing skills are being developed appropriately at this age. Good quality visual stimuli, often taken from nature, are used to focus pupils' attention.
- 128 By the age of eleven, pupils use collage to good effect and demonstrate an increasing understanding of the work of artists, although the range of artists studied is relatively

narrow. There are a few opportunities for pupils to directly relate the skills and techniques employed within paintings by other artists. Older pupils worked closely with a photographer during a residential visit to Exeter, and produced some very good quality black and white photographs. Pupils explore an appropriate range of paints and other media, considering their suitability for different purposes. More focused observation and analysis of colour and texture is encouraged. For example, in Year 4, where pupils were challenged to use pencil crayons and pencil shading to represent different textures in a study of rocks. Pupils make good use of source books, and very good use is made of information technology to help generate and develop their ideas. Throughout the school, the emphasis placed upon the skill of drawing is consistently developed. Appropriate opportunities are taken to use pencil sketches to plan for two and three-dimensional models, and to practise techniques.

- 129 The quality of teachers' planning is good. There is a good emphasis on pupils making informed choices of media and techniques and a very clear focus on the progressive development of skills and techniques through the school. Pupils are introduced to an appropriate range of media and have opportunities to develop and apply different techniques. There is an appropriate focus on pupils completing a piece of work well, using a manageable range of techniques, and allowing for some consolidation before introducing new approaches.
- 130 Pupils have very positive attitudes to art. They are keen to talk about their work and demonstrate good awareness of how certain effects have been achieved in their work. They express their views readily, aware that their contributions will be valued.
- 131 The co-ordinator provides good leadership, leading by example. Planning is monitored carefully, and pupils finished work is scrutinised. There has been some opportunity for observing teaching and learning, but this has been limited. There is a school scheme of work which has laid the foundations for improvement in skills and techniques through the school. There is a purposeful link between art and design, and design and technology. Each of the two subjects has a clear progression of identified skills; these are being progressively and successfully built into topics, and this represents an improvement since the time of the previous inspection.
- 132 The appropriate use of sketchbooks helps pupils to plan work and to experiment with different techniques, and this merits further development. The school is devising and implementing clear assessment, monitoring and evaluation procedures to support further improvement in the subject. Pupils' emerging skills are assessed carefully against learning objectives, and these assessments are increasingly being translated into target statements for pupils.
- 133 There is a good range of art resources. These are well organised, clearly labelled and of good quality.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 134 On the basis of lessons seen and informed by discussions with teachers and pupils, examples of retained artefacts, displays of pupils' work and a collection of photographs stored electronically, standards at age seven and eleven broadly match what is expected nationally. There is a clear focus on the development of knowledge, understanding and designing and making skills, and pupils make progress in their learning at a broadly satisfactory rate.
- 135 Design and technology is taught within topics throughout the school. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 learn to mark, cut and stick paper and fabrics together to make, for example, 'owl babies' for a class collage. Pupils have considered the materials and joining medium needed and designed suitable decorative finishes for the collage. They learn a satisfactory range of designing and making skills; these are progressively developed and extended as they move through the school.
- 136 Pupils in Years 3 and 4 undertake well-planned cross-curricular topics that lead up to the making and evaluating of pastries. They analyse data from a survey of parents' preferences for different types of jam tart to inform their designs, including choices about flavours and textures, using ICT effectively. They design their tarts and model the tart bases using salt dough, ready for further evaluation, before making the finished tarts using the selected ingredients to achieve the desired result. Their designs do not always include labels, although many do. Photographic evidence demonstrates the clear progression achieved in a project to construct a frame for a puppet theatre. The designing and making process included detailed models using different construction kits, leading on to a frame made from wood that was glued together. Subsequent to producing their finished product, pupils have undertaken a critical evaluation of what they have achieved.
- 137 Other photographic evidence of pupils' work on bridges made from paper in Years 5 and 6 gives a further indication of the good progression and scope of pupils' design and make projects. The associated work in pupils' folders indicates that their written investigations of building structures, including the Eden Project, famous London buildings, and the research into the design and construction of the Sphinx and the pyramids at Giza, provided a good prelude to design work.
- 138 At each key stage, higher-attaining pupils show above-average progress. In some classes, pupils with special needs undertake the same demanding tasks as other pupils but with support. Their progress is very similar to that of the majority of pupils.
- 139 Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Their attention and concentration contribute well to their satisfactory progress. The quality of relationships is very good; pupils co-operate well with each other and this feature serves to highlight the good quality personal development of the pupils. During one lesson with pupils in Year 3, pupils involved in design work for their tarts discussed their ideas and showed commendable respect for each other's efforts.
- 140 All of the teaching observed was with pupils in the top four year groups; it was at least satisfactory, and often good. Lesson planning shows good detail, and the learning outcomes are appropriate to the age and ability of the pupils. Teachers' expectations are high and lessons are conducted at a good pace, making good use of the time available. Good emphasis is placed on the quality of designs and the development of practical skills such as accuracy in measuring, marking and folding or cutting. The

quality of learning is good. Pupils' mathematical, literacy and creative skills are used well and they make good gains. They make good evaluations, and know how they can improve their designs, models or finished products. Appropriate emphasis is given to the quality of decorative finish. In a lesson involving the preparation of 'turnip top' sandwiches, those supervising insisted on high standards of hygiene. Similar emphasis is given to safety when pupils are engaged in activities involving cutting.

- 141 The subject co-ordinator provides good leadership. Clear assessment, monitoring and evaluation procedures are being developed to support further improvement in the subject. Pupils' skills are assessed carefully against learning objectives, and these assessments are translated into target statements for pupils. A key feature of the good design and technology programme is the high quality of the links made with other subjects, notably mathematics, ICT, art and design, science, history and English. This represents an improvement since the time of the previous inspection. There is a small but appropriate range of materials and tools for lessons, all of good quality, with consumable items being purchased as required because of the limited storage space available.

GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY

- 142 One geography and two history lessons were observed. Further evidence has been drawn from samples of work, teachers' planning, other documents and discussions with teachers and pupils. Standards in both subjects are at least in line with what is expected for pupils of the same age; in some aspects they are above expectations. There has been considerable improvement since the last inspection.
- 143 Up to the age of seven, pupils learn about the locality and further afield. They know which countries make up the British Isles and are aware of the differences between past and present. They recall the order in which significant inventions and developments came about and visit local museums to extend their knowledge and understanding of life in the past. In a topic on Stockton village they are discovering what changes have occurred over the years and continue to happen as a result of changing needs and land use. The pupils show great interest in photographs taken at the end of the nineteenth century and work out which buildings remain, albeit in a different form from those shown over a hundred years ago. They sensibly discuss how, for example, shopping habits have changed and why there are fewer shops in the village now. They also consider what effect a fictitious development of a drive-through eatery might have on the village facilities, the traffic and the environment. They sort out the advantages and drawbacks of such a scheme and express their views with enthusiasm, basing them on sound geographical and historical understanding.
- 144 From Year 3 to Year 6 pupils build upon prior learning on local, national and international fronts. Year 3 and 4 pupils have spent some time considering the potential impact of the actual proposals to site an airport near Rugby. The geographical and historical work is well supported by literacy skills in writing persuasive letters opposing this initiative. Similarly, such skills are being used to good effect in Years 5 and 6 as pupils study Britain since the 1930's, with a specific focus on the Second World War.
- 145 Pupils in all classes are very positive about learning about the world around them in geography and history. They listen carefully, enthusiastically gather information from a suitably wide range of resources and undertake activities with interest.

- 146 Teaching in history and geography lessons is at least satisfactory and often good. In the most effective lessons, teachers not only show high levels of subject knowledge but also take the time and effort to make the work exciting and to bring the content 'alive'. This approach was evident in the enthusiastic presentation of historic photographs and subsequent role-play in a class of Year 1 and 2 pupils. The Year 5/6 teacher introduced a lesson on the effects of war on an ordinary family by bringing in actual foodstuffs equivalent to an adult's weekly ration. She then played an audiotape of members of a rural family of ten children recalling, as adults, their wartime experiences. The class and group discussions that followed were lively and showed sensitivity and awareness beyond that which is usually found in pupils of the same ages. Pupils drew upon their own experiences and their previous historical understanding, alongside mathematical ability, to evaluate the implications of rationing. This lesson was very well planned to meet the wide range of learning needs in the class; tasks were varied and interesting and ensured that all were fully involved in the activities.
- 147 The co-ordinator for geography and history carries out her responsibilities very effectively. She has revised the schemes of work to fit the different cycles of topics that run across year groups to make sure that pupils acquire skills, knowledge and understanding progressively without unnecessary repetition. She provides good support to her colleagues and keeps resources up to date. There is suitably wide range of maps, reference books, audio and video tapes, posters and other printed materials as well as relevant artefacts related to each topic covered.
- 148 The school benefited greatly from being asked to participate in a QCA project on 'Creativity in History' in 2001. This involved teachers and pupils in developing the use of drama and role-play as part of history lessons and, by all accounts, was a very valuable professional development activity. Techniques and approaches arising from the project are used to good effect in current teaching and learning, contributing to the continuing improvement in the humanities since the last inspection.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

- 149 Pupils' progress in information and communication technology (ICT) is very good throughout the school and is a notable strength. Progress since the last inspection has been very good. The school has re-equipped with a sufficiency of new hardware and software. As a result, pupils are not only equipped with a wide range of skills but they are also very able to apply such skills.
- 150 All pupils are taught information and communication technology skills and teachers are very good at the identification of opportunities for the use of ICT. Consequently, the use of information and communication technology across the curriculum is well embedded in this school. For instance, in one excellent lesson in Y5/6, pupils used a range of programs to work on digitally-taken photographs that had resulted from study of the Shakespearean story of Macbeth. Pupils learn to crop photographs, to record voice-overs and to make a presentation in 'PowerPoint.' They also link their work to artwork on "The Scream" by Edvard Munch.
- 151 Similarly, pupils in Years 3 and 4 had conducted a survey, prior to making pastries, about type, texture and thickness of pastry and preferred flavour of jams. With the resultant tally charts they illustrated their findings graphically, using a range of charts and to make presentations of their conclusions.

- 152 Standards in information and communication technology are good throughout the school. Pupils are very confident and competent in their use not only of computers but also in control technology, use of programmable toys, photography, Internet research and communication, and the use of a range of audio-visual equipment. On a recent residential trip to Exeter, pupils produced a range of high quality and sophisticated black and white photographs under the tuition of a local photographer. Pupils are enthusiastic about new technology and take care of the resources available.
- 153 All teaching observed in information and communication technology was very good or excellent and reflects good subject knowledge of all staff and the co-ordinator. She has a very big influence on the success of this subject. All have benefited extensively from their New Opportunities Fund training and from very strong links with the ICT department of Southam College – the secondary school to which the pupils transfer at the end of Year 6.
- 154 A very good, progressive scheme of work supports this area of the curriculum, and there is an equally good assessment programme in place that helps teachers to plan their lessons effectively and to seize opportunities for enhancing their pupils' information and communication technology skills. The co-ordinator, who has also produced a very good action plan to ensure that information and communication technology continues to be developed as a very effective component of the whole school provision, has developed this.

MUSIC

- 155 Very little music teaching was observed during the inspection. That which was seen was at least satisfactory and some was good. In addition, an audiotape of a musical presentation that represented the end of a classroom project in Years 3 to 6 gave an indication that teaching and learning for the older pupils is also good.
- 156 The co-ordinator for music has had responsibility for the subject for about eighteen months and is about to hand the responsibility of the subject on to a new post holder. An incremental scheme of work has been developed and is in operation, though as yet there is no formal assessment stratagem in place to monitor its effectiveness. The co-ordinator informally supports colleagues in planning music into the weekly curricular provision, and teaching is enhanced by the employment of a music specialist who works half a day a week with all pupils in Years 3 to 6. All pupils are given the opportunity to take up paid instrumental lessons with the Warwickshire Music Service for whom the peripatetic teachers work.
- 157 Pupils sing robustly and enthusiastically in assembly and it is clear that singing is a feature of the music teaching in the school. Pupils in the Foundation Stage often sing as a part of their provision and this sets a good foundation for the rest of the school.
- 158 Resources for music are in good order, though most are provided as a central resource and there are no classroom-based materials. Pupils are aware of the names of a range of percussion instruments and use appropriate language to describe their functions. They also have the ability to explain a range of musical terms. For instance, pupils in a Y1/2 class were fully cognisant of beat and timbre and were eager to learn and respond to the new concept of "ostinato".

- 159 Although there has been satisfactory improvement overall since the last inspection, the co-ordinator is aware that music has been an area of the curriculum that needs to be developed. She will support the new co-ordinator in raising the profile of the subject as the school's previous prioritisation of the core curriculum begins to pay dividends.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 160 Aspects of physical education covered during the inspection included dance, games and gymnastics. Evidence from four lessons, discussions with teachers and pupils, and teachers' planning and records, indicate that standards in physical education are in line with those expected nationally by the ages of seven and eleven.
- 161 Effective learning takes place in games, gymnastics and dance lessons because pupils are allowed adequate opportunity to practise basic skills. Good emphasis is placed on throwing, catching and passing a ball or developing sequences of movement and balance. As a result, performance improves.
- 162 Pupils undertake swimming in Years 3 and 4. Evidence indicates that a significant number of these pupils can already swim the twenty-five metre standard expected by the age of eleven, and by the time they leave the school almost all pupils achieve this standard.
- 163 Standards in dance are satisfactory. Pupils in Year 1 and 2 responded well to some good teaching to make substantial gains in developing dance sequences. They practised and performed movements in unison and as a canon. They collaborated well in pairs and threes to devise short sequences which were interesting visually.
- 164 Pupils have positive attitudes to physical education. The ethos of physical education lessons is one of enjoyment. Most pupils are keen to do well and they behave well. The subject contributes well to pupils' personal development. When working in pairs or small groups in dance and gymnastics, pupils discuss and plan their performances collaboratively. They consider each other's ideas with respect and value particularly good performances. Good use is made, for evaluative purposes, of pupils who demonstrate high standards from which observers develop and refine their own performances. However, opportunities for evaluating the performance of others is not always fully exploited in lessons. Pupils have opportunities to work with others of the same or opposite gender.
- 165 On balance, the quality of teaching is good. Appropriate emphasis is given to warming up and cooling down at the start and end of lessons. Pupils are very well managed and high expectations are set in lessons. In all lessons there is an excellent relationship with pupils which is both encouraging and supportive. Planned tasks provide increasingly demanding challenges for pupils at different stages. Time is used well, with ample opportunity provided in which pupils can plan, practise and consolidate existing skills. The rate of learning and progress of pupils is usually good. Pupils with special educational needs are given good support, and most make good progress.
- 166 The co-ordinator has done some monitoring of the work of other teachers and pupils, and regularly monitors teachers' planning. She has made a valuable contribution to the subject and has had a positive impact on standards and the progress which pupils make. Based partly on a commercially available scheme, the school's physical

education programme covers all the required elements in due season. Assessments against learning objectives are secure. A good range of extra-curricular sporting activities is provided for pupils, usually at lunchtime but also out of school. These are open to boys and girls alike and are well attended. Staff give up much of their own time to organise these activities and undertake any necessary training.

- 167 The school benefits from good resources for physical education. Pupils enjoy well-resourced provision for indoor PE, with much of the large apparatus having been purchased by the Friends association. There is a grassed playing field and hard surface playing area outdoors. Resources amply meet the needs of the age range in the school. Provision in football and rugby is enhanced through links with Coventry City FC and Rugby RFC. The school enjoys good links with other schools, and pupils achieve success when representing the school in local area competitions.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- 168 No religious education lessons were observed. Evidence from samples of work, displays, planning and discussions with teachers and pupils indicate that attainment is in line with that expected by the locally Agreed Syllabus for pupils of the same age.
- 169 By the time they are seven years old, pupils have a good knowledge of the places, objects and symbols associated with religious traditions, with particular reference to Christianity and Hinduism. They are familiar with stories about Jesus and the ways in which Christmas is celebrated. They also know stories about key figures from other faiths such as Rama and Sita and festivals such as Diwali. They show a good understanding of moral issues and reflect sensitively upon their own and other people's feelings. They recognise who and what is special to them and how relationships and feelings affect their lives. Pupils make good progress in their knowledge and understanding in the subject.
- 170 In Years 3 to 6, pupils continue to build upon prior learning and experiences. They demonstrate an awareness of some of the major similarities and differences between faiths and understand some of the ways in which religion affects lifestyles. They are beginning to identify important tenets of Christianity, including the key facets of denominations within it. They study Sikhism, Islam, Judaism and Buddhism. Pupils show good levels of understanding of important concepts, feelings and attitudes.
- 171 The co-ordinator has worked hard to develop a scheme of work that covers all the elements of the Warwickshire Agreed Syllabus with topics appropriate to each age group. The scheme ensures progression through the year groups. Teachers make links with work in religious education and other subjects. When there are no obvious connections, religious education units are covered independently. The subject Action Plan is well constructed, with a clear focus on raising standards. The co-ordinator monitors the quality of teaching and learning in the subject and provides useful feedback to teachers.
- 172 Resources are of good quality and quantity. Boxes of artefacts related to the main world religions are available along with reference books and other materials for teachers and pupils. The local clergyman, who is an ex-officio school governor, visits the school on a regular basis and is a valuable source of information and expertise. Links with followers of other faiths are not strongly established but the co-ordinator plans to encourage more visits to a variety of places of worship in, for example, Leamington Spa and Coventry.

173 Standards of attainment and the quality of teaching have improved since the last inspection.