

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ST PAUL'S CE VC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Gloucester

LEA area: Gloucestershire

Unique reference number: 115605

Headteacher: Mr G Bullivant

Reporting inspector: Mrs J E McNeil  
30711

Dates of inspection: 27<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> January 2003

Inspection number: 250951

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	New Street Gloucester Gloucestershire
Postcode:	GL1 5BD
Telephone number:	(01452) 521872
Fax number:	(01452) 385847
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr R Bown
Date of previous inspection:	25 <sup>th</sup> September 2000

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
30711	Mrs J McNeil	Registered inspector	Mathematics Art and design	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? – the school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9079	Mrs A Moss	Lay inspector	Equal opportunities	How high are standards? - attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
16761	Mr M Hemmings	Team inspector	Science Music Physical education English as an additional language	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to the pupils?
17687	Mrs L Johnson	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology Design and technology Special educational needs	
32014	Mr M Sandercock	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Geography History Religious education	

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St Paul's Primary School caters for pupils aged between four and 11. Of similar size to the average primary school, there are currently 198 pupils on roll, 108 boys and 90 girls. There is a high turnover of pupils each year, with almost a third of the pupils having joined the school after the Reception Year. Of the 22 pupils receiving support for having English as an additional language, 11 are at an early stage of speaking English, which is higher than most schools. Almost a quarter of the pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. Twenty eight per cent of the pupils have free school meals, which is above average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs, at 33 per cent, is well above average. This includes five pupils who have statements of need, which is higher than most schools. The main needs catered for are learning difficulties and emotional and behavioural difficulties. The school receives extra funding from the Education Action Zone in recognition of being situated in an area of social need. The overall attainment of pupils on entry to school is very low.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

This is an improving school. Pupils are making better progress than at the time of the last inspection and standards in English, mathematics and science are rising. The quality of teaching is good and all the pupils get a fair deal by being at the school. The improvement is largely due to stronger leadership by the headteacher, who is well supported by other senior teachers. It is also the result of the high level of support and expertise provided by the local education authority in the past two years. The school gives good value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- Pupils make good progress in English, mathematics and science.
- The teaching is good overall and is particularly good in the Reception class, Years 2, 5 and 6.
- The leadership of the school, by the headteacher, deputy headteacher, senior managers and governors, is good.
- Pupils with special educational needs and those in the early stages of learning English make good progress.
- The vast majority of pupils behave well and have positive attitudes to learning.
- The school is a very caring community, where pupils are valued and feel secure.

#### **What could be improved**

- To continue to improve standards in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology.
- To review and make better use of the time available within the school day.
- To use the information about pupils' attainment and progress more effectively.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

When the school was last inspected in 2000 it was judged to have serious weaknesses. There has been good improvement since that time and the school now provides a good quality of education. Two of the issues for action identified in the last report related to aspects of leadership and management and the quality of teaching and learning. These have improved well, with the result that standards are higher in English, mathematics and science. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress have improved, but better use could be made of the analyses of data to inform planning. The balance of curriculum time has been revised, but more needs to be done to ensure that all subjects are covered in sufficient depth. Other aspects of the school's work have also improved. For example, curriculum planning is improved and the pupils' behaviour is better. Substantial improvements have been made to the premises. Pupils' progress in information and communication technology is unsatisfactory, partly due to the time delay in building the computer suite. The overall good improvement is largely due to the strong commitment by staff and governors to continual improvement and the good procedures in place for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	E	C	D	B
mathematics	E	D	E	D
science	E	D	E	E

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

Standards are more closely reflecting the pupils' capabilities by the age of 11. The school enables all its pupils to achieve well irrespective of gender or capability on point of entry. Progress is particularly good in the Reception class, Years 2, 5 and 6, reflecting the best teaching in the school. It is also the result of the whole school commitment to the teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy.

The school was awarded the 'School Achievement Award' in 2001, in recognition of improved standards. For pupils in Year 6 in 2002 there was a slight dip in results, but more than a third of the pupils entered the school after Year 2. For those pupils in the school since Year 2, data held by the school indicates that they achieved very well in English and appropriately in mathematics and science according to their prior attainment. The current Year 6 pupils are on course to attain standards in English, mathematics and science that are below average, but this represents good progress. The school did not meet its targets for English and mathematics in 2001 and 2002. The revised targets for 2002 are set at a realistic, but challenging level and inspectors confirm that they are likely to be met.

The test results for Year 2 pupils show that attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is improving year on year, rising more rapidly than most other schools. This is particularly the case in writing and mathematics. In 2002 the standards were below expectations in writing and mathematics and well below average in reading. Inspection evidence indicates that the current Year 2 pupils are making good progress, although standards are still below expectations in reading, writing, mathematics and science.

Inspectors found that when pupils start in the Reception class they have very low capabilities overall. They make good progress but, by the time they enter Year 1, standards for the vast majority are still well below expectations for their age, particularly in literacy and numeracy skills.

Standards in information and communication technology are below expectations by age 11 and pupils' progress is unsatisfactory. This is due to a lack of software and hardware until recently and the delay in completing the computer suite. Work seen in religious education, art and design, design and technology, geography and history is in line with what is expected. It was not possible to make a secure judgement on the standards in music and physical education.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils have good attitudes to work and are keen to take part in all the school offers them. They welcome new pupils, saying <i>'we show new children that we are nice, happy souls'</i> .
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good, both in lessons and during playtimes. Pupils are clear about acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. They say <i>'friends stick up for you'</i> and that <i>'problems are sorted out, if it's really bad by Mr Bullivant'</i> .
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils play and work together well. They listen to each other and are willing to share their ideas and views. Pupils say teachers are <i>'good'</i> and that <i>'teachers are really friendly and help you'</i> .
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. Attendance is below the national average. The Education Action Zone is very supportive of the school's efforts to improve attendance and the good systems to monitor attendance.

There are very good relationships amongst pupils and between pupils and adults. The school vision, 'learning together', is realised in the day-to-day life of the school.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The overall quality of teaching is good, which has a positive impact on the pupils' learning. Watching lessons and scrutinising the work in pupils' books shows that good teaching occurs in all classes, but that the best teaching and the most progress occurs in the Reception class and Years 2, 5 and 6. In these classes almost all lessons were good or better, accounting for all the very good teaching observed. In most lessons the teachers have good knowledge of the subject they are teaching and plan well. The pupils know what they are expected to achieve by the end of the lesson and work at a good pace, concentrate well and maintain interest in their work. A weakness of the teaching is the limited opportunities for pupils to use their own initiative. Teachers have sufficiently realistic expectations of what the pupils can achieve, with the exception of art and design and design and technology for the oldest pupils, where insufficient time is devoted to the teaching of new skills. Teachers are not making sufficient use of information and communication technology to support the work of other curriculum areas.

The teaching of English and mathematics is good and this has a significant impact on how well the pupils achieve in these subjects. In part, this is because there is a strong commitment to teaching the basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics. The pupils with special educational needs are taught well in all classes, whether they are taught in normal lessons or withdrawn for support in small groups. Those with English as an additional language are also taught well, with the specialist teacher providing particularly effective support. The learning support workers make a significant contribution to pupils' learning.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. It is good in the Reception class. In Years 1 to 6 the curriculum is broad and relevant, but the balance of time allocated to some subjects is inappropriate.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Provision is well co-ordinated across the school. Pupils are well supported, both in class and when withdrawn in small groups.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. The school ensures that the pupils receive additional support. Where they receive specialist support, provision is very good.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Good overall. The provision for spiritual and cultural development is sound. There is good provision for moral and social development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good systems ensure the pupils' health, safety and welfare. The procedures for assessing pupils' progress are satisfactory but the use made of data is unsatisfactory.

The school day was restructured following the last inspection, but more work is needed. The curriculum time in Years 1 and 2 is well below the average for most schools because of the long lunch break. English and mathematics are generally taught in the morning in Years 1 to 6, with sessions lasting one hour and ten minutes. This is too long, particularly in mathematics, either to maintain a brisk pace or to maintain the pupils' concentration. Similarly, with all other subjects being taught in the afternoons, insufficient time is devoted to some subjects. There is a wealth of assessment data, but this is not being used sufficiently well to inform teachers of pupils' learning needs. Extra-curricular provision is satisfactory, including a sound range of clubs and visits within the locality and beyond. The school has satisfactory links with parents and parents have a good regard for the school.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and senior managers provide good leadership for school improvement. Most subject leaders are providing good subject leadership.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governors are well informed, fully involved and provide a good level of support. The chair of governors has been very effective in strengthening the governing body.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The headteacher and subject leaders evaluate teaching and learning effectively to improve the quality of education provided.

The strategic use of resources	Sound. Forward planning of expenditure is good and the school seeks to find best value for money. The school is effectively deploying the teachers at its disposal.
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There is an effective partnership between all staff in the school and a strong sense of purpose. The hall extension and conversions made to existing classrooms have much improved the accommodation. The headteacher, governors and staff are to be congratulated on how well this project has been managed, with minimal disruption to pupils' learning. Now the building work is completed, better use can be made of the library and computer suites and the school can proceed with the plans to improve the school grounds. Resources are adequate overall, but are in need of updating in the Reception class. They are unsatisfactory in science and physical education and there are insufficient non-fiction books in the library.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Eleven parents attended the meeting with representatives of the inspection team and 33 per cent of questionnaires were returned.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They feel comfortable about contacting the school about a problem or concern.</li> <li>• Children enjoy going to school.</li> <li>• The children make good progress.</li> <li>• The good teaching.</li> <li>• Children are expected to work hard and achieve their best.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greater consistency in the amount of homework set.</li> <li>• The range of activities outside lessons.</li> <li>• The closeness of the working relationship between the school and parents.</li> <li>• Better information about the progress their child is making.</li> </ul>

The inspectors agree with the things that most please parents. Where parents expressed a view about homework it was as much to do with too much as too little. Nevertheless, inspectors found that the newly issued guidelines are consistent with government recommendations and homework is judged to be appropriate. Inspectors consider that the school provides a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities, albeit reduced in number from the time of the last inspection whilst building work was taking place. Parents can be reassured that the school does its best to communicate effectively with parents, although the information about standards in the school prospectus is overly complicated. Inspectors consider that parents are offered good opportunities to meet with teachers to discuss the progress their child is making. There were a few concerns expressed about the school's procedures for gaining 'blanket' permission for children to go on trips. Inspectors agree that the parents are justified in their concerns.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

1. When the pupils join the school in the Reception Year the vast majority have very low capabilities, with only a small proportion meeting or exceeding expectations for their age. The children's very low standards are evident in all areas of learning, with the exception of their physical development where they are well below expectations. By the time they leave the Reception class all children have made at least good progress, although many are still well below average in communication, language and literacy skills, mathematical development and their knowledge and understanding of the world. They make particularly good progress in physical development and personal, social and emotional development, where the vast majority are in line to reach the expected level for their age and creative development where they are expected to be below expectations. All children achieve well, including those with special educational needs and those with English as a second language. The overall good progress is because of consistently good, and often very good teaching. It is also because the reception teacher, who taught the youngest pupils at the time of the last inspection, provides a broad and interesting curriculum. This is thoroughly planned and delivered, with good support from the learning support assistants. The inspection confirms that the good achievement of pupils, seen at the last inspection, has been maintained.
2. The majority of pupils who attend the school start in the Reception Year. However, the turnover of pupils is high, with almost a third joining the school since the Reception Year. For example, of the 31 pupils who took the National Curriculum tests in Year 6 in 2002, eight joined the school after Year 2. There are approximately equal numbers of pupils leaving and joining the school. This clearly has an effect on the on going work of the school in being able to monitor and sustain the progress of individual pupils. However, insufficient account is taken of pupil mobility when interpreting the overall standards, as reported at the end of Year 6 and the progress made by each pupil.
3. For those pupils who took National Curriculum tests in 2002 at the end of Year 6, standards were below average in English and well below average in mathematics and science. When comparing the school's performance with similar schools, using the indicator of free school meals, attainment was above average in English and below average in mathematics and science. The 2001 results were higher than this and the school received the 'School Achievement Award' in recognition of improved standards. Over time, the rate of school improvement in attainment is similar to that seen nationally.
4. There are other ways of calculating pupils' performance, in particular in assessing the progress the pupils make from Year 2 to Year 6. This indicates that the pupils in Year 6 in 2002 made above average progress in English, below average in mathematics and well below average in science when compared to pupils attaining similar standards at the end of Year 2. However, the high turnover of pupils has an impact on results. Inspectors' analysis of data held by the school indicates that the vast majority of pupils in the school from Year 2 made very good progress in English and sound progress in mathematics and science. This is because five of the eight pupils who joined the school during Years 3 to 6 were identified as having special educational needs.
5. Since 2000, the results of the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 show clearly that standards are rising in reading, writing and mathematics. In all three tested areas this rise is more rapid than seen nationally, being particularly evident in writing and mathematics. For those pupils who took the tests in 2002, standards were only slightly below expectations in writing and mathematics, although were well below average in reading. Given that the overall attainment on entry to Year 1 is well below average in all tested areas this represents good achievement in writing and mathematics and sound progress in reading during the two years. When compared with similar schools the pupils attained standards that were average for writing and mathematics and below average for reading. Attainment in science is harder to judge, since the pupils are not

tested in science. However, the teacher assessments in 2002 suggest the pupils attained above average expectations. However, standards varied according to each area of science work. The grades for the four different areas fluctuated from 'above average' in knowledge and understanding of materials and physical processes to 'below' average for work in experimental and investigative science. No pupils were reported to be working at the higher level, Level 3, which is low compared with most schools across the country.

6. The inspectors found that standards in English and mathematics are rising. All pupils achieve well and get a fair deal in the school, irrespective of gender or capability. This represents good improvement since the last inspection in 2000, when standards were judged well below average throughout the school. Now, by the time the pupils leave the school they are attaining below average standards in English and mathematics. Given that they enter the school with very low attainment they make good progress during their time in the school. The reason that the pupils achieve well is the result of:
  - good teaching, most particularly evident in Years 2, 5 and 6;
  - much improved planning in all classes;
  - the whole school commitment to teaching the basic skills of speaking and listening, reading, writing and numeracy;
  - the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy being well implemented, albeit lessons exceed the recommended length, particularly in numeracy;
  - a greater emphasis on the quantity and quality of work produced by the pupils;
  - the commitment of the headteacher and governors to maintaining a generous level of learning support workers to support the teachers in these lessons; and
  - a high level of support and expertise provided by the local education authority.
7. Whilst standards have improved significantly in English and mathematics they could improve further. For example, there has been considerable monitoring of the quality of teaching across the school. The best teaching is very good. In identifying the best practice, this is not being shared or modelled so that all teachers can aspire to further improve. Similarly, the analysis of information gained from tests is too complicated and therefore not sufficiently useful in planning for future learning. The school did not meet its targets for English and mathematics for the last two years. This year's targets have recently been revised and are seen to be realistic but suitably challenging. In English, 68 per cent of pupils are expected to attain Level 4 or above in English and 19 per cent to attain Level 5. For mathematics, the targets are 71 per cent of pupils to attain Level 4 or above and 29 per cent to attain Level 5. Inspectors confirm that with continued good teaching in Year 6 that these targets are likely to be met.
8. In science, the pupils are attaining below average standards by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6, which represents an improvement on the last inspection when they were well below average. They are also below average by the end of Year 2, which is also an improvement since 2000. Given the pupils' low starting point, overall achievement through the school is good and is mainly the result of better teaching and planning. The reason why standards have not improved further is because the teaching of scientific enquiry is overly directed by the teachers in Years 3 and 4, where the pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning and make choices. Added to this, the resources for science are inadequate and restrict the development of pupils' investigative skills.
9. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are not high enough. They are below average by the time the pupils leave the school and progress is unsatisfactory overall. This is the same judgement as made at the last inspection and there has been insufficient improvement since this time. In part, this is not the school's fault. Whilst there has been an intensive training programme for teaching staff this has yet to be put to good use because of the disruption caused by the building programme. The computer suite was only completed just a few weeks before the inspection, although there is still no access to the Internet. ICT is not supporting learning in other subjects as well as it should.
10. It is not possible to make a secure judgement on standards in music and physical education.

This is because few lessons were observed during the inspection and there is little evidence of pupils' work to show progress over time. Whilst there are no indications that standards have fallen since the last inspection, in music some lessons are cut short and there is a danger that the curriculum may not be covered in sufficient depth.

11. Standards in history have improved since the last inspection and are now average by the ages of seven and 11. The pupils make good progress given that they start Year 1 with abilities that are well below average. The improvement is largely due to better planning and teaching, which gives greater emphasis to pupils pursuing a practical, enquiry-based approach.
12. In other subjects there has been relatively little change since the last inspection, with standards remaining average overall. In art and design and design and technology the pupils enter Year 1 with standards that are below average. They make sound progress overall, which represents satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. However, the rate of progress in these subjects slows in Year 6. This is because the teacher does not give sufficient time to cover the curriculum due to the emphasis on the end-of-year tests. Similarly, work is insufficiently demanding and artistic skills are not sufficiently well developed by these pupils.
13. Progress for pupils with special educational needs is good overall by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils' needs are identified early and targets are set to address them. They make good progress as a result of the good focused support they receive, either extra help from the teacher or learning support workers, both within the class and when withdrawn in small groups. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress overall. They make particularly good progress when taught by the specialist teacher, either within the class or withdrawn as a small group.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

14. As at the last inspection, pupils continue to have good attitudes to school and learning. Parents report that pupils enjoy coming to school and this ensures that most arrive on time each morning. When they arrive, they are happy and looking forward to their day. Pupils are polite, cheerful and eager to learn. They have a positive approach to school and try hard to meet their teachers' expectations. This was evident, for example, in a Year 2 literacy lesson where pupils worked hard writing amusing poems about animals. Almost all pupils listen well and take part eagerly in the lesson. Pupils' positive attitudes to learning were seen in many lessons, including in the class for the youngest children. The safe, welcoming and calm atmosphere provides an environment that encourages pupils to do their best and pupils respond well. They develop good habits of working and settle quickly to tasks. Sustained levels of concentration were seen in many lessons, for example, in a Year 6 numeracy lesson. Pupils remained on task when learning about fractions and decimals, even when not directly supervised, persevering well in completing their activities.
15. Behaviour has improved since the last inspection. It is now good overall, except for a few incidents of boisterousness at playtimes. Occasionally, a few pupils act in immature and attention-seeking ways in the playground. Similarly, a minority of pupils in Year 1 sometimes misbehave in lessons. More generally, when pupils are moving around the school and in lessons they do so with a minimum of fuss and without wasting time. There is no evidence of oppressive behaviour, bullying or racism. The school's caring and supportive climate for learning encourages pupils to get on well together and there is very good racial harmony.
16. There are very good relationships amongst pupils and between pupils and adults. Very good levels of co-operation and collaboration were noted in many lessons, as, for example, in a Year 4/5 numeracy lesson where pupils worked very well in pairs looking at the relationship between units of mass. Higher and lower attaining pupils work well together, readily sharing their knowledge and skills, which helps them learn better. On occasions, the pupils showed their appreciation of each other by giving spontaneous applause when one of them achieved well. They understand and follow school rules well and treat each other and adults with courtesy and

respect. Teachers use personal, social and health education lessons to help pupils recognise their worth as individuals and to see themselves as others see them. Through these lessons pupils are developing an understanding of the impact of their actions on others and learn to respect each other's feelings, values and beliefs.

17. Pupils' personal development is good. They readily accept responsibility for performing tasks around the school, for example in helping younger pupils with their reading, acting as litter monitors and Year 6 children are encouraged to go to Year 1 as a reward for 'Golden Time' each week.
18. Attendance levels have declined since the last inspection. They are now unsatisfactory in comparison with other schools. The high rate of absenteeism, by a significant minority of pupils, adversely affects pupils' progress and the standards that they achieve. The headteacher is bringing a new awareness of the importance of high levels of attendance and has started to bring in initiatives to influence these. He and the attendance officer have organised clear mechanisms for following up any unexplained absences and late arrivals. It would appear that their parents condone the absence of these pupils. The school works closely with the education welfare officers who visit the school regularly. A small minority of pupils are often late for school in the morning.
19. The Education Action Zone is very supportive in trying to raise awareness of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality. The school realises that it needs to continue to work closely with the relevant agencies and to make parents and pupils very aware of the importance of high levels of attendance and punctuality of pupils. There have been seven exclusions in the past year. The inspectors found that the exclusion process has been used as a necessary strategy for the sake of the whole school community.

## HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

20. The judgement about teaching is based on the lessons observed and the scrutiny of pupils' work over time. Teaching is good overall. This represents good improvement since the last inspection, when teaching was just sound with too much being unsatisfactory. This was a key reason why the school was considered to have serious weaknesses. The school has addressed the weaknesses identified and no unsatisfactory teaching was seen during the inspection. Teaching is much better and pupils' books indicate that there is good teaching in all classes. The best teaching is in the Reception class, Years 2, 5 and 6. Here, the teaching is consistently good and accounts for all the very good teaching observed during the inspection. More than anything else, the improved teaching explains the improved progress of the pupils. Teaching is good in English, mathematics, science, religious education, geography and history. It is sound in art and design, design and technology and ICT. In ICT, delayed access to the new computer suite has impeded the development of teaching and learning in this subject. It is not possible to make a secure judgement about the teaching in music and physical education, because too few lessons were observed and there is little evidence of work over time.
21. Pupils of all levels of attainment respond well to the good teaching, making good progress in almost two thirds of the lessons observed. Almost all teaching builds successfully on the good attitudes to learning that the children develop in school. The Year 6 pupils were keen to tell inspectors that *'lessons are interesting'* and that *'the teaching is good, it's got better'*. There are common features to most good lessons. The key characteristics of lessons where the teaching is most successful and the pupils achieve particularly well are:
  - There is a clear expectation that learning will take place. Teachers plan well and provide interesting tasks that are well matched to the pupils' capabilities.
  - Teachers know their subjects well and use correct technical, subject-based language to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding. For instance, Year 5 pupils investigate the factors affecting the rate of evaporation in science. They understand that 'molecules' in water change to 'water vapour' when heated.
  - There are very good relationships between teachers and pupils, which encourage the pupils

- to think and respond freely as they work as a class or as part of a small group. This makes a good contribution to the pupils' moral and social development.
- There is an element of fun and sensitive humour to the lesson. For example, the use of the puppets 'Leo the lion' in the reception class and 'Tony tiger' in Year 1 help stimulate learning. Similarly in Year 6 the teacher raises the pupils' self-esteem and inspires them to do even better with comments such as '*you're not meant to be that good. Don't peak too soon*'.
  - The pupils' behaviour is very well managed and there is never a need for them to be admonished.
  - Teachers have realistic, but always high, expectations of their pupils. They challenge them to further effort, providing opportunities for all pupils to become engaged in the work and make good progress.
  - The learning support staff are well briefed by the teachers and make a valuable contribution to the quality of the pupils' learning. There is a strong team spirit between teachers and support staff.
22. Much of the best teaching occurs in English and mathematics lessons. All teachers place particular emphasis on the basic skills of literacy and numeracy and ensure that these are consolidated through other curriculum subjects. Speaking and listening skills are given high priority. All teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to speak at length, either within subjects or, as in Years 1 and 2, within a distinct session. The teachers' questioning skills are skilful and challenge pupils to think about their work. In return, the pupils are engaged; they maintain interest and tackle their work with enthusiasm and concentration. The National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy are well established and make a significant impact on how well the pupils achieve overall. However, with most lessons timetabled to last for one hour and ten minutes, sessions exceed the recommended length. Most particularly in numeracy, but also in literacy, this is too long to keep the lesson moving at a sufficiently brisk pace.
23. There are weaker areas in the teaching:
- A lack of sufficient opportunities for pupils to use their own initiative. The teachers generally overly direct the activity and therefore there is little room for error. The choices available for the pupils are too limited. For example in one observed art lesson, the equipment and materials were well prepared and placed on tables. However, this prevented the pupils from suggesting and finding alternative materials and tools to use in their work. Similarly, the library has insufficient non-fiction books for the pupils to work independently and develop research skills.
  - In Year 1 a significant minority of pupils interrupt lessons by calling out answers and settling to work too slowly. Although the teacher has appropriate strategies to manage the behaviour, some learning time is lost waiting for all pupils to respond appropriately. This is most particularly evident in the afternoons, when no learning support worker is allocated to support the teacher.
  - ICT is insufficiently supporting learning in other subjects. Although there are computers in all classrooms, teachers made very little use of them during the week of the inspection.
24. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good overall and well targeted to the pupils' individual needs. They are well supported by the skilled learning support workers, both in lessons and when withdrawn in small groups. The teachers pay good attention to the teaching of basic skills in lessons. The specific targets in individual education plans are clear and well defined, which enables the pupils to make good progress. However, the use of ICT to support pupils with special educational needs is underdeveloped.
25. The teachers are aware of the needs of pupils in the early stages of learning English. These pupils are taught well because the teachers take care to make explanations clear and understandable. The specialist teacher (from the Ethnic Minority Achievement Service for the teaching of children with English as an additional language) has a very good understanding of pupils' needs and provides very effective support. The time allocated to the school for the support of these pupils is providing them with the best opportunity to achieve in line with their abilities.

26. Teachers know their pupils well and take appropriate opportunities to assess the degree of learning each pupil has achieved. They do this through questions, through checking pupils' knowledge at the conclusion of lessons and through helpful marking of written work, which shows pupils how they can improve. Good use is made of the pupils' targets for improvement in English and mathematics. These would be further improved if presented in language that the pupils and parents can understand. In the Reception class, the use of assessment is good. Here, the ongoing checking of each child's progress promotes the effective development of skills across all six areas of learning. This results in the children settling into the school's routines quickly and making good progress.
27. A small number of parents expressed dissatisfaction over the school's provision of homework, although the concern was as much to do with too much homework as too little. The inspectors found that the quantity and quality of homework are appropriate and in line with national recommendations. It is used appropriately to reinforce work completed in lessons.

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

28. The quality and range of learning opportunities provided for the children in the Reception class are good. There is a strong emphasis on promoting the children's personal, social and emotional development, which allows them to grow in confidence and settle into everyday routines. This is important, as many children start school with poor personal and social skills and low self-esteem. Well-organised and meaningful activities are matched well to the needs of the children, so that they are able to make at least good progress in all the areas of learning expected for this age range. Children are provided with a good start to their education and secure foundations are laid for the future demands of the National Curriculum.
29. The curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6 is broad and relevant but lacks appropriate balance. This was an issue from the last inspection and, although the school day has been restructured, it needs to be further revised. This is because the length of the school day for pupils in Years 1 and 2 is well below the average for most schools, as a result of the overlong lunchtime. Another reason is that too much time is allocated to some subjects, to the disadvantage of others. For example, English and mathematics lessons last for one hour and ten minutes, which is too long and results in pupils becoming restless and losing concentration. In other subjects time is not always used wisely, such as in a music lesson for pupils in Year 3, which should have lasted 30 minutes but was cut short by ten minutes because the teacher gave out homework and let the pupils get ready for going home. Similarly, in Year 6 the pupils have just half an hour for art and design and design and technology each week, which is insufficient to fully cover the curriculum.
30. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been successfully implemented and this has contributed well to the improving standards in English and mathematics. In science, some classes have restricted opportunities for pupils to take part in sufficiently structured investigations, which is limiting their skills in this key aspect of the subject. The provision for ICT has been much improved since the last inspection with the building of a computer suite that allows for whole-class teaching of basic skills in the subject. However, this is too recent to have impacted on raising standards and there are not enough opportunities for pupils to develop these skills by using them to support their learning in other subjects.
31. There is a commitment to developing the pupils' creative talents and they are given opportunities to work with a range of visitors, including theatre groups, writers and musicians. Pupils can join the school choir and take part in musical and dramatical productions for parents and members of the community. The school also gives pupils the chance to take part in a range of educational visits that enrich the curriculum by providing further learning experiences.
32. The provision for extra-curricular activities is satisfactory, with pupils being able to join such clubs as football, art, board games and country dancing. There are swimming lessons for pupils in

Years 4, 5 and 6 and by the time that they leave school, nearly all pupils can swim the nationally expected 25 metres, as well as having a good knowledge of water safety. All statutory requirements are met, as are the demands of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. The curriculum is also enriched by involvement in national and local initiatives, as is exemplified by the school's involvement in a family learning project, which has led to increased confidence in the pupils taking part in it.

33. The way that the curriculum is planned has been much improved since the last inspection. The planning procedures are now thorough and make sure that due emphasis is given to teaching literacy and numeracy skills. They incorporate national guidelines and provide teachers with clear information about the key learning objectives and skills to be taught. This enables them to set work that builds on previous learning and which suitably challenges pupils of different abilities so that they can make the progress of which they are capable.
34. The curriculum is fully inclusive and enables all pupils to have equality of access to every aspect of school life. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The teachers plan carefully to meet the needs of pupils in all lessons, but especially in literacy and numeracy. The support of the skilled learning support workers enables the pupils to tackle their work confidently and with developing independence. The school plans carefully to ensure that pupils have the support they need without missing out on the experiences of their peers. Pupils who speak English as a second language are also well supported and this enables them to make good progress in their gaining of language skills. This is especially the case when taught by the specialist teacher who has very good expertise in this area.
35. There is satisfactory provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. The school is working to make this aspect of the curriculum more structured and has recently appointed a co-ordinator to oversee this development. The pupils' social development is promoted by the extra-curricular programme and by the variety of educational visits in which they can participate. They are also encouraged to work collaboratively, in pairs and small groups, as well as taking turns to share equipment fairly. Pupils have some opportunities, in and out of classrooms, to take responsibility, which supports their personal development. However, the school is aware of the need to provide more opportunities for pupils to show initiative and make their own decisions to help prepare them as responsible citizens within the community at large. For example, a school council is soon to be introduced, so that the pupils will have more say in school life. As part of their work in science, the pupils are helped to develop good attitudes towards healthy eating and learn about the dangers of the misuse of drugs. The school provides for sex education, with the help of the school nurse, in a sensitive and supportive manner.
36. Overall, the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social and cultural development is good. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when it was satisfactory overall. However, provision for pupils' cultural development, although satisfactory, is not as good as it was at the time of the previous inspection; provision for their spiritual development remains satisfactory.
37. Pupils' spiritual development is sound. The development of pupils' self-esteem is central to the school's caring ethos and is evident in the teaching. Attitudes of staff to pupils encourage mutual respect. All pupils are included and each individual is valued. Pupils' self-esteem is raised through praise and the rewards systems. They are being taught to appreciate the world. In assemblies, for example, pupils are asked to think for a moment about how a small pip can grow into an apple tree and they are asked to reflect on looking after the environment. In an assembly for the youngest children they were very attentive and responsive when discussing 'precious things'. The choir sings well and the pupils appreciate the songs.
38. Provision for pupils' moral and social education is good. The school teaches pupils right from wrong and helps them behave well individually and in groups. A sound personal, social and health education programme is taught and this help pupils consider some current social and moral issues. Pupils are considerate and tolerant of each other. They were seen, for example, to work very well together in a Year 5 history lesson researching for information on Tudor homes. Excellent relationships were observed in a Year 2 numeracy lesson where the pupils showed

great enjoyment trying to 'catch you out' when comparing two-digit numbers. Older pupils are encouraged to help the younger children. Pupils regularly collect money for charities. Extra-curricular activities, including visits to places of interest, also make a good contribution to pupils' social development.

39. The provision for the development of pupils' own culture is satisfactory. The school provides a curriculum which helps pupils develop their understanding of art, music and literature. This provision is reinforced through regular assemblies and by visits to museums and places of interest. However, provision for learning about other cultures is underdeveloped. Although there is a good display in the hall for the Chinese new year, there is a general lack of displays and artefacts to celebrate other cultures. There are no multicultural musical instruments or books in the library. The school has identified this as an area to develop further to better prepare pupils for life in a multicultural society.
40. The links with the community make a suitable contribution to pupils' learning. Local ministers and priests come into school to lead assemblies and help provide pupils with an insight into the nature of religious experience. There are visits from representatives of the police and fire services, as well as from the school nurse, to further support pupils' learning in such areas as fire safety, road safety and how to adopt a healthy lifestyle. Local people visit to talk of their work and experiences, such as a mother bringing her baby in to help younger pupils learn about the human life cycle. There are opportunities for pupils to raise money for a range of national and local charities, in which they develop an understanding of the needs of others. The induction programme for pupils joining the school in the Reception class ensures that they are well prepared for school. The pupils in Year 6 are suitably prepared for the time when they enter their secondary stage of education, as a result of the liaison arrangements between primary and secondary staff.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

41. Pupils continue to be well cared for by the staff, as they were at the last inspection. Parents and pupils appreciate this good provision. All pupils are valued and the school's caring ethos promotes very good racial harmony. There are good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and very good procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour. The senior management team ensures that there is a shared understanding by all members of staff of the necessity to promote consistently the guidance given in the school's behaviour policy. There is not, as yet, a formal policy for preventing bullying. However, bullying is not a problem at the school at this time. Teachers and learning support workers make a significant contribution to providing a caring atmosphere and a safe and calm environment for all pupils, both in and out of lessons. Good behaviour is encouraged in ways that make sense to the children. Playtimes and lunchtimes are well supervised, although lunchtime is too long for the youngest children and those in Years 1 and 2. The occasional outbreaks of boisterous behaviour by a few pupils are handled well.
42. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are satisfactory. Although no profiles for the personal development of each pupil are kept, pupils' personal development is monitored informally and effectively. Staff know pupils well and respond sympathetically to them individually, taking good account of any personal circumstances that may affect their learning and general well-being. 'Circle time' is now being used to help pupils express their thoughts and feelings and to learn to understand about themselves and others. The school provides opportunities for pupils to take responsibility by, for example, looking after new pupils and by showing visitors around the school.
43. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good even though attendance rates have declined since the previous inspection. These rates are now unsatisfactory when compared to attendance rates at similar schools. However, the school follows stringent and appropriate procedures for registering pupils each day. There are clear procedures for following up any absences. The headteacher and the attendance officer, who is supported by the Education Action Zone, work closely with the education welfare officers who visit the school regularly. There

is now a reward system for recognition of classes with the best attendance each week. The school is working hard to inform all parents of the importance of improving levels of attendance and punctuality and this is stressed in all school documentation, including newsletters.

44. There are good procedures in place for child protection; the headteacher is named as the designated person in charge. Children currently at the school who are being cared for by the local authority are monitored carefully. Staff are receiving appropriate training to enable them to keep up to date with aspects of first aid. There is a comprehensive health and safety policy and regular risk assessments are carried out.
45. The need to improve the procedures for assessing the pupils' attainment and progress was an issue for the school at the time of the last inspection. Procedures are now satisfactory overall. Assessment procedures in English and mathematics for pupils in Years 1 to 6 are good. The school uses a range of strategies linked to the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Particularly good use is made of the twice-termly formal assessments, where clear feedback is given to the pupils about what they must do to improve. The schools' method of setting individual and group targets in English (using a commercial scheme) and Maths (using the NNS Key Objectives) has been less successful, because the targets are often very broad and the pupils are unsure what the targets mean and what they must do to improve. Assessment procedures in science are satisfactory, but for all other subjects they are unsatisfactory. This is because the school has not yet introduced systems for assessing pupils' achievements in these subjects.
46. The headteacher has amassed large quantities of data about the standards and achievement of the pupils. However, the use of this is unsatisfactory, as it was at the time of the last inspection. This is because the teachers do not yet understand how to analyse and use the data to provide good information about what must be done for the pupils to make further improvements. Similarly, the information provided for governors is too complicated to help them fully comprehend what the data is telling them as to whether standards are high enough.
47. In the Reception class, children's personal, social and emotional development is particularly well emphasised. The teacher uses a variety of activities to form an initial assessment of what children know and can do when they start school. These and continuing assessments, are used well to plan further work that is matched closely to children's developing needs and ensure that they make at least good progress.
48. The provision outlined in statements of special educational needs is implemented appropriately. Arrangements for the review of these statements are good. Liaison with other agencies is sound. Arrangements for placing pupils on the register of special needs are appropriate and the monitoring of their progress against the targets in their individual education plans is good. The special educational needs co-ordinator is currently developing the monitoring of the pupils' performance against standardised levels of progress.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

49. The school fosters positive views among parents. They warmly praise what the school achieves. They value its caring attitudes and are satisfied that their children make good progress. They believe teachers know their children well and that such secure personal relationships help pupils want to succeed. The vast majority of parents responding to the questionnaire stated their children like school and those seen during the inspection said their children are eager to come. They say that the school expects their children to work hard and achieve their best and is helping them to become mature and responsible.
50. A few parents did not think that the school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. The inspection found that the range was satisfactory, although reduced in number since the last inspection. Lunchtime and after school clubs have recently been reintroduced after the decline in facilities due to building work and are proving to be popular.
51. A minority of parents do not feel well informed about how their child is getting on and a few feel

that the school does not work closely with them. The inspection team found that the school is trying hard to work closely with parents in their children's education. There are regular parents' meetings and an 'open door' policy whereby parents can approach members of staff at any appropriate time should they wish to discuss their child. For example, all teachers are on the playground at the end of each day, remaining with their class until the last pupil has left for home. However, the end-of-year reports to parents are inconsistent across the school. Although they say what the pupils can do, the vast majority do not specify what they need to do in order to improve.

52. Some parents were dissatisfied with the amount of homework that their children receive but the inspection team found that the homework given across the school was generally satisfactory. However, inspectors found that the parents could be better informed of what they could do to help their children with their work. New guidance has just been sent out to parents to fulfil these recommendations.
53. Concern was mentioned at the parents' meeting that 'blanket' permission was given at the beginning of the school year for the children to go on trips. Specific permission was not obtained for individual trips where there could be an element of risk, such as a boat trip on a canal. The inspection team found that parents were justified in their concern.
54. The inspection team agrees with the positive views of the vast majority of parents. It judges that the school is now trying harder to work more closely with parents and is actively trying to involve even more parents in the life of the school. Parents speak highly of the good, informal links with the headteacher and staff. They see the links as a two-way process, ensuring pupils' interests are to the fore. The quality of information provided to parents is satisfactory. They are given regular information on their children's targets, topics and curriculum areas to be studied. The school prospectus, the governors' annual report to parents and newsletters are informative. The assessment data and target section of the parents' booklet is too complicated and of little use to parents in understanding how well the pupils achieve.
55. Parents' involvement in the work of the school is satisfactory and is improving. A few parents come in to help, for example, with reading and cooking. The parents of pupils with special educational needs are involved appropriately. Many parents are keen to volunteer to help on school visits. The parent-teachers' association is organised by a dedicated, hardworking small group of parents. They have organised events that have raised money to fund, for example, Christmas treats for all the pupils. The parent governors make a valued contribution to school life.
56. Induction procedures are satisfactory overall. They are good for children entering the Reception class, and they are also good for pupils entering school at times other than at the beginning of the school year. Parents are pleased at how their children settle in and enjoy school. They also appreciate the appropriate care taken when the oldest pupils transfer to secondary school.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

57. The overall leadership and management of the school are good. The improvements evident since the last inspection are mainly the result of more effective leadership and management. Where weaknesses were evident these have been successfully addressed. For example, the headteacher, deputy headteacher, subject leaders and governors are working more effectively as a team to monitor and evaluate the school's performance and plan for improvement. Similarly, there are better links between management decisions and actions and the improvements in standards and provision since the last inspection. Inspectors recognise the support and expertise provided by the local education authority in improving the leadership of the school. There is a strong commitment to improvement and good capacity to succeed. Policies are implemented with a high degree of consistency. The aims and values of the school are well met through the curriculum, extra-curricular activities and in the good ethos of the school. The good support for pupils with special educational needs, those with English as an additional language and those from minority ethnic groups reflect the inclusive nature of the school, ensuring that all pupils get a fair deal by being at the school.

58. The leadership and management of the headteacher are good overall. He has been influential in establishing a stronger emphasis on academic success, particularly for the teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. Whilst he provides clear direction that is raising standards, he effectively maintains the strong pastoral ethos of the school. Working in a relationship of strong teamwork with the staff, there is a growing understanding of what is working well in the school and what needs to be improved. The emphasis on better teaching and higher expectations of what all pupils can achieve is paying dividends, clearly evident in the rising standards in English and mathematics. Leadership could be further improved by streamlining the procedures for collecting and presenting information about pupils' attainment and progress. The headteacher produces an abundance of graphs and charts, which are not sufficiently understood by teaching staff or governors. Therefore the data is not sufficiently influencing teachers' planning or helping improve the pupils' achievements and attainment over time. Similarly the format in which this data is presented to parents is over complicated.
59. The deputy headteacher effectively supports the headteacher in the leadership of the school. At the same time she plays an important role as an exemplar of very good teaching practice. The introduction of a senior management team represents a significant development since the last inspection. The team meets regularly with the headteacher to discuss strategies for introducing new initiatives as well as identifying areas for improvement. They lead by example and support the headteacher in management decisions. Although the team is relatively new, senior managers are already beginning to impact on further raising standards.
60. The governors provide a good level of support for the school. They are well informed about the work of the school and its performance and form an integral part of the school team. For example:
- They have a committee structure that works successfully. They meet regularly and have a very good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Other than annually updating the 'terms of reference' that underpin their work, they ensure that statutory requirements are met.
  - The chair of governors is very effective. He has been instrumental in establishing a very successful working relationship with the headteacher as well as building a governing body that knows and supports the school well. He is keen to make the governing body even more effective.
  - All governors play an active part in the life of the school. They monitor the work of the school, both formally and informally. Since the last inspection each governor has been linked to a subject area. Many governors joined 'their' subject leader for the discussions with inspectors, which showed their commitment and understanding. The subject reports they present to the other governors are mostly of a high quality. Governors are to be commended on the success of this initiative.
  - The weaknesses identified at the last inspection have, by necessity, formed the basis of school improvement planning. An 'action' group, consisting of governors, senior staff and the school link adviser, has met regularly to monitor progress and agree the next steps. They are now looking to have a firmer steer in the longer-term vision for the school and plan to widen the consultation process to seek the views of parents and pupils on further ways in which the school could improve. This will ensure that all parties work towards common goals and understand the most pressing priorities for the school.
  - The principles of 'best value' are well understood and applied. Governors have good arrangements for evaluating the cost-effectiveness of key spending decisions and their impact on the pupils' learning. Financial planning is related to focused educational priorities. For example, the governors are committed to retaining an additional teacher for three mornings a week. This minimises the use of supply teachers and provides cover for staff sickness, attendance at courses and time for teachers to monitor their subject area. Governors also aim to retain a high level of learning support workers. These are key factors in why the pupils are achieving well in the school. The budget surplus is being used to enable these arrangements to continue for as long as possible.

61. The school's arrangements for monitoring and evaluating its performance are good. This represents significant improvement since the time of the last inspection when these arrangements were seen to be in need of development. The monitoring of teaching is of high quality and clearly pinpoints areas for development. Teaching is regularly and rigorously observed by the headteacher, subject leaders and advisers from the local education authority and is well supported by governors. The headteacher keeps a particularly close track of pupils' progress as they move through the school. However, the analyses of data and tracking systems are insufficiently understood by teachers and therefore not as useful as they might be in improving achievement over time. Standardised tests are used to support the tracking of progress and attainment. Test results are carefully analysed, weaknesses are highlighted and teaching programmes adapted to meet needs. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been successfully implemented and monitored, both by the school and the local education authority. The success of these procedures is apparent in the improved teaching throughout the school and the rising standards, particularly in English and mathematics.
62. The school has successfully established the role of the subject leader for each National Curriculum subject and religious education, as one of giving strategic direction to raise standards. This was seen as a weakness in the last inspection and is now a stronger area of the school's work. The headteacher is more able to delegate and let staff get on with the job, giving them responsibility for planning and implementing improvements. There have been many opportunities for the subject leaders in English and mathematics to monitor and evaluate the improvements in their subjects. Here, there has been particularly good support from the local education authority, with consultants working alongside the teachers to observe and feedback on teaching. This is a key factor in the rising standards evident in these subjects. All subject leaders monitor planning and sample pupils' work and have a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development in their subjects. This is translated into appropriate subject improvement plans. Whilst actions for improvement are costed the subject leaders do not yet have a budget. Therefore they cannot be totally sure whether their plans can be realised in practice. In this aspect there has been no change since the last inspection.
63. The school provides all its pupils with equal opportunity to learn and achieve. Pupils from all ethnic groups are well integrated and boys and girls work and play together happily. Those pupils with special educational needs are well-supported in lessons. The pupils with English as a second language are particularly well supported when taught by the specialist teacher. The co-ordinator for special educational needs provides good leadership. She has considerable expertise in dealing with pupils in need and ensures that all statutory requirements are met. All paperwork is kept up to date and all monies are carefully allocated so that statement provision is guaranteed. She liaises well with the special needs governor so that the governing body is well informed concerning all matters relating to special needs.
64. The school has a generous number of teaching and support staff to meet curriculum requirements, a priority in the forward financial planning by staff and governors. This has a positive impact on the achievements of all pupils. The teaching staff are appropriately qualified to meet the teaching and management requirements of the curriculum. There are good procedures in place for the performance management of teaching staff, with targets that reflect school priorities and individual needs. This was identified as a weakness at the last inspection. Although there is little turnover of staff there are good induction processes for those new to the school. Support staff are valued as integral and important members of the team. All staff recognise their contribution to achieving the school's aims and values.
65. The school's accommodation is now good. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection when it was severely criticised. It is the result of a major building programme, which was only completed a few weeks before the inspection took place. It is to the credit of the staff and governors that the building works (both the hall extension and the internal alterations, which affected all classrooms) caused minimal disruption to the pupils' learning. The pupils are very appreciative of the new facilities, with older pupils noting the best aspects being 'the hall' and 'the toilets'. The new library and ICT suite are an unusual shape, since they fill two corners surrounding the octagonal shaped hall. In the ICT suite this means that some pupils will need to

move from their places to see the interactive whiteboard, which will not be helpful for pupils or teachers.

66. The range of learning resources is satisfactory overall. The exception is the provision of non-fiction books in the library, where there is an insufficient range and quantity of books to support independent learning. There are also insufficient resources in physical education and to support investigational work in science. Resources in the Reception class are in need of updating. The external play areas have naturally suffered as a result of the building project, which the school plans to address. The school's income and expenditure are well below average. Given the good teaching and the difference that this is making to the pupils' achievements by the time they leave, the school provides good value for money.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

The governors, headteacher and staff should look to:

- (i) Continue to improve standards in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology, by:
- identifying the most effective teaching strategies in the school and sharing these to further improve the quality of teaching and learning;
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to be actively involved in their own learning;
  - ensuring that ICT is used to support pupils' learning across the curriculum; and
  - improving the resources to support teaching and learning, in particular the provision of books in the non-fiction library and the resources for science.
- (Paragraphs 8, 23, 24, 30, 39, 66, 81, 84, 92, 97, 98, 100, 105, 106, 108, 114, 118, 122, 123, 129 and 143)*
- (ii) Review and make better use of the time available within the school day, by:
- increasing the teaching time for pupils in Years 1 and 2 to meet the average time for most schools; and
  - ensuring that the length of lessons and the organisation of the school day make the most effective use of time and give appropriate time to all subjects.
- (Paragraphs 10, 12, 22, 29, 41, 68, 84, 91, 101, 110 and 133)*
- (iii) Use the information about pupils' attainment and progress more effectively, by:
- streamlining the procedures for collecting and presenting information, so that is meaningful to teachers and governors;
  - ensuring that the system for tracking and checking pupils' progress is understood and fully implemented by all teachers;
  - introducing procedures for checking progress and attainment in subjects where they do not currently exist; and
  - developing the pupils' ability to evaluate their own performance and to set targets for

learning.

*(Paragraphs 2, 7, 45, 46, 58, 61, 85, 93, 100, 108, 114, 118, 123, 133, 137 and 143)*

In addition, the governors should also consider including in the action plan:

- continuing to work with parents to further improve the punctuality and attendance of a significant minority of pupils.

*(Paragraphs 18, 19 and 43)*

- improving the resources for physical education and for children in the Reception class.

*(Paragraphs 66, 71 and 137)*

- implementing the planned programme to improve the school grounds

*(Paragraph 66)*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	52
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	45

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	0	16	17	19	0	0	0
Percentage	0	31	33	36	0	0	0

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

### 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)	198
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	56

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Y1 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	65

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	22

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	24
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	31

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.5
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	2.6
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	23	5	28

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Girls	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Total	22	24	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	79 (72)	86 (72)	93 (84)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Girls	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Total	22	25	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	79 (76)	89 (80)	96 (84)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year. Where the number of boys or girls in a year group are ten or fewer the results are not published.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	18	14	32

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	14	15
	Girls	10	6	8
	Total	21	20	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	66 (73)	63 (62)	72 (81)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	13	14
	Girls	6	6	7
	Total	15	19	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	47 (35)	59 (73)	66 (88)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

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

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

<b>No of pupils on roll</b>	<b>Number of fixed period exclusions</b>	<b>Number of permanent exclusions</b>
142	5	0
2	0	0
13	0	0
13	2	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
4	0	0
5	0	0
0	0	0
8	0	0
0	0	0
7	0	0
0	0	0
2	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0

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

### ***Teachers and classes***

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.2
Average class size	27.4

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	195

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2001 - 2002
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	<b>£</b>
Total income	473,878
Total expenditure	440,411
Expenditure per pupil	1,966
Balance brought forward from previous year	22,967
Balance carried forward to next year	33,467

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2.2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1.8
<hr/>	
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	198
Number of questionnaires returned	66

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	62	35	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	52	41	6	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	27	53	11	0	9
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	21	38	33	3	2
The teaching is good.	55	42	2	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	35	44	18	2	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	67	32	0	0	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	53	38	0	0	8
The school works closely with parents.	32	44	20	2	3
The school is well led and managed.	38	39	9	0	12
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	41	50	5	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	32	35	17	6	8

### Other issues raised by parents

Eleven parents attended the pre-inspection meeting. The parents were mostly complimentary in their responses. There were a few concerns expressed about the school's arrangements for obtaining parents' permission for trips to proceed. The inspection confirmed that 'blanket' permission is gained on entry to the school and that this is not sufficient.

## **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**

67. Children join the school in the Reception class at the beginning of the academic year in which they become five. They gradually become full time over a period of the first six weeks. Despite the majority of children having had pre-school experience, they enter school with very low abilities in most areas of learning, in particular, in communication, language and literacy, mathematical and social skills. Since the last inspection the school has built on previous strengths and improved even further. The key reason for this is the consistently good and often very good teaching, in an exciting, well-structured learning environment. As a result the children make good progress in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world around them. Previously they made sound progress. They make very good progress in physical, creative and personal, social and emotional skills. Despite the good progress children make in their first year, when they enter Year 1, the overall standards are well below what is normally found for children of their age.
68. The curriculum is stimulating and interesting. All children, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, benefit from a wide range of activities. The activities are effectively planned to cover all six areas of learning. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are effectively taught. The checking of children's work and progress is very good and emphasises the teacher's expectations. Children are constantly praised for their efforts and achievements. Careful attention is given to the differing levels of attainment when organising the work and providing appropriate adult support. However, the hour and a half lunch break is considered to be too long for the children.
69. Teaching is consistently good and much is very good. The key characteristics of this successful teaching, where the children achieve well, include:
- The teacher is experienced, has a secure knowledge of the curriculum for these children and plans all work very thoroughly.
  - The teacher is effective in promoting the development of skills across all areas of learning, particularly in communication, language and literacy, numeracy and personal, social and emotional development.
  - The teacher is well supported by learning support workers, who are given clear guidance on how best to support the needs of children. Together they work as a happy and effective team.
  - The teacher's calm, quiet manner and the excellent relationships she has built up with the class has given the children the confidence to undertake new, often challenging, learning;
  - There is very good classroom organisation and management.
  - The high expectations of behaviour are realised.
70. The school has established a good system for introducing new children into the school through meetings at the pre-school providers and at the school itself. This helps children make a confident start to their school life. Effective links have been established with parents to make sure that they know what the school expects and how they can best support their child's learning. A significant minority of parents do not take advantage of this support. Daily contact is maintained and aided by the use of homework and home/school reading links.
71. Accommodation is spacious, with an adjoining area to the classroom being used for some practical activities such as cooking, sand and water work. Children have sole access to a newly established outside play area, which is used for role-play involving ride on toys. There are plans to further develop this area following good external support. There is a satisfactory range of resources to support learning but most are showing signs of wear and tear and are in need of replacing.

## **Personal, social and emotional development**

72. When the children start the school their attainment is particularly low and the vast majority find it hard to pay attention and listen carefully. In their first term, great emphasis is placed on developing these skills. As a result, they make very good progress and the vast majority are likely to achieve expected levels by the time they move into Year 1. This very good progress is due to very well organised teaching and well planned opportunities for children to work independently. In a very sensitive way, the teacher reminds children of her expectations, often pointing out those who are demonstrating what she expects. Children are encouraged to take turns, share resources and work with a partner. Through role-play in the 'fire station' they decide the nature of the emergency, select the 'fire fighter' and the 'chief' and discuss what they will need to do to help. Owing to the interesting tasks and appropriate support, most children concentrate and persevere well. During the activities the teacher questions effectively and invites children to contribute their ideas. A minority of children need high levels of direct support to make sure they are fully involved. Children are encouraged to listen during 'circle time'. Here, most children are confident to tell the class what, for example, makes them happy, for instance, *'I'm happy when my baby brother sits and we play together'* and *'I'm happy when I'm with my family because they love me'*. Children behave well as a direct result of the clear expectations and they have positive attitudes towards school.

## **Communication, language and literacy**

73. Children make good progress in this area of learning as a result of highly structured teaching. However, by the end of the year most are still likely to be achieving standards well below what is expected in speaking, reading and writing. The children, including those with special needs and those with English as a second language, develop their literacy skills at their own appropriate rate. They learn to listen to each other and take turns in communicating ideas. Very good opportunities are provided to increase the range and use of children's vocabulary and the structure of their language. One good example of this was exemplified when the teacher and learning support worker demonstrated a dialogue between a member of the public and a fire fighter. Children respond to this by structuring their own conversation in role-play areas. Through the effective use of stories and individual reading sessions with books, the children are beginning to understand that pictures and text have meaning. The more able children recognise a few key words, like 'look', 'the' and 'and'. The children's attitudes to books are very good and they handle them with care. They like hearing stories and listen well, enjoying sharing books with their teacher. In one session they were eager to talk about photographs in an information 'big book'. Elements of the literacy framework are well used to develop children's understanding of letter sounds, with some children starting to blend them together to form simple words. They use pictures to sequence an event in which they have been involved, such as making cakes. All but the lowest ability children are able to form some letters independently and the more able children attempt to write words using their knowledge of letter sounds, a typical example being, 'I w resq atee mabel from out the cupd', (I will rescue Auntie Mabel from out the cupboard). All children show an awareness of writing and actively engage in making marks on paper, especially during role-play sessions. Clear, lively introductions and a fun element to the sessions do much to captivate children's attention and promote learning.

## **Mathematical development**

74. The development of mathematical skills, including number, is good. The provision of purposeful activities, linked to the children's interests, aids learning. All children make good progress but are likely to be well below expected standards by the end of the year. Through good teaching and well-organised, practical activities, children make good strides in their understanding of mathematics. 'Leo the Lion' puppet often sets them problems so that they can apply their understanding to 'real' situations, such as finding a way to rescue Leo's ball from the pond using short and long sticks. Regular counting and comparing numbers helps children develop an

understanding of numbers to ten and, for the higher attainers, numbers beyond this. Counting songs and rhymes are used very effectively to support this process. The vast majority of children recognise flat shapes such as circles and can order a set of cubes according to size. The teacher emphasises the correct use of mathematical vocabulary, for example the children use 'shortest' and 'longest' to compare objects and peg socks on a washing line.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

75. Provision and teaching for children are good overall and are particularly strong in the area of science. Children make good progress overall but standards are likely to be well below expectations as they move into Year 1. Using links to the Little Red Hen story, children plant wheat grain, grind them to make flour and later, bread. They collect and compare different seeds and observe the spiralling effect when sycamore seeds fall to the ground. In planting bulbs and watching them grow most children are aware that light and water are needed for growth to occur. Children develop good enquiry skills and are able to use everyday objects to experiment making loud and quiet sounds, for example sandpaper and containers filled with rice. They can use a tape recorder to record a selection of these sounds and enjoy listening to them. When experimenting with small ice cubes and large blocks of ice many are able to predict whether the ice will float or sink. Some can give reasons for their predictions, for example, *'It will sink because it is massive.'*

### **Physical development**

76. Indications are that the children's physical development on entry to school was well below expectations. Due to very good teaching and well-planned opportunities most children make very good progress and are in line to achieve the expectations for this area of learning by the end of the year. When playing outside, almost all children move confidently with good body control, co-ordination and awareness of space. They pedal 'ride on' toys and have no difficulty in steering to keep to the path. They show good levels of independence and need little support when changing into their shorts and tee shirts. In dance lessons they demonstrate very good levels of control and follow the teacher's instructions and actions closely. They try hard to move their bodies to the rhythm of the music. They run quietly on tiptoe, hop and jump and most can 'freeze' when the teacher claps. Children show high levels of creativity using their bodies and scarves to respond to well-chosen pieces of music. They are confident in their ability to care for themselves when dressing and washing their hands. Almost all children can handle pencils, crayons, scissors and glue safely.

### **Creative development**

77. Teaching is very good in this area of learning and supports children in making very good progress from the very low attainment levels when they started school. It is likely that standards achieved by the end of the year will be below expectations. The well-planned range of techniques and media are successful in increasing children's confidence and creative skills. They experience listening to jazz music and respond by using coloured wool, pastels and chalks to 'send' colour across a page. They paint and draw portraits of themselves and use modelling materials such as play dough to make long and short snakes. Children experience working with clay and experiment with different tools to create textures on their pots. They are enthusiastic about singing. They spontaneously sing number rhymes and join in with the teacher when she plays familiar songs on her guitar. Children have opportunities to explore the sound of percussion instruments, including ones they have made. They enjoy the many opportunities for imaginative and dramatic play, which supports the development of their speaking and listening skills as well as personal and social development.

## **ENGLISH**

78. Standards in English are rising. By the time they leave the school the 11-year-old pupils are attaining standards which are below the national average, but broadly in line with attainment in similar schools. This is a good improvement since the last inspection when standards were well

below average. Results have shown improvement over the last three years. Since the last inspection the school has introduced additional measures to improve attainment in English. These measures include:

- thorough and consistent monitoring of the quality of teaching in English;
- a high level of support and training for all teachers and learning support workers; and
- a focus on improving standards in writing.

The evidence of the present inspection confirms that these measures are having a positive impact on standards and that pupils across the school are making good progress. This includes those pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language.

79. Standards in speaking and listening are below average for pupils at seven and 11 years old, but pupils across the ability range make good progress throughout the school. When pupils start Year 1, overall standards in speaking and listening are well below average. Careful attention is paid to the development of these skills and by the time the pupils leave Year 2 they have made good progress, although standards remain below the national average. They listen well and pay careful attention to each other and to their teachers. They develop confidence in speaking aloud and this is carefully fostered, through daily timetabled sessions. For example, the Year 2 class thoroughly enjoyed working with a highly skilled learning support worker to share their news from the previous weekend and to answer questions from other children. The older pupils continue to experience a range of planned opportunities to develop aspects of the spoken language; for example, the pupils in Year 6 are able to discuss and explain their favourite types of books in a lesson on literary 'genre'. Although the pupils continue to make good progress overall, by the end of Year 6 the vast majority of pupils have still not reached the standard expected nationally, partly because of some variation in the quality of teaching and partly because the pupils have started from a low baseline.
80. Standards in reading are below the national average, but the pupils make good progress across the school because of the careful and structured teaching of reading. By the time they reach the age of seven, the pupils recognise a range of common words by sight and are developing good skills in phonics to enable them to read words they do not know. The pupils in Year 2 made very good progress in learning to read with expression, for example, when they read the poem 'Jump or Jiggle' in a literacy lesson. The highest attaining pupils can recognise rhymes and substitute their own choice of animals to create a poem and read it aloud to the class with fluency and expression. Pupils across the ability range experience more difficulty in developing comprehension skills and the teachers pay good attention to this in the 'guided reading' sessions for small groups. By the time they reach the top of the school the pupils have developed a technical vocabulary with which to express preferences about their favourite types of books and authors. They refer to a wide range of books to explain their views of different types of literature. The Year 5 class demonstrated good understanding when they described the differences between myths, fables and legends; they were able to draw on their understanding of the key features of a range of stories to plan their own legends.
81. Pupils across the school have good attitudes to reading and respond well to texts in lessons, but say that they would like a greater choice of books for individual reading. The school has invested in good quality 'big books' to support teaching in the literacy lesson and this is having a positive impact on the development of the pupils' reading skills. However the range of books for pupils to read individually, particularly non-fiction books, is limited and this is a constraint on the progress of the pupils. The limited development of the library and the lack of opportunities to use the Internet for research also limit the opportunities to develop reading, comprehension and research skills, especially for the most able readers. The pupils with special educational needs and those at an early stage of learning English are well supported and make good progress in learning to read. The 'reading buddies' scheme, where pupils have the opportunity to read with volunteers from the community is greatly valued by the school and especially by the children concerned.
82. The school has focused on improving standards of writing and this is having a positive impact. Although standards remain below the national average, the pupils across the ability range make

good progress throughout the school. By the age of seven, pupils are able to write with increasing confidence for a range of purposes. They write stories, instructions, letters and poems with enthusiasm. The pupils in Year 2 demonstrate a good understanding of how to choose words to make their poems interesting through the use of imaginative vocabulary, which demonstrates their understanding of the use of rhyme and alliteration. The teachers pay very good attention to the careful and structured teaching of handwriting and spelling and this has a very positive impact on the pupils' achievements. The importance of good presentation is emphasised and these young pupils take pride in their work. The work of all pupils, but especially the lower-attaining pupils and the pupils with special educational needs, is well supported by the skilled learning support workers. By the time they reach the age of 11 the oldest pupils have developed their writing in a range of contexts including poetry, stories, play scripts, letters and diaries. Higher-attaining pupils write in sentences, which are correctly punctuated and contain interesting vocabulary. Spelling is usually correct and the writing is structured in paragraphs. In one lesson observed, the pupils in Year 4 were able to identify a wide range of different types of poetry. The highest-attaining pupils in the class demonstrated their understanding of how the use of similes and metaphors can enhance their own writing and the lowest-attaining pupils were able to choose appropriate adjectives for their poems. Good emphasis is given to the teaching of spelling, handwriting and punctuation and the pupils' work is generally neat and well presented. The school has worked hard to raise standards in writing and has encouraged the pupils to perceive themselves as writers and take pride in their efforts. This is having a positive impact on standards for all pupils. The pupils have good opportunities for writing at length in a range of contexts and work of a high standard is displayed in the school.

83. The pupils' attitudes to English are good. The pupils enjoy their lessons and generally work hard to please their teachers. They are keen to share their ideas and co-operate well in group tasks. In Year 1, the behaviour of a few pupils threatens to disrupt learning; in the vast majority of cases the teachers and learning support workers deal with this effectively.
84. The school has effectively implemented the National Literacy Strategy. Lessons exceed the recommended length of one hour, but pace was maintained in the lessons observed during the inspection in all but a few cases. The school effectively plans for the promotion of literacy skills in other subjects. The opportunity to use ICT to develop teaching and learning in English is underdeveloped and this is unsatisfactory.
85. Overall the teaching of English is good. The teaching observed during the inspection ranged from satisfactory to very good, but there was evidence of good teaching in all classes from the work that pupils have produced over time. Teaching is particularly good in Years 2, 5 and 6. The teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the subject. All teachers were careful to share the purpose of the lesson with the pupils, which resulted in pupils being clear about what they were expected to do. In the best lessons the teachers moved quickly from a revision of previous learning, through a lively engagement with word, sentence and text level work, to well-planned activities which were carefully and appropriately structured for different ability groups. Plenary sessions were interactive and provided good opportunities to review and develop learning; for example the Year 5 teacher used the plenary session to rehearse the five features of a legend, allowing the pupils to demonstrate what they knew and prepare for the next stage of learning. The teachers plan carefully to ensure that all ability groups make the maximum progress. There is good support from the learning support workers for pupils with special educational needs, for pupils needing additional support and for those pupils at an early stage of learning English. The marking of the pupils' work is of a high standard and includes helpful comments to enable pupils to know what they have to do to improve. The teachers make very effective use of the twice-termly assessments to help the pupils identify areas for improvement. The school has recently adopted a commercial scheme to give the pupils group and individual targets. This is less effective, as some of the targets are expressed very broadly and the pupils are frequently unsure what the targets mean. Arrangements for homework have recently been revised and are satisfactory.
86. The leadership and management of English are good. The school has a clear and effective action plan and has been well supported by the local education authority in determining priorities and

taking action to improve teaching and learning. The school has made a good start in developing the analysis and use of data to set targets for improving performance in English. This is not sufficiently understood by the teachers and has yet to have an impact on further raising standards in the subject.

## MATHEMATICS

87. Since the last inspection, standards attained by the pupils have risen and many aspects of the way the subject is taught have improved. In 2000 standards were reported as being well below average throughout the school. Now attainment by the age of seven and 11 is below average. This represents good achievement for the younger pupils, given that on entry to Year 1 their skill level is well below average. It also shows good progress for the Year 6 pupils, since they were attaining well below expectations in 2000. The improving standards are the result of good teaching and stronger leadership and management. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make good progress. This is because these pupils are set work that matches their capabilities and they receive good support, which ensures they achieve as well as they are able.
88. By the age of seven the majority of pupils are gaining an appropriate understanding of number and place value. The vast majority of pupils in Year 2 can count forwards and backwards in twos, fives and tens, by completing the sequence started by their teacher. They use 'more' and 'less' when comparing numbers. In one lesson the less able pupils were comparing two digit numbers whilst the more able could compare three digit numbers. In explaining how they knew which was the higher number, one pupil explained *'if the first digit is the same, look at the second'*. The most able pupils in Year 2 are able to carry out addition and subtraction problems with two-digit numbers. All learn about terms such as 'faces' and 'corners', with many being able to describe them, for instance, *'a hexagon has got six sides and six corners and it's got six straight sides'*. They learn about the properties of three-dimensional shapes. For example, the most able pupils know that a cylinder is *'a 3D shape with two circular faces'* and a cube is *'a 3D shape with six square faces.'* They all experience data collection, presenting their findings in a block graph. For example, in a 'smarties fun' lesson, they counted the smarties in a tube to find out whether there are equal numbers of each colour, discovering that there were more orange than any other colour.
89. There is good emphasis on the pupils in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 developing an understanding of number. They are given appropriate problem solving activities to make learning more meaningful. For example, the vast majority of pupils in Year 3 can work out the correct answer to *'Mummy bakes 15 jam tarts and 20 fairy cakes. How many altogether?'* The majority can explain the strategy they use to calculate the answer, one example being *'10+20+5=35'*. Pupils in Year 4 use their knowledge of the five times table to solve problems, for example, whether 65 seconds is the same as one minute and 15 seconds or 87 seconds is the same as one minute 27 seconds. Those with the most secure knowledge of the five times table are able to say whether these are 'true' or 'false' statements. Particularly in Years 5 and 6, good teaching and the teachers' secure subject knowledge are helping pupils to become more confident in handling numbers, to choose different strategies for carrying out calculations and to apply known facts to check that their answers are reasonable. For example in a very good Year 6 lesson, the pupils were using known percentage facts to calculate unknown facts. The teacher effectively modelled how to use a 'web' to work out different percentages, given that 100 per cent equalled five pounds. This enabled the pupils to complete their tasks, finding every percentage from one to 99. The pupils used their own strategies and worked industriously. One pupil volunteered, *'I started with working out one per cent, then two per cent,* another stated, *'I started with working out  $\frac{1}{2}$ , then  $\frac{3}{4}$ , then  $\frac{1}{4}$ , then tenths and then units'*. In Year 5 the pupils start to understand decimal notation and most could order a set of numbers. Here, the more able pupils were ordering measurements to three decimal points, for example in litres, 12.7, 1.27, 0.127, 1.027 and 2.7, whereas lower attaining pupils were well supported and working to two decimal points. By Year 6 the pupils can use negative numbers when plotting co-ordinates in four quadrants. They are able to find the area and perimeter of compound shapes. They can estimate and measure obtuse and acute angles with a fair degree of accuracy.

90. Teaching is good overall and particularly good in Years 2, 5 and 6. The improved teaching has had a significant impact on the improving standards. The quantity of work produced in all classes is impressive and shows that the National Numeracy Strategy is effectively implemented. There is a whole school approach to the teaching of mathematics that has helped standards to rise. For example, the pupils record answers on whiteboards or use number fans to demonstrate to their teacher whether they can give the correct answer. This enables the teachers to make on going assessments of pupils' knowledge and understanding. Planning is good in all classes, with activities well matched to the pupils' needs. There is direct teaching of mental calculations. Correct mathematical language is emphasised throughout the school, so that even the youngest pupils confidently use and understand mathematical terms. Most pupils have positive attitudes to their learning. They listen well, concentrate hard and are eager to learn, whether working individually, as a class or within small groups. Where teaching is most successful:
- Teachers have very good subject expertise and use a good variety of teaching methods, which enable all pupils to make progress.
  - Teachers ensure that their pupils are quite clear about what they expected to learn. Instructions are precise and previous work is reinforced before being extended.
  - Teachers' questioning is effective, encouraging the pupils to explain the strategies they have used.
  - Teachers have a clear picture of what each pupil can and cannot do to enable them to set appropriate work to extend pupils' learning continuously.
  - Expectations are high and relationships are very good. Teachers challenge the pupils to achieve well and make learning fun. This means that pupils are confident to ask for help and willing to 'have a go'.
  - Teachers effectively model how pupils should set their calculations out.
  - Learning support workers make a good contribution to the pupils' learning, most particularly in the group activities where they generally support the lower attaining pupils.
91. There are weaknesses in the teaching. The key weakness relates to the teaching time, which is too long. All lessons are timetabled for one hour and ten minutes, which is higher than national recommendations. As a result there is some loss of pace, most particularly evident in the introductory, whole class, mental sessions. For example, pupils are given too much time to think, which does not effectively develop quick mental recall skills. Similarly, many pupils start to lose concentration towards the end of the lesson, particularly in Years 1, 3 and 4. A small group of pupils in Year 1 have difficulty concentrating and overly dominate the teacher's time. Their inappropriate behaviour impacts on the learning of other pupils in this class.
92. Teachers emphasise basic literacy skills in their mathematics lessons so that these are developed well alongside mathematical skills. The Year 1 pupils were explaining to the class and 'Tony tiger', the puppet, how they worked out the least amount of coins to make, for example, six pence. This was contributing to improving the pupils limited speaking skills. One higher attaining pupil managed, *"because five is five and one is one, so five is near enough to six so it's one more"*. Similarly, in Year 2 the teacher made reference to previous work in science, 'comparing' differences in people, to 'comparing' two digit numbers by identifying 'more' and 'less'. Mathematical skills are developed appropriately in other subjects, although there is insufficient use of ICT to support the subject. There was little evidence of pupils' work in ICT, with the exception of Year 2.
93. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are now good but the use made of assessments is unsatisfactory overall. The pupils' results and test papers are analysed in Years 2 and 6 and planning and pupils' work are scrutinised to determine strengths and weaknesses. The pupils are given two targets for improvement each half term, which is good practice. However, these are often presented in language that is difficult for pupils to understand, for example for a lower attaining pupil in Year 6, 'to be able to carry out short multiplication of and division of, numbers involving decimals'. Appropriate use is made of day-to-day assessments to ensure that pupils who are experiencing difficulties clarify their understanding before moving on. The use of test data is unsatisfactory. It is too complicated to be fully understood and useful to the teachers for planning lessons. The system for tracking and checking pupils' progress is underdeveloped. Arrangements for homework have recently been revised and are satisfactory.

94. The leadership and management of the subject are good, improved since the last inspection. Monitoring of teaching and learning is now well established and the subject leader has a clear picture of the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school. There has been very good support from the local education authority, which has helped standards to improve. The link governor provides good support.

## SCIENCE

95. The standards of attainment of the majority of pupils in Year 6 and Year 2 are below the national expectation. As most pupils start school with very low skill levels, this represents good progress and pupils of all abilities and those with English as an additional language, achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. This shows good improvement since the last inspection and is the result of the better quality teaching that pupils now receive.
96. The quality of teaching and learning is good, being particularly strong in Years 2, 5 and 6. In these classes, the teachers plan their lessons carefully so that activities build on previous work, which enables pupils to use their prior scientific knowledge and understanding to support their learning. In the introductions to lessons there is precise explanation of the work to be covered, so that the pupils are clear about what they are to learn and how to set about doing the activities. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and of what they can do and, as a result, set challenging and interesting work. There is good emphasis placed on pupils using correct scientific vocabulary and in them learning through structured practical investigations. This was evident in a lesson for pupils in Year 5, in which they were investigating the process of evaporation and learning how to record their results accurately. Another good example was in a Year 6 lesson on forces, in which the teacher's questioning led to pupils making good progress in their understanding of such terms as 'friction', 'gravity' and 'air-resistance'. In both lessons the activities were interesting and, consequently, the pupils showed curiosity and enjoyment in what they were doing. They were well behaved, maintained their concentration and collaborated well in pairs and small groups.
97. A weakness of the teaching in Years 3 and 4 is the over reliance on the use of worksheets as a means of recording results, which hinders pupils developing the skills of finding their own way of showing what they have found out. In these classes, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to develop their investigational skills by being involved in carefully planned practical activities. As a result, the teachers in Years 5 and 6 have to work very hard to try and help pupils to 'catch up' in these important aspects of the subject. In a lesson for pupils in Year 1 on the properties of materials, the teacher was unable to successfully manage the unsatisfactory behaviour of a significant number of pupils and, as a result, the pace of the lesson was slow and the learning of other pupils was adversely affected.
98. There are inconsistencies in the quality of marking, with teachers in some classes not using it as a means of informing pupils how they can improve their work. An example of good marking was in a piece of work of a Year 6 pupil on investigating how a candle burns, when the teacher noted '*the timings should be included here*'. This alerted the pupil to the importance of making ongoing observations and putting them in the report of the investigation, so that they can be discussed and evaluated. The school acknowledges the need to better develop the pupils' investigational skills. At the moment there are not enough opportunities for pupils to learn how to interpret information and identify trends, or to develop their skills in making conclusions that are evaluative, rather than being a description of what they have done.
99. Poor writing and communication skills limit the standards that younger pupils attain. However, as a result of the good progress that pupils make in Year 2, most of them know how to make a simple electrical circuit, as well as identifying which foods are healthy and which are not. They understand and know about the different properties of materials and how this affects the use to which they are put. Pupils in Year 6 know and understand the effects of forces and can explain related scientific vocabulary, such as friction and air resistance. They can use 'branching keys' to identify and distinguish between different insects. They know how to carry out a simple test

and understand the importance of making it a fair one, as when investigating how temperature affects dissolving.

100. The subject is well managed by a leader who has a clear view of the subject's strengths and weaknesses and has created an action plan that focuses on improving pupils' investigational skills. The opportunities for pupils to be involved in collaborative group work activities makes a positive contribution to the pupils' personal and social development. Pupils are able to make suitable use of their literacy and numeracy skills when recording their findings, but there is little opportunity to use their ICT skills to support their learning. The planning procedures are good and provide teachers with clear information about the key learning objectives and skills to be taught. Checking procedures are not successful in enabling teachers to track pupils' progress and then set manageable targets for improvement, particularly in their investigational skills. The accommodation is good, but resources are inadequate and restrict the development of pupils' investigational skills.

## ART AND DESIGN

101. Only three lessons were observed during the inspection. However, from talking with pupils and teachers and from scrutinising the pupils' work it is possible to make a judgement on standards and pupils' progress in most aspects of art. It is not possible to make a judgement about the standards of three-dimensional work, since the school has not retained sufficient evidence to support this. Standards in other aspects of art, as at the time of the last inspection, are in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Since pupils enter Year 1 below expectations, they make good progress during Years 1 and 2. The pupils in Years 3 to 6 make sound progress overall. However, progress is better in Years 3, 4 and 5 than in Year 6. This is because the oldest pupils do not have sufficient time to cover the planned programme in sufficient depth. These pupils recognise this, stating *'art could be a bit longer. We only get half an hour for DT and art.'* Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language tackle the same tasks as their peers and make similar progress.
102. Pupils' observational skills are developing satisfactorily. All pupils examine and draw a variety of man-made and natural objects. The 'portrait' portfolio shows particularly good progression of skills across the year groups. For example, the pencil sketches in Year 1 show considerable differences in ability and perception, varying from bodies with few discernible features to those with definable main features on the face. By Years 4 and 5 attention is focused on the form of the head and the position of the facial features, with most pupils demonstrating that the eyes are not positioned at the top of the head. Good use is made of the school environment and locality to observe at first hand. For example, in preparation for designing their own window, pupils in the Year 4/5 class sketched windows around the school, noting size, shape and design features. The books for sketching are a good initiative for recording observational drawings to show progression of skills. However, the quality of work in these books is generally not good enough. Too many observational or imaginative drawings are of unsatisfactory quality, particularly those in pencil or crayon, where they are often carelessly produced with insufficient attention to detail. It is this lack of consistency of care and control which is the prime reason for standards being judged average overall despite some work being of a higher standard. This is because the pupils are not being encouraged to take sufficient care or pay enough attention to detail and the teachers are not giving sufficient guidance on how work could be improved. At the same time, much work is undated and it is unclear what the task entailed. Despite this the pupils have good attitudes to art and enjoy the subject.
103. A variety of different media is used, such as paint, wax crayons, felt pens, pencils, pastels and collage, to create pleasing images. The portfolio of 'imaginative paintings' indicates that the school has improved this provision since the last inspection. This is evident across the year groups; for example, Year 6 pupils produced watercolours of an imaginary place to visit. All the pupils experiment with mixing paint colours. Year 1 pupils were using white paint and two shades of blue to make 'cold' patterns depicting winter. In Year 5, the pupils are mixing primary colours

to make secondary colours. This is a good opportunity to develop the pupils' spiritual development through the unexpected.

104. Pupils are introduced to the work of other artists and begin to use these opportunities to develop their own skills. For example, pupils in Year 2 are studying the work of Henri Rousseau. In an introduction to one lesson, the pupils were encouraged to study a picture, inspired by very good questioning from the teacher. In being asked to suggest a title for the picture, excellent responses included 'Spooky jungle', 'Rain forest storm' and 'Scary tiger'. There was much excitement when the artist's title was finally revealed as 'Surprised! Storm in the forest'. Similarly these pupils could recall that Henry Moore was a sculptor and could remember emulating the work of Kandinsky. In Year 6 the pupils used self-portraits produced in a previous lesson as a basis for further work, influenced by looking at the work of Picasso to make colourful representations in the same style. These were of good quality.
105. There are examples of artwork supporting other areas of the curriculum. For example, in Year 3 the pupils painted Masai Mara masks and the Kenyan flag to support their work in geography. There was little evidence to indicate that ICT is sufficiently used to support the subject. However, there were good examples in Year 2. For instance, these pupils used a 'paint program' to imitate the style of Mondrian and could 'fill' some of the areas.
106. The quality of teaching is sound overall, but is good in Years 1 and 2. Where teaching is good it is because the pupils are given better opportunities to learn and practise new skills. The good scheme of work for art and design, based on the nationally prepared scheme, is appropriate for the age of the pupils and covers the elements of the subject: shape, line, colour, pattern and texture. Lessons are structured and well planned, although teachers' overly direct activities with few opportunities for pupil choice. For example, the teachers predetermine materials to be used in most lessons. Similarly, the planning does not give sufficient support to those teachers who lack confidence in their ability to teach the subject. For example, in Year 6 all pupils were shown how to 'cut' into a polystyrene tile using an inappropriate tool (a pencil) in order to scour the surface in preparation for press printing. Despite this, the pupils' good attitudes to their work, their concentration and application, ensured that they worked hard and achieved prints that showed a reasonable resemblance to their original sketch. There are good opportunities for the pupils to work on their own. However, there were too few examples of pupils working as part of a group or as a contributor to a whole-class product.
107. Extra-curricular opportunities support the art and design programme well. For example, the annual 'arts week' is a good initiative to inspire and motivate pupils. Last year the Year 4 pupils visited Gloucester docks, as part of an artist in residence project between British Waterways and the class. The craft club and the recently introduced art club are popular, providing good opportunities for the pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 to enhance their art skills.
108. Whilst standards are no lower than at the time of the last inspection, some areas have been insufficiently addressed; for example, in differentiating activities to better meet the needs of all the pupils and developing procedures for assessing the quality of artwork. These are key reasons why standards have not further improved. The good subject leader for art and design is aware of the deficiencies and has plans to address them. For example, the school is set to implement assessment procedures. The subject leader has started to monitor the quality of teaching and regularly undertakes a rigorous scrutiny of planning. Similarly, a start has been made on assembling a portfolio of pupils' work to help monitor progression and continuity across the year groups. Whilst resources are satisfactory overall, there are insufficient books in the library to support work in art and design.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

109. Standards of attainment are in line with national expectations for seven and 11-year-old pupils. This is the same as at the time of the last inspection. The pupils make sound progress overall. They make good progress in Years 1 and 2 given that they enter Year 1 with below average expectations. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional

language carry out similar tasks to their peers and make similar progress.

110. The 11-year-old pupils were informally observed creating models for shelters. They were able to reflect thoughtfully on their structures and consider how they might be made more stable. In a lesson in Year 4 the pupils were observed making money containers. The pupils had analysed purses to note significant design features and were carefully and thoughtfully producing their own designs. They were confident in discussing the material they were going to use and were able to discuss the merits of different ways of fastening and decorating the purses. Pupils in Year 5 had visited a bakery and then made their own bread. In discussion, the pupils described how they had investigated different types of bread, used their recipe and baked their own bread. Pupils of all abilities in Year 3 to 6 make sound progress in design and technology, but the time allocated to the subject in Year 6 is too short and the pupils have insufficient time to spend on a subject which they enjoy.
111. By the time they are seven the pupils have developed the ability to create models based on their own designs. In a lesson in Year 2, all pupils made very good progress in developing their skills in design and technology. They had previously created designs where they had carefully described the materials they would use to create vehicles. During the lesson one group of lower-attaining pupils worked with a learning support worker to assemble their vehicles from a range of different components. They demonstrated developing accuracy in using saws and glue guns to cut out and join the parts of the vehicle. Higher-attaining pupils were carefully painting their vehicles and were confidently able to explain their choices from a range of finishing techniques. The pupils could also explain how they had modified their original designs as they created the vehicles.
112. The pupils' attitudes to design and technology are good. They draw their designs carefully and demonstrate pride in their finished products. They are sensible when they use tools and equipment and are supported in this by their teachers and the learning support workers. Good attention is paid to health and safety issues.
113. The teaching of design and technology is sound overall. It is good in Years 1 and 2 and sound overall for the older pupils. The teaching observed during the inspection ranged from satisfactory to very good. In the best lessons the teachers gave careful encouragement to pupils. They provided a good range of resources to encourage pupils to experiment with different techniques. The teachers provided clear demonstrations and supported the pupils in developing their ability to reflect on their work and consider how their designs could be improved.
114. The leadership and management of design and technology are satisfactory. The subject leader has only been in post since September and has not yet had the opportunity to monitor standards in the subject. The school is now using a nationally recommended scheme of work, which is helping to raise standards in the subject. There is no system for assessing pupils' attainment and progress in the subject and this is unsatisfactory. Resources for design and technology are adequate although the use of ICT is underdeveloped and unsatisfactory.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

115. Standards of pupils' work in geography at the end of Years 2 and 6 are in line with national expectations and they make good progress overall. The previous inspection reported attainment at the end of Year 2 to be low, with standards matching expectations by the end of Year 6. Now the pupils make at least good progress in Years 1 and 2, given that they start in Year 1 well below expectations. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, make overall good progress. This is because improved planning has increased the breadth of study and teachers use key questioning to extend the pupils' skills of enquiry.
116. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 learn about their immediate environment. Through work in the local area, seven-year-old pupils develop awareness of features within their locality so can write, for example, *'Bristol Road is busy because there are lots of vehicles and all the vehicles go to town'*. They are

also able to state what they find attractive and unattractive about an area they have visited. For instance, in Gloucester Park they like *'beautiful flowers, lovely green trees, cute birds'* but they are not pleased to see *'smelly dustbins, dogs mess, old benches'*. By Year 6, pupils can identify the different features found in urban and rural landscapes. They are able to decide where best to place a settlement in an imaginary land and consider what would be essential for survival, such as *'a good fishing cove, pasture land, a spring, a sheltered harbour'*.

117. From the evidence of the two lessons observed and the good quality and quantity of work in pupils' books, the indications are that teaching is good overall. The key features of the best teaching, as evidenced in a very good lesson in Year 2, are:

- good subject knowledge and careful planning that challenges pupils of all capabilities;
- a clear focus on the expected learning and a check to see how well this has been achieved;
- an effective balance between listening, answering questions and engaging in interesting activities;
- effective involvement of learning support workers, who unobtrusively work with pupils to clarify the teachers' explanations, ask further questions and volunteer answers on the pupils behalf should they lack confidence; and
- high levels of encouragement to recognise effort and achievement.

As a result, these pupils were able to write direct comparisons between Tocuaro in Mexico and their home area, for example, *'Tocuaro has a little school because there are not many children. We have three big schools.'* By careful checking, the teacher and learning support workers had a clear understanding of what pupils had understood and what the next steps in their learning should be. This is a model of good practice. The pupils also used a computer program to locate Tocuaro and find out more, which furthered the pupils' research skills.

118. Pupils' develop good attitudes to geography. Their work shows they achieve particularly well as a result of experiences gained on field trips and when they have access to good resources. For instance, pupils in Year 4 were keen to look at a selection of maps and aerial photographs before evaluating which they would find more useful in planning a route.

119. The subject is well led. Issues arising from the previous inspection have been successfully addressed. For example, a scheme of work is now in place, which details the progression of geographical skills through the school. In addition, the subject leader has taken advantage of support from the local education authority to undertake observations of lessons. She has identified the strengths and weaknesses in geography and is working with the teachers to decide future priorities for the subject. Procedures for assessing the pupils' attainment and progress are yet to be introduced and are therefore unsatisfactory. It is recognised that more non-fiction books are needed to support research work. Plans are in place to make more effective use of computers so that email links can be established, for instance, with a locality studied in Brazil.

## HISTORY

120. Standards in history at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are similar to those expected nationally. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and also those in the early stages of learning English, make good progress overall. This is an improvement on the findings of the last inspection, where standards were below average and progress was satisfactory overall. The improvement is largely due to improved planning, better teaching and the way pupils' understanding of history is enhanced by a practical, enquiry-based approach. Year 6 pupils, for example, investigate what women's lives were like in the 1950s by examining the advertisements from a selection of original 1950s magazines, such as *'Woman's Own'*.

121. Pupils in Year 2 can sequence events to show the passing of time so, for instance, write, *'When I was five I broke my toes. I went to hospital and had an x-ray and I went back home.'* These pupils are able to use historical sources to answer questions about past events, such as the First World War. In recording what they could remember, responses included, *'I remember lots of*

*people died. I remember they fought face to face. I remember they lost their eyesight.* By Year 3 pupils are beginning to identify and explain how major events affect the lives of people. For example, in imagining they lived in Roman times they wrote letters describing the day Vesuvius erupted. One good example was, *'I was playing tag then suddenly there was blackness everywhere. My Mum came rushing out screaming my house was on fire. People collapsed as a poison gas came.'* Opportunities such as these reinforce work in literacy. The pupils' understanding of life in Roman times is further extended through a visit to Gloucester City Museum where they experience wearing Roman armour. By Year 6 the pupils can describe key characteristics of a period and recognise the changes that happened during that time. For instance, they write about how home life changed for children who were evacuated in the Second World War.

122. Although only two lessons were observed during the inspection, the quality of work in pupils' books supports the judgement that teaching is good overall. The key features of good teaching are:
- planning is detailed and tasks are matched to pupils' capabilities;
  - the pace of lessons is brisk and time is used well;
  - resources are appropriate and well used;
  - teacher subject knowledge is secure;
  - the pupils know what they are expected to learn and a check is made on how successfully this has been achieved; and
  - questioning is used effectively and lessons are interesting. For example, in a well-taught Year 5 lesson, identifying differences between Tudor homes and pupils' own homes, good questioning challenged pupils' thinking, the teacher's enthusiasm fostered curiosity and full participation and there was a good match of interesting activities to pupils' capabilities. This resulted in most pupils increasing their knowledge and understanding of life in Tudor times.
123. Pupils' attitudes to history are good in all year groups. They enjoy learning about the past and, through looking at pupils' work, there is evidence that the curriculum provides a structured approach to learning as they progress through the school. Standards would improve further if tasks were better differentiated to challenge the higher attaining pupils. Where worksheets are used, these too often prescribe how pupils record their work, thereby limiting opportunities to demonstrate actual understanding. This was particularly evident in Years 3 and 4. Insufficient use is made of ICT to support learning in history. The school has yet to gain access to the Internet so that pupils' research skills can be further extended.
124. The subject leader provides sound leadership. Through looking at teachers' planning and children's work, she is beginning to identify shortfalls within the subject. Assessment procedures are not in place and therefore unsatisfactory. Resources are satisfactory overall, but the school is aware that the range of non-fiction books and primary sources are limited.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

125. Standards in ICT are now at the expected level for seven-year-olds, but are still below the national expectation for 11-year-old pupils. In 2000, standards were below average in all classes. Pupils of all capabilities and those for who English is not their first language, make unsatisfactory progress overall, although they make sound progress in Years 1 and 2. The main reason why standards are not higher is because the school has only recently installed sufficient hardware in the new computer suite to effectively teach the subject.
126. The pupils in Year 2 attain average standards and make sound progress in developing their ICT skills. The pupils are able to load a painting program appropriately. They enjoy the opportunity to choose from a range of tools in the menu bar and try hard to create paintings in the style of the artist, Mondrian. Individual pupils in the same class are able to use the keyboard with developing accuracy to word process their stories. The pupils have had appropriate opportunities to control a programmable robot.

127. By the time they reach Year 6 the pupils have fallen behind the expected levels for their age group and their progress is unsatisfactory. This is mostly because of lack of access to equipment caused by the slow development of hardware and software in the school and the disruption caused by the building work. The pupils in Year 4 were observed using a variety of tools in a painting program. The highest-attaining pupils were successful in using features of the program to cut out part of the picture and create a 'stamp' to make multiple copies. Average and lower-attaining pupils were able to create representational drawings with developing accuracy and were learning to save and print their work. Pupils in Year 5 and 6 have used a graphical modelling program appropriately to create plans of their bedrooms. The pupils in classes across the school have had good opportunities to collect data in a data-handling package and have been able to create and print graphs and charts to help them interpret information. They have effectively used the 'Logo' software to write simple programs to model and develop their understanding of shape and angles.
128. The pupils have very good attitudes to the subject and thoroughly enjoy the opportunity to use the resources in the ICT suite. They are keen to develop their skills and work co-operatively in pairs to produce the work that is required. One pupil who has recently entered the school and who has only just started to learn English was delighted with the picture he was able to produce.
129. The teaching of ICT is satisfactory. Only two lessons were observed during the inspection week so the judgement is based on the lessons observed, an analysis of pupils' work and discussions with staff and pupils. Some staff are still not fully confident in their teaching of ICT, but are well supported by the learning support workers. The staff have received training under the national scheme from the New Opportunities Fund. This was not considered to be particularly successful and since then ICT lessons have been disrupted by building work, which has impeded the development of teaching and learning in the subject.
130. The school has adopted a recommended national scheme of work for ICT. This is helping to raise standards, but the pupils at the top of the school are still not able to work at the appropriate level for their age, because of the need to improve from a very low baseline. The use of the scheme will ensure that the requirements of the ICT curriculum are met in full. Current arrangements for assessing the pupils' progress in ICT are unsatisfactory, but plans are in place to adopt a scheme drawn up by the local education authority. The development of ICT across the curriculum is unsatisfactory. Although some use is made of ICT in subjects across the curriculum it is at a low level and has been further disrupted by lack of access to the Internet.
131. The leadership and management of ICT are satisfactory. The subject leader has not yet had the opportunity to monitor standards in the subject, although she supports and reviews the teachers' planning. The school has been slow to put adequate resources in place, but there is now a good computer suite with a digital whiteboard. This will help to raise standards, although the lack of a network and of access to the Internet continues to cause difficulties for teachers.

## **MUSIC**

132. There is insufficient evidence on which to make a secure judgement on the standards that pupils attain, or the quality of teaching and learning. However, it is clear that the school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection, as pupils' singing is much better and co-ordination of the subject is now sound.
133. Pupils in Year 1 showed they could sing and clap the beat to the song 'This Old Man' and then clap rhythms to their own names. In a Year 3 lesson on learning how music can be used descriptively to portray different animal characteristics, the pupils showed a lot of enjoyment in acting out a variety of movements in response to the 'Tortoise Song'. Both these lessons ended abruptly and before the teachers' planning indicated, which meant pupils were unable to review and evaluate how they had performed. In a good lesson for pupils in Year 6, the teacher's expertise enabled all pupils to make good progress in their ability to recognise and use a four beat rhythm. The teacher made the learning fun and the pupils responded with enthusiasm and

enjoyment.

134. In assemblies, the pupils listened carefully to the music being played and sang tunefully, with enthusiasm. The choir performed two songs in one assembly and their singing was of good quality. Musicians from the local music centre, who come in to give performances of string quartet and woodwind, enhance the curriculum. Pupils are able to entertain parents and members of the community in musical performances. The procedures for tracking pupils' progress are unsatisfactory. The subject leader is aware of this and of the fact that the composition element of the subject is in need of much development. She is preparing an action plan to improve this part of the subject's provision. The school also recognises the need to ensure that all pupils are given enough time to develop their musical skills and that lessons should be long enough for them to do this. Resources are adequate but lack instruments from a variety of cultures that would better help pupils understand how music differs around the world.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

135. There is insufficient evidence on which to make a secure judgement on the standards that pupils attain, or the quality of teaching and learning.
136. In the few lessons seen, the teachers dressed appropriately and, as a result, were able to correctly demonstrate the techniques for pupils to use. The warm up activities were well used to get the pupils ready for their physical activities. This was evident in a lesson for pupils in Year 1 when they travelled in a variety of ways, including running, skipping and walking around the room, before performing a series of balances on different parts of their bodies. Pupils in Year 4 showed suitable skills in throwing and catching beanbags and balls, in addition to their ability to change direction quickly and accurately. In a Year 6 dance lesson, the pupils responded well to music when carrying out a routine of sharp robotic movements. In all these lessons the pupils showed a lot of enjoyment in their activities and worked well together in pairs and small groups.
137. The previous inspection identified a lack of opportunity for pupils to discuss and evaluate their work. This has been successfully addressed and teachers now ensure that pupils have the chance to make evaluations of their performance and that of other pupils.
138. The subject leader provides secure leadership and has created a suitable action plan to improve the subject. She works well with the local community of schools in a project to improve provision for physical education in the area. There are swimming lessons for pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 and by the time that they leave school, nearly all pupils can swim the nationally expected 25 metres as well as having a good knowledge of water safety. The procedures for tracking pupils' progress are unsatisfactory. A range of extra-curricular activities, such as football and country dancing provide further learning opportunities. Local coaches and players have worked in the school to enable pupils to develop their skills in rugby, tennis, table tennis and netball. The accommodation, which lacks a grassed area for pupils to use and the inadequate resources, restrict the range of sporting activities that can be carried out. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection, particularly in the increased opportunities for pupils to review and refine their performance.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

139. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6 the vast majority of pupils are on course to attain standards which are in line with the expectations of the Gloucestershire locally agreed syllabus. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs and those in the early stages of speaking English, make good progress. The most progress is made in Years 2, 5 and 6. This represents good improvement since the last inspection, when standards were below average and progress was sound.
140. Much of the work in religious education is based on knowledge of festivals and Christian teaching. The well-planned opportunities in each year group enable pupils to gain a deeper understanding of

key festivals and reflect on how people's lives are affected through the choices they make. For example, in studying Christmas, Year 2 pupils know about the importance of gifts and write, *'Gold is a thing for a King and frankincense is a thing of worship.'* By Year 4 they are able to consider important milestones in the holy family's journey to Bethlehem. They reflect on the journey of life and events that have most affected them, for instance, *'My sister was born'; 'The twin towers got destroyed'; and 'They re-built St. Paul's School.'* In Year 6 they are able to reflect on the dilemma faced by key figures in the Christmas story, so a soldier's response to Herod's commands could have been, *'...it was cruel to the babies but was it worth losing their jobs?'*

141. Teaching of religious education is good overall, being particularly good in Years 2, 5 and 6. This is an improvement since the last inspection and is a key factor in the improving standards being attained by the majority of pupils. The teachers' good subject knowledge and planning ensure that pupils experience a range of activities, which extend their thinking and understanding. For example, a carefully chosen text in Year 1, 'Lucy's Quarrel', gave pupils the opportunity to compare the text to their own experience. They were able to describe a family conflict and how it was resolved, for example, *'I fell out with my cousin and poured water over his head but I said sorry'* and *'I get nervous when I have to say sorry, my heart beats faster.'* This work supported their work in literacy well. In Year 5 the pupils benefit from visits to St Paul's Church. They have access to good resources such as replica fonts, candles and baptism cards. These help the pupils understand the importance of baptism to Christian people. A typical response was *'A baptism is when you get welcomed into God's family and your head has holy water put on it.'*
142. The school is successful in integrating key messages from the teaching of religious education into its daily life. The reflective nature of religious education makes a good contribution to the spiritual, moral, social, cultural and emotional development of pupils. At the core of these is respect and care for others, which provide a clear link to the positive ethos of the school, where emphasis is placed on respecting everyone. For example, Year 5 pupils consider asylum seekers within their community and empathise with their possible feelings, *'I would feel broken that my country was not with me, neither would one of the most important pieces of my heart.'* *'I would be scared of what might be heading round the corner, it might be worse than ever, it might be dangerous.'*
143. Acts of collective worship support the programme for religious education. Planned weekly themes have been developed so that, for instance, younger pupils can consider 'what is special?' whilst the older pupils reflect on 'God's special gifts to us'. During assembly time, those pupils, withdrawn at parents' request, benefit from their work with a teacher who talks to them about current issues and organises the exchange of letters with friends in Bangladesh. Together they also prepared and presented an assembly to the rest of the school about the festival of Eid.
144. The subject leader is knowledgeable and provides good leadership. She has worked hard to resolve issues raised at the previous inspection, being particularly successful with improving lesson planning. Through looking at pupils' work and talking with them about their work she has a clear understanding of the standards they are attaining and what further improvements need to be made. Assessment procedures are yet to be introduced and are therefore unsatisfactory. Resources are appropriate, but insufficient use is made of ICT to support learning in the subject.