

INSPECTION REPORT

LUGWARDINE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Bartestree, Hereford

LEA area: Herefordshire

Unique reference number: 116706

Headteacher: Mrs Julie Powell

Reporting inspector: Mr Paul Baxter
27217

Dates of inspection: 18-21 November 2002

Inspection number: 252407

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 5-11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Barneby Avenue
Bartestree
Hereford

Postcode: HR1 4 DH

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Leslie Fancourt

Date of previous inspection: March 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members | | | Subject responsibilities | Aspect responsibilities |
|--------------|--------------------|----------------------|--|---|
| 25217 | Paul Baxter | Registered inspector | Educational inclusion Mathematics Physical education Religious education | The school's results and achievements How well is the school led and managed? |
| 13395 | Joanna Illingworth | Lay inspector | | Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents? |
| 8316 | Jozefa O'Hare | Team inspector | Special educational needs Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage Science Art and design Geography Music | How well are pupils taught? |
| 22092 | Derek Watts | Team inspector | English Design and technology Information and communication technology History | How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? |

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This is a seven-class primary school, with 180 pupils on roll, so is smaller than average. It is located about four miles from Hereford, serving the village and surrounding areas, socio-economically an above average community. The school roll has increased significantly in recent years, both in the number of pupils entering and also in those leaving the school, other than at normal times of admission and transfer. There is very little difference between the numbers of boys and girls attending the school. Approximately one percent of the pupils come from ethnic minorities and have English as an additional language. The pupils concerned are bilingual and fluent in English. Under three percent of the pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals and this is well below average. Thirteen per cent have special educational needs, including emotional and behavioural needs and specific learning and post severe illness needs. Overall, it is a below average percentage. Of these, one pupil has a Statement of Special Educational Need, and this is below the national and county averages. Children generally enter the Foundation Stage in the Reception class with above average attainments, but these can vary from year to year.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Lugwardine is a good school that continues to improve. In recent years careful evaluation of the pupils' performance has promoted stronger provision. Overall standards are above average, including in literacy and numeracy and standards in science, previously a weakness, have been raised to well above average. Very good leadership and management, particularly strengthened by outstanding contributions from the headteacher and chair of governors, have established consistently good planning and teaching of the curriculum. In response most pupils now achieve well, in relation to their prior attainment, as they move through the school. Many pupils are now achieving even more successfully and the school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The excellent leadership of the headteacher is strongly supported by staff and governors. Together they share an equally strong commitment to improvement and capacity to succeed that promotes the pupils' enjoyment and success in learning.
- The provision for young children in their Reception year is excellent.
- Provision for the pupils' moral development and to eliminate bullying is excellent and establishes an ethos that values the pupils, promotes their very good attitudes and relationships, and aids their progress.
- The school's skill in targeting improvement in science has led to very good teaching and learning and above average standards in this subject.
- Good and better teaching underpins the pupils' good achievement, especially in the key subjects of English and mathematics, and continues to raise standards.

What could be improved

- Opportunities for pupils to enrich their learning in the range of subjects through information and communication technology (ICT), by using their literacy skills (especially writing) and through exploration and reflection, are inconsistent across the school.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good improvement since the last inspection. Since 1998, despite variations in the numbers of pupils attending the school and in the times when they seek entry or leave, standards have risen at a rate that is above the national average for primary schools. All the key issues of the last inspection have been fully rectified. Overall academic standards have been raised well, especially in English, mathematics and science. The quality of leadership and management has been strengthened

considerably, especially the contributions of governors and subject co-ordinators. As a consequence, staff and governors are more aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and have been able to target improvement skilfully and successfully. All areas of provision, including the key aspect of teaching, have shown at least good improvement. Consequently, pupils achieve well and attain the appropriate targets set for them. A strong team approach underpins the headteacher's example and the school is extremely well placed to continue this improvement.

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 | C | C | B | C |
| mathematics | C | C | B | C |
| science | E | D | A | A |

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

Inspection shows that standards continue to rise in response to a well-planned curriculum and successful teaching. This is illustrated, especially in science, in the table above showing the performance of Year 6 pupils in this year's National Curriculum tests. Standards are above average overall and most pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and higher attainers, achieve well by the time they leave the school. Children achieve very well in reception and most exceed expectations in all areas of learning and develop significant social skills. Pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2. Year 2 is a particularly capable group of pupils. They achieve well and most are on course to attain standards that are well above average overall by the end of the school year. Standards are well above average in all aspects of English and in mathematics and science and they are never less than average in all other subjects. The pupils continue to achieve well overall through Years 3 to 6 and an increasing number are beginning to increase their rate of achievement in response to strong teaching and by their effective application of literacy and numeracy skills. There are a large number of pupils in the current Year 6 class and several have specific learning needs. By the end of Year 6, attainment is above average overall, and in several subjects including English and mathematics. A successful emphasis on investigation has lifted the standard in science to well above average and standards are never less than average in all other subjects. Good teaching and learning are enabling pupils to attain the appropriate targets set for them and their performance also shows that they achieve well in relation to their previous attainment by the time they leave the school.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|--|
| Attitudes to the school | Very positive. Pupils respect and appreciate school and are keen to succeed. |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms | Good overall. Pupils behave well in most lessons but very occasionally they get over-excited or lose interest and their concentration slips. |
| Personal development and relationships | Relationships are very good. Pupils accept and exercise responsibility really well and this aids their learning. |

| | |
|------------|---|
| Attendance | Very good, well above the national average. |
|------------|---|

The headteacher and staff work hard to sustain a warm ethos that values the pupils and their contributions. This sustains the pupils' enjoyment of school that enhances their achievement.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

| Teaching of pupils in: | Reception | Years 1 – 2 | Years 3 – 6 |
|------------------------|-----------|-------------|-------------|
| Quality of teaching | Very 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.

Teaching is good overall; it is an improving strength across the school and it is successful in promoting the pupils' learning. Well over a third of the lessons observed were very good or better and substantially more than three-quarters were at least good. No unsatisfactory teaching took place. Most of the teaching observed in the Reception class was very good and a significant number of very good lessons were also observed in Years 1, 3 and 4. The teaching in other classes was good overall. The teachers' knowledge and understanding of the National Curriculum is considerable. They make lessons challenging and interesting; therefore learning is successful. Teachers are successful in developing good relationships and especially in adapting the curriculum to meet the differing needs of all the pupils. As a result, all pupils, including those with special educational needs and potentially higher attainers, concentrate and achieve well. The pupils also respond thoughtfully in discussions, although on occasion such introductions at the start of lessons are too long, limiting time for reflection and writing. English and mathematics and numeracy are taught well across the school and the very good teaching of science has led to a significant improvement in the pupils' attainment. Literacy and ICT skills are not always emphasised fully in other subjects though. It was not possible to judge the quality of teaching in art and design in Years 1 and 2 and in ICT. The teaching is satisfactory in history and music in Years 3 to 6. Teaching is good in all other subjects. The teachers know their pupils well and use assessments successfully, especially in literacy and numeracy, to inform planning and to target future learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect | Comment |
|---|--|
| The quality and range of the curriculum | Good overall, significantly supported by very good links with local schools, pre-school groups and the local community. Also strengthened by a very good range of extra-curricular activities and by a very effectively planned curriculum for young children in their Reception year. |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs | Consistently good support enables all pupils to enjoy equal access and derive full benefit from all aspects of school activity. |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | Very good overall; excellent provision for the pupils' moral development, very good support for their social awareness and good spiritual and cultural development nurture the pupils' strong personal skills. These help them to exercise responsibility and independence well to enrich their learning. The pupils are appropriately prepared for life in Britain's multicultural society. |
| How well the school cares for its pupils | Good overall provision sustains the pupils' health and welfare. Excellent procedures ensure that bullying cannot cause upset. Strong support of the pupils' academic and personal development through good use of assessments. |

The school's very strong partnership with parents goes from strength to strength and underpins the pupils' very positive attitudes to school and learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|--|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | Very good overall; excellent team and pastoral leadership by the headteacher, and very good support from key staff. A strong team approach ensures consistent and successful teaching and learning. |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities | Under the dynamic leadership of their chairman, governors fulfil their responsibilities very effectively. All statutory requirements are met. |
| The school's evaluation of its performance | The school monitors the quality of teaching and learning and the outcomes in terms of the pupils' attainment very carefully. As a consequence, staff receive very good support and guidance and standards are rising successfully. |
| The strategic use of resources | Resources are used well to enrich the pupils' learning. All staff co-operate very effectively to meet the pupils' needs. |

The accommodation and resources for learning are good overall. The hall is relatively small but quality learning in physical education is sustained by nurturing the pupils' mature attitudes and by good use of the spacious outdoor facilities. The governors have applied the principles of best value well in using funds to rectify key issues of the last inspection. They are considering best value with increasing success in monitoring the future success of the school.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

| What pleases parents most | What parents would like to see improved |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teaching is good and their children make good progress. They would feel comfortable about approaching the school with a problem. The school is well led and managed and is helping their children to become mature and responsible. Their children like school and behave well. The school expects their children to work hard and achieve their best. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The degree to which the school works closely with parents. The quality of the information provided by the school about how their children are getting on. |

The inspection team support all of the parents' positive views expressed above. Inspectors consider that the school works very closely with parents and provides them with very good information about their children.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Most children enter the school with levels of attainment that are above those found nationally but this varies from year to year. The children's communication, language and literacy skills, especially speaking and listening, are usually those that are more fully developed. Young children are given excellent support as they begin their life in school and they learn quickly and very well. Achievement is very good overall in reception and most children exceed expectations in all areas of learning, especially in their social skills and in understanding ways of learning. In response to very good teaching, by the time the pupils enter Year 1, attainment is above average in most areas. However, their personal and social development is well above average.
2. The pupils' performance in the Year 2 National Curriculum tests and teachers' assessments has been at least well above average and occasionally reached a very high standard in recent years, particularly in reading and writing, in response to the well-planned teaching of the curriculum. The wider evidence base of inspection now shows that pupils currently in Year 2 are on course to attain well above average standards overall by the end of this school year. Standards are well above average in all strands of English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 2, reflecting the well-established consistency in the teaching of these subjects. Standards range between average and above average in all other subjects, and although standards are improving, this indicates that some subjects, such as physical education, receive a greater emphasis than others, for example, design and technology. Overall, these standards indicate good achievement over time for all groups of pupils, including higher attainers and pupils with special educational needs. They also represent a good improvement since the last inspection and stem from the systematic improvement of teaching, planning and assessment. Teachers know their pupils well and promote good progress in their learning.
3. Results in the National Curriculum tests and teachers' assessments for pupils in Year 6 in recent years show that, despite variations in the numbers of pupils attending the school and in the times when they seek entry or leave, standards have risen at a rate that is above the national average for primary schools. This has been accomplished by a successful whole-school focus on challenging all pupils to the full, including higher attainers, and this has led to a significant increase in the number of pupils attaining the higher than expected Level 5 standard in English, mathematics and particularly in science. This year's results were well above the national average overall – a significant improvement, especially in science. In addition, both this year's and last year's results in national tests for pupils in Year 6, when taken together, match the standards found in similar schools. Comparisons between the pupils' above average scores in tests when in Year 2 with their performance in Year 6, in this year's tests, show the pupils' good achievement in relation to their prior attainment as they have moved through the school.
4. Inspection shows continuing good achievement from all pupils across the range of prior attainments in response to increasingly effective and more consistent teaching and learning. Pupils currently in Year 6 are on course to attain above average standards overall. This is a lower-attaining year group than those normally found in the school. It is a large class and contains a greater than usual number of pupils with specific learning needs. Nevertheless, in relation to the pupils' prior attainment this standard shows that most pupils achieve well by the time they leave the school. The pupils' attainment is well above average in science, and it is above average in English, mathematics, design and technology, geography and physical education. It is average in all remaining subjects.
5. The pupils on the school's Register for Special Educational Needs have a wide range of needs and benefit from the specific help they receive, particularly in English and mathematics. Throughout the school, these pupils achieve well, successfully attaining many of their targets set for them in their individual educational plans. Potentially higher-attaining pupils are responding well to the greater challenges and problem-solving opportunities offered to them and they also achieve well. The

school is well aware of the need to challenge all pupils equally. The headteacher carefully monitors the performance of the boys and the girls, and as a result there are no significant differences in their performance.

6. The pupils' improving skills in numeracy are used and extended further in other subjects, for example, in science, when completing charts and graphs. The pupils' steadily improving literacy skills are also used and developed well in several subjects, for example, in science and mathematics, through the strong emphasis on specific vocabulary. Overall, however, opportunities to enrich the pupils' learning across the breadth of subjects by using information and communication technology (ICT) are not always developed in a consistent fashion through the school. This is also true of the development of pupils' literacy skills, especially writing, and of learning through exploration and reflection. As a consequence, the quality of pupils' learning in subjects such as design and technology, religious education, history, ICT, art and design and music varies from satisfactory to good across the school. There is scope to raise the standards that pupils attain in these subjects.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. Pupils of all ages have a very positive attitude to school, and their attendance is very good. All pupils, from the youngest children in the Reception class to the oldest in Year 6, behave well and they have very good relations with one another and with adults. Their personal development is very good. Pupils with special educational needs relate well to each other in their groups and in the whole-class situations. They contribute in lessons and enjoy being involved in activities with their peers. The very good relationships that exist throughout the school greatly contribute to these pupils' good achievement. The school is an orderly, happy place, and a very good environment for learning. These strengths reflect its very good provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. Overall, pupils' very good attitudes, values and personal development have improved well since the last inspection and substantially enhance their academic attainment and achievement.
8. Pupils have great enthusiasm for school, thanks to the happy family atmosphere and the good quality of teaching. They enjoy lessons in all subjects of the curriculum and are eager to learn. They listen with care to their teachers and to one another, sustain their concentration well and work hard. They respond very positively to lessons that are well planned, have good pace and contain challenging tasks. This was the case during the inspection in a Year 1 science lesson. Pupils were enthusiastic about the subject and made very good progress with their learning because of the high quality of the teaching. Attitudes to learning are consistently positive across the school. Pupils of all ages want to do well and take pride in producing good work. Their determination to succeed is enhanced by the very good relations that they have with adults. Pupils know that their opinions will be treated with respect, and therefore feel confident about expressing their views in front of the class. They are also keen to demonstrate what they know and understand in order to win praise from members of staff. For example, in a Year 4 English lesson a forest of hands shot up every time the teacher asked a question, and members of the class could hardly contain their eagerness to give the answers. Occasionally, pupils become too excited, and sometimes their attention wanders when tasks are insufficiently challenging, but not to the extent of significantly impairing progress. Attitudes were never less than satisfactory in all the lessons observed during the inspection. Pupils also show enthusiasm for learning outside the classroom. Lunchtime and after-school clubs are very well supported, as is the case with the after-school science club which meets every Wednesday afternoon. Overall, pupils' interest and involvement in extra-curricular activities are very good.
9. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They know right from wrong, show respect for property, and are orderly and self-disciplined. They observe class rules and are polite to members of staff and to one another. There is some noisy behaviour in class, but pupils quickly quieten down when asked to do so by their teachers. There is no disruption to lessons, no sexist or racist behaviour, and no exclusions from school. The absence of bullying and aggression is an excellent feature of pupils' behaviour. It is the result of the excellent moral education that the school gives its pupils. Members of staff have consistently high expectations regarding behaviour,

establish clear guidelines, and act as very good role models; consequently, there have been no exclusions in recent years.

10. Relationships and personal development are very good, and are the outcomes of very good provision for social education. Pupils are very much aware of how their actions can affect other people. They are very considerate towards others. They listen attentively and with respect to one another's contributions to lessons. They do not butt in, but wait patiently for their turn to speak. They have concern for other people's welfare, are sensitive to their feelings, and genuinely appreciate their achievements. For example, in a Year 5 class observed during the inspection, pupils spontaneously applauded one another's efforts in gymnastics. The level of co-operation in lessons is very good. Pupils are mutually supportive, and work very successfully in pairs and groups. They also socialise very well outside the classroom and play together harmoniously at lunchtime. Pupils' very good relationships and consideration for others promote very good inclusion. Pupils go out of their way to see that colleagues with special educational needs are not left out of activities or socially isolated.
11. Pupils are actively encouraged to become more mature and responsible and to play an active part in the running of the school. This successfully raises their self-esteem and promotes their personal development. Members of Year 6 say that they get many opportunities to exercise responsibility, and that they greatly value this. They particularly appreciate having more freedom to make decisions about their own learning. Pupils of all ages get the chance to influence the running of the school and to acquire a sense of ownership of it. For example, classes draw up their own classroom rules in co-operation with their teachers. They also elect representatives to the school council. This is a relatively recent innovation but already makes an effective contribution to personal development. It is run by pupils; they draw up the agenda, chair the meetings and write the minutes. The school has used 'circle time' well to prepare pupils for their role on school council. 'Circle time' also gives pupils the opportunity to raise concerns and to discuss issues such as bullying. In this way pupils learn the important social skill of resolving conflicts by reflection and negotiation.
12. Attendance is very good and is well above the national average for primary schools. There is no unauthorised absence, and there are no groups of pupils or individuals who are frequently absent from school. Attendance therefore makes a positive contribution to pupils' learning and progress.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

13. The overall quality of teaching is good throughout the school and the consequent quality of learning is also good. Teaching is an improving strength across the school and it is successful in promoting the pupils' learning. Well over a third of the lessons observed were very good or better and substantially more than three-quarters were at least good. No unsatisfactory teaching took place. Most of the teaching observed in the Reception class was very good and a significant number of very good lessons were also observed in Years 1, 3 and 4. The teaching in other classes was good overall. Since the previous inspection, the quality of teaching and learning has improved. The best lessons were characterised by brisk pace and imaginatively planned activities to meet the learning needs of all pupils. In these lessons, the teachers demonstrated a lively and animated approach that motivated the class to listen well. As a result, the pupils showed delight in their learning.
14. The improving trend in teaching and learning matches the rising standards in the school. An outstanding feature of teaching is the close teamwork among staff that includes learning best practice from one another through the close monitoring of teaching by the headteacher and subject co-ordinators. There is clear commitment among teaching and support staff to develop the quality of their work and to do their best for the pupils. This is evidenced in the care and patience that staff show for their pupils. As a result, all pupils are involved in lessons and school activities. There are, therefore, no barriers to pupils' learning. Parents are justly very pleased with the teaching at Lugwardine School, as evidenced in the pre-inspection questionnaires.

15. Children in the Foundation Stage benefit from the very good teaching provided and consequently, they make very good gains in their learning. The teacher and the classroom assistant carefully assess what the children can do and then plan activities that will move each individual child forward in their learning. There are very good routines provided so that the children know what to do and the expectations are very high, which helps the children to be clear about what they should learn and do. The teacher and her classroom assistant provide teaching and learning experiences of a consistently very high quality. They both create a very positive atmosphere and make learning fun for all the children. This encourages the children to give of their best at all times and takes their learning forward.
16. The teachers have very good subject knowledge and teaching expertise. This ensures that they deliver lessons confidently and, in particular, teach basic skills very well. The pupils, therefore, acquire these basic skills very well. For example, in an outstanding lesson in the Reception class, the teacher knew how to provide the best opportunities for effective mathematical development. This was achieved through brisk discussion, practical and enjoyable activities, which included observing numbers and patterns on the number square. Several teachers use ICT effectively to enrich the pupils' learning and are increasingly encouraging the pupils to write in depth and with expression across the range of subjects. These strategies are not implemented consistently, however, in all classes and achievement is restricted at times in a few subjects, such as religious education and history.
17. The teachers deploy support and classroom assistants effectively and provide feedback and prompts to aid the pupils' learning. All support staff know exactly what is required of them and how they can help the pupils to learn. The clear instructions provided for them lead not only to the pupils with whom they are working learning very well, but the teachers are then able to focus their attentions more on the smaller group remaining. The support staff ensure that that individuals or small groups are involved and are participating fully in the session, often by rephrasing questions, so that the lower-attaining pupils can understand at their level. The parents, who regularly help with small-group activities, are well briefed and provide invaluable help in class. This was observed in a science lesson in Year 2, where two parents very effectively assisted the pupils to investigate the suitability of materials.
18. Planning of lessons is of good quality. Targets are made clear so that the pupils are aware of what they will learn and what is expected of them. In the best teaching, during the final session, the teachers check with their pupils whether learning targets have been achieved. These strategies successfully engage pupils in their own learning. The teachers know their pupils very well and give constructive feedback in lessons. In addition, they make good use of assessment to inform planning the next step of pupils' learning. Consequently, this improves pupils' progress and subsequent attainment, as evidenced in English, mathematics and science. Marking is undertaken regularly and, in the best examples, the teachers give pointers to pupils how to improve their work. Homework is regularly given. It is carefully planned to consolidate and to extend learning. A very good example of this was observed in Year 1, where the teacher gave the pupils the task of interviewing people about their jobs. They subsequently used this information in their geography lesson.
19. The teachers have high expectations of what the pupils can achieve and of how they should behave. The high standards of discipline set throughout the school, and the teachers' good management skills, ensure that there is a purposeful working environment in which it is easy for the pupils to learn. The high expectations and encouragement given, ensure that the pupils of all abilities try their hardest and they consequently achieve well. For example, in a very good mathematics lesson on number in Year 3, the teacher had provided very carefully planned and challenging work for all groups in the class. The pupils were consequently very well motivated to learn and achieved very well throughout the lesson. This enthusiasm for learning and the resulting productivity and interest was a feature of many lessons. For example, in the Reception class, the teacher set a scene of excitement and anticipation in her introduction to the language session, which inspired the children to learn.

20. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is good. The teachers have worked very hard to implement both strategies in English and mathematics lessons, which they have done effectively. In science, the teachers have concentrated on improving their knowledge and understanding of the subject and on the best teaching methods to promote effective learning. As a result, standards in science, as well as in English and mathematics, have risen steeply throughout the school. The parents are justly pleased with their children's learning. The pupils' literacy skills are not always utilised to best effect, however, in promoting learning in other subjects and not all teachers challenge the pupils to record their ideas in writing and this limits understanding in subjects such as religious education.
21. The teachers are very aware of pupils with special educational needs in their classes. They are skilled in ensuring that work is set at an appropriate level. The individual educational plans are generally good and identify step-by-step, easily achievable learning targets. When these are achieved, new ones are set on the basis of careful assessment information. As a result, these pupils achieve well.
22. Since the last inspection the teachers have been increasingly successful in challenging pupils effectively in relation to their prior attainment, this is especially the case regarding potentially higher-attaining pupils. This is evidenced by the increasing number of pupils in Years 2 and 6 attaining higher than average standards. This has been accomplished by ensuring that tasks and problems to solve match the pupils' prior attainment. All teachers are also skilful in offering appropriate challenges through good questioning and are now challenging pupils even more productively by involving them in evaluating their own work, for example, in physical education, and this is promoting higher standards.

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

23. The quality and range of learning activities for children in the Reception class are very good. All recommended areas of learning for the Foundation Stage curriculum are taught and given appropriate attention. Children are offered an interesting and inspiring range of learning experiences. They are very well prepared for their National Curriculum studies.
24. Overall, the quality and range of the curriculum for Years 1 to 6 are good. The breadth, balance and relevance of the curriculum are good and all National Curriculum subjects plus religious education are taught and given appropriate attention. The school is meeting statutory requirements for all National Curriculum subjects, religious education and collective worship. The planning of the curriculum is good and more recently the school has used an ICT program for this. This technology provides all teachers with an overview of the whole curriculum and the planning can be easily reviewed and modified. The school has made good use of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, national schemes published by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and other commercial schemes in planning the whole curriculum. All schemes and guidance have been appropriately modified in order to suit the needs of the school. The good planning helps to ensure that pupils learn in a steady and systematic way as they move through the school. The planning of the curriculum has improved significantly since the last inspection.
25. The school has implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies well and, as a consequence, strategies for the teaching of literacy and numeracy skills are good. Opportunities for pupils to apply and develop literacy and numeracy skills throughout the curriculum are satisfactory. While there are good examples, opportunities for pupils to carry out independent study and research are not consistent throughout the school. Similarly, the use of ICT to support teaching and learning is not explored fully in all subjects.
26. The school offers a very good range of extra-curricular activities for pupils. These include French, netball, football and recorders. Extra-curricular activities contribute well to pupils' social and cultural development.
27. Pupils with special educational needs are often taught in specific groups within lessons for English and mathematics. They are set appropriate challenges and enjoy learning. Teaching assistants

are very effective in helping these pupils to access the curriculum and provide support to individuals and to groups. As a result, there are no barriers to special educational needs pupils' learning or any aspects of school life.

28. The school's approaches and strategies for promoting equal opportunities are good. All pupils in the school, regardless of their attainment, background, gender or nature of special educational need, are provided with good quality learning opportunities.
29. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is very good. Teaching and learning are underpinned by a well-constructed scheme of work and teachers are successfully developing increased opportunities for pupils to 'air' their views in class discussions known as circle time and through class representation on the school council. Assembly themes and charitable efforts to support 'Children in Need' further enhance the pupils' awareness.
30. The provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall and this represents a good improvement, especially in terms of offering increased ownership of their learning to the pupils. In response to this support the pupils' behave well, enjoy warm relationships and value their school, and these qualities also aid their academic learning.
31. Provision for spiritual development is good. Opportunities for pupils to develop their spirituality are provided during assemblies and religious education and other lessons. Not all assemblies include sufficient opportunities for reflection, however, and the degree to which pupils are able to reflect in writing, for example, about how religious belief and practice can contribute to people's lives, are not provided consistently across the school. All staff value the pupils' contributions, and, as in a physical education lesson in Year 5, pupils too, often applaud the efforts of others spontaneously and with obvious delight. The sheer joy of learning was evident in several other lessons and especially in the Reception class.
32. Provision for moral development is excellent. Pupils are taught right from wrong and respond positively to the school and classroom rules. Staff provide very good role models, and effectively use praise and encouragement to support good behaviour and effort. Beneficial opportunities are provided through the discussions in class known as circle time, and through involvement in the new school council where representatives of each class meet to consider whole-school issues.
33. Provision for pupils' social development is very good. Very good relationships between adults and pupils support pupils' learning in this area. Pupils are aware of the needs of others and work and play constructively together. Extra-curricular activities such as team sports and music clubs, for example, 'The Band' further develop pupils' social skills. The teachers are diligent in ensuring that pupils are taught how to co-operate in small and large groups. In response to the teachers' example, pupils' value each other's contributions and readily celebrate good effort and refine and improve their studies in response to shared ideas.
34. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good overall. Visiting speakers and performers and trips to local places of interest make a good contribution to the pupils' cultural appreciation of their own local and wider community. Through their involvement with international organisations and charities, pupils develop an appreciation of different world cultures. The school promotes inclusion very well, and all pupils' cultures and beliefs are valued equally. Opportunities for pupils to understand the multicultural society in which we live are satisfactory, and are supported effectively through visits to various places of worship and by visitors from a range of faiths, for example, Christian Baptists and members of the Jewish community.
35. The contribution of the community to pupils' learning is very good. Numerous visiting speakers contribute well to the curriculum and assemblies. The local Church Foundation helps to fund educational visits. Very good partnerships with local pre-school nurseries help to ensure that children settle into the Reception class as quickly as possible. The school has established a very good partnership with the local secondary schools, particularly in English, mathematics, science and design and technology. Science and design and technology teachers have worked with teachers at Lugwardine and secondary schools have loaned good quality learning resources to the

school. This has helped to improve the practical experiences offered in these subjects. Secondary teachers have visited the school to observe the teaching of English and mathematics and this has provided a valuable insight in teaching and learning in these areas. The school is part of a local partnership of primary schools known as the 'Elgar Partnership' and has worked together in promoting consistency in English and mathematics assessments in primary schools.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

36. The school takes good care of its pupils. It values them as individuals and gives them good support. This effectively underpins academic progress and promotes high standards of attainment. It also creates an atmosphere in which pupils are happy and confident. They know that members of staff care about their welfare and are there to help them with problems. Parents appreciate the support that their children receive and praise the school for creating a family environment.
37. The very good relationships that teachers and support staff have with pupils help to promote high standards of care. They are particularly important with regard to procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development. Much of the monitoring is carried out informally, but is nevertheless very effective. Members of staff, including the headteacher, know pupils well, quickly identify their problems, and intervene to give them help that meets their individual needs. Pupils for their part, trust members of staff and are willing to turn to them for guidance. The school also has very good formal procedures for recording and tracking personal development. For example, class teachers log parents' concerns about their child's progress, and any worries that staff have are fully discussed at staff meetings. Positive aspects of pupils' personal development are also fully recorded. Each class has a 'celebration book', and pupils maintain folders that summarise their achievements. The annual reports on progress also include a brief assessment of personal and social development. The school's systems are very effective in linking personal with academic progress and ensuring that the one promotes the other.
38. The school's programme of personal and social education gives very effective support to pupils' personal development. Circle time, where pupils meet as a class to discuss issues, gives pupils good opportunities to talk about their concerns, including their relations with one another and issues such as bullying. Through it, they learn to reflect on problems and to resolve them through discussion instead of through confrontation. Circle time, therefore, enhances pupils' understanding points of view that are different from their own, and successfully promotes respect for other people's feelings.
39. The school's good procedures for early identification of pupils with special educational needs start in the Reception class and occasionally, prior to being admitted into the Foundation Stage. Analyses from assessment are used to plan provision and to monitor pupils' learning. Individual educational plans are appropriately reviewed each term and Statements of Special Educational Need are reviewed annually.
40. Procedures to protect and promote pupils' welfare are good overall. There are good arrangements for inducting new pupils into the Reception class and ensuring that they settle down quickly and thrive in their new environment. The school has an appropriate policy for child protection. Members of staff are well aware of the correct procedures to follow if an issue of child protection should arise, and arrangements are in hand to update their training. Provision for first aid is good. The school has a more than adequate number of fully qualified first aiders. There is also good provision for preventative measures, such as risk assessments, fire drills and checks of equipment. Inspectors have raised the issue of security with the school, and it is taking steps to address the weaknesses.
41. The school has good procedures for monitoring and improving attendance. Class registers are completed and maintained in accordance with legal requirements, and there are sound procedures for recording 'lates' and following up unexplained absences. The school keeps good records on the attendance of individuals and groups of pupils. The administration officer transfers information from class registers to the school's computer. This gives members of staff ready access to statistics

that track attendance and punctuality. In practice, pupils have very good attendance records, so that reducing the absence rate is not a priority for the school.

42. The school's procedures successfully promote high standards of behaviour. The behaviour policy is clear and comprehensive, and is regularly reviewed and evaluated. Members of staff use it consistently and fairly, so that pupils are in no doubt as to what is expected of them. The school has a good system of sanctions and rewards. It gives due recognition to pupils' achievements and celebrates their successes. This promotes positive behaviour by building up pupils' self-esteem and confidence. The school's procedures for eliminating oppressive behaviour, are excellent. All members of staff are equally committed to eradicating aggression, bullying and other forms of unacceptable conduct. However, the school is aware that problems are most likely to arise during breaks and lunch hours and therefore has focused on improving supervision and behaviour management at these times. It has put a great deal of effort into helping support staff to deal fairly and constructively with pupils. The school's measures are extremely effective, as the absence of oppressive behaviour shows. Pupils are very much aware that racism, sexism, bullying and fighting will not be tolerated. They also know that they can report any incidents to members, who will deal with them promptly and effectively.
43. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection. At that time the school was caring and supportive. It had a good behaviour policy but it was not always implemented consistently and effectively. The school has maintained its strengths while successfully rectifying weaknesses identified by the previous report.
44. Overall, the school has good systems to assess and record pupils' attainment and personal development and assessment is used well to inform future planning and teaching. Assessment and the use of assessment has improved since the last inspection. The school has very good systems for assessing pupils' attainment in English and mathematics. The assessment information is used well to set learning targets each term for groups of pupils with similar levels of attainment. Progress towards these targets is monitored and reviewed on a regular basis.
45. Results from National Curriculum tests, standardised tests and non-statutory tests are effectively analysed. Pupils' performance in reading, spelling, writing and mathematics is effectively recorded and tracked as they move through the school. ICT systems are used successfully to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of this system. The assessment information is used well to identify strengths and weaknesses in individual pupils' learning. Future planning and teaching is adapted to address weaknesses and consolidate on strengths.
46. For all other subjects, the school has a manageable system for assessing key skills. This information is generally used well to guide future planning and teaching. In a few subjects, for example, physical education, teachers encourage pupils to evaluate their own and each other's work and this is helping further improvement.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

47. Parents have very high opinions of the school and the quality of their partnership with it. This is apparent from their meeting with the registered inspector and survey of parental views. In the latter, more than nine out of ten parents said that they were happy with every aspect of the school's work. All respondents were pleased with the progress their children make, the quality of teaching, and the ease with which parents can approach staff over queries and concerns. The current inspection supports the very positive views expressed in the survey. Inspectors agree that school has a very strong and effective partnership with parents and has the confidence of all communities, and these make a major contribution to pupils' learning and progress.
48. The school recognises the valuable contribution that parents make to their children's education, and therefore seeks to develop good links with them. It is very successful in doing this. Parents are extremely supportive of the school and of pupils' learning. For example, they are co-operative over attendance and notify the school promptly if their child is absent because of illness. A small but significant number of parents act as volunteer helpers in the classroom. Teachers brief them

well on their role, and they make a positive contribution to lessons. Parents also contribute to the curriculum by their support for extra-curricular and enrichment activities. For example, they help to supervise pupils on educational trips and they make financial contributions towards the cost of them. The active parent teacher association provides additional resources for learning by organising successful fund-raising events. Its social functions also enhance the life of the school by bringing parents and staff together and promoting a sense of community. Parents also give enthusiastic support to school performances and attend consultation evenings in large numbers. They have an extensive and constructive involvement with pupils' learning at home. The vast majority check homework diaries and reading records. Some use them for a dialogue with class teachers, about their child's progress. They also hear their children read at home and encourage them to do their homework. Overall, parents take a keen interest in and actively support pupils' learning, and as result, help to raise standards of attainment across the school.

49. The school makes very good arrangements for maintaining strong links with pupils' families. They start even before children join the Reception class. The school welcomes parents of prospective pupils and invites them to come in at an early date to meet members of staff. The prospectus and annual report of the governing body meet legal requirements, and are well presented and user friendly. The school also publishes a separate curriculum prospectus that gives summary of the curriculum for each subject and briefly explains teaching methods. The quality of information for all parents is very good overall. Among its strengths are the class newsletters that teachers send out on a regular basis. These are very effective in updating parents on the topics that pupils are studying and notifying them of trips and extra-curricular activities. Another very positive feature is the programme of special class assemblies combined with visits to the classroom. This allows parents to come into school during a working day in order to see what their children are doing. During the inspection, many Year 4 parents attended an assembly and saw their children give a presentation on the Vikings. They then joined pupils and members of staff in the Year 4 classroom and watched a video of music and physical education lessons. It was a very enjoyable occasion and increased parents' understanding of their children's learning and attainment, and celebrated pupils' achievements.
50. The quality of formal reporting on progress is good and has improved since the previous inspection. The annual written reports provide clear accounts of what pupils have learned and can do, and the progress that they have made during the year. They give targets for improvement in the core subjects of the curriculum. These are often specific and constructive, but are sometimes too broad and general to be helpful, as in the case of higher-attaining pupils who are told to keep up their good work. The reports include the levels at which pupils are working, plus statements as to whether these levels are above, in line with or below national expectations. This information has proved to be very effective in promoting parental support for pupils' learning. It is a good example of the school's sensitivity to parents' wishes; its inclusion in the annual reports arose out of a survey of parents' views on reporting and homework.
51. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are regularly and frequently informed of their children's learning, so that they are aware of the progress made towards meeting their targets. The school's very good links with all parents and an open-door policy, all ensure a close liaison that helps to meet their children's needs.
52. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection. Links with parents continue to make a positive contribution to pupils' attainment and learning, and the school has made a serious and productive effort to address the weaknesses in reporting that were identified in the previous report.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

53. The leadership and management of the school are very good overall. Staff, governors and parents share an excellent commitment to improvement and an equally skilled capacity to improve further. The school has shown very good improvement since the last inspection. The strengths of clear aims and values and a strongly shared sense of purpose identified by the previous inspection in 1998, continue to provide successful direction and leadership to the work of the school. The very

supportive ethos, of harmonious learning, full inclusion and good teaching, has been systematically enriched by the successful team-orientated approach to leadership and management that stems from the excellent example of the headteacher and the industrious contribution of the chair of governors. This is fully endorsed by the whole-school community and provides significant enrichment to the pupils' achievement. In response to this active spirit of corporate management, staff, governors, parents and increasingly the pupils themselves, are significantly improving their involvement and effectiveness in planning the development of the school.

54. The sum total of this stronger leadership and management has led to a very good response to the key issues identified in the previous report over four years ago, as well as very effective continuing improvements in other areas. In particular, those relating to planning the curriculum and assessing the pupils' work, and aspects of leadership and management, including the effectiveness of subject co-ordinators and of the governing body. The increasing impact of these changes can already be seen in the considerable improvements in the achievements of pupils across the range of attainment and in a significant rise in standards, particularly in English, mathematics and science, by the end of Year 6 over the last two years.
55. The headteacher, ably supported by the senior management team, which now includes the deputy headteacher and co-ordinator for Years 1 and 2, provides outstanding pastoral leadership. Her role in creating and sustaining a positive climate for improvement, in motivating and enabling the staff and governors' team, has been a crucial factor in the successful ongoing improvements. Together they promote the pupils' self-esteem and recognise achievements, and the very good inclusion of pupils with special educational needs and, increasingly, potentially higher-attaining pupils are some of the many examples of how the school's aims and values are seen in practice daily. This makes a strong contribution to the pupils' personal development and very positive attitudes.
56. Monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance are very good. In particular, the monitoring and evaluation of teaching are rigorous and have promoted the improving teaching and learning implemented across the school. Subject co-ordinators monitor provision well and have a clear awareness of the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects and their knowledge of the standards that pupils attain is helping them to plot continued improvement. They share this information with senior managers and governors and this ensures that decisions are based on accurate information and that action is correctly targeted. This is represented in a well-thought out school improvement plan and is illustrated, for example, by the improved challenge now presented to potentially higher-attaining pupils and their improved performance in national tests.
57. The Reception teacher provides strong leadership for early years and, with support from the learning support assistant and headteacher, ensures excellent provision for children in their Foundation Stage year in the Reception class. The special educational needs co-ordinator, with support from the governor with responsibility for this aspect, provides good leadership and promotes very good working relationships with other colleagues and outside agencies. Teachers and classroom assistants work effectively as a team to manage the work associated with pupils with special educational needs. This includes attendance at regular review meetings to assess pupils' progress towards their targets in individual educational plans. As a consequence, pupils with such needs achieve well as they move through the school.
58. The governing body is very effective in meeting all its responsibilities. Under the leadership of a dynamic and dedicated chairman, the governing body has improved its effectiveness significantly since the last inspection. Informed governors now play an important part in setting a clear educational direction for the work of the school. They support the headteacher well and help to ensure that her effectiveness is not reduced by bureaucratic demands. They support her fully in ensuring that information management systems are introduced to enhance the efficiency of the school, for example, using ICT to monitor the performance of pupils in national tests. The governors are also industrious in supporting staff in promoting the very good partnerships with parents and the community that enhance the pupils' positive attitudes. The required procedures for performance management are in place and are fully supportive of the shared commitment to continued improvement. New staff have been well supported and continue to make a substantial

impact as valued members of an efficient team. Daily acts of collective worship meet the statutory requirements and through a clear policy for Race Equality they are strong in their promotion of racial harmony.

59. Financial control and management are very good. The headteacher plays a key role in these areas and is very well supported by the knowledgeable and efficient administration officer. The new chair of the governors' finance committee and her colleagues are also increasingly active as 'critical friend' in these aspects. The funds received by the school are used effectively to improve standards and achievement and to provide a good quality of education. Good use is also made of specific grants, for example, to raise standards in literacy and numeracy and to increase the use of ICT to aid pupils' learning.
60. Principles of best value are applied with increasing effectiveness. The school ensures, through competitive tendering, that they obtain best value for money when purchasing resources and services. The headteacher provides colleagues and the governing body with detailed evaluations of the impact of expenditure to improve provision on the pupils' performance, for example, pupils with special educational needs and those who attended booster classes. The large amount of funding carried forward from 2001/2002 has been used effectively to support the seven-class structure and to increase resources for learning. A small amount has been retained in the budget for 2002/2003 as an appropriate contingency fund. There is scope for governors to increase their active involvement in monitoring best value.
61. There is a good number of suitably qualified teachers and support staff. They are deployed effectively to promote higher standards, importantly to sustain the school's seven-class, single-year group structure and also to ensure that their considerable expertise is shared productively. The administrative officer contributes highly effectively across most areas of provision and this is appreciated greatly by all members of the school community.
62. The school's accommodation is good overall, and is well matched to the demands of the curriculum and the number of pupils on roll. It's strengths are large, modern classrooms, good ancillary teaching areas, and cloakrooms for all pupils. However, as at the previous inspection, the hall is quite small, restricting the freedom of movement in physical education for the older pupils. There are not enough classrooms in the main building, with one class still housed in a relatively isolated temporary classroom. Other shortcomings are the lack of adequate storage space, and a very small staff room. However, all these weaknesses are addressed in the school's plans for extra accommodation.
63. The quality and range of resources are good overall and these have improved since the last inspection. Learning resources are good for the Foundation Stage curriculum in Reception, English, mathematics, science, design and technology, history and physical education. The school has a good range of non-fiction books and commercial reading schemes. These are attractively presented and inspire pupils to read. The school makes good use of the library loan services and so there is a good range of books available to support studies in science, geography and history topics. The school has a good range of equipment for practical work in mathematics, science, design and technology and physical education. Learning resources are generally satisfactory in art and design, geography, ICT, music and religious education. The school has increased the number of computers per pupil and improved the range of software. However, there is only one computer in each class in Years 1 and 2 and two computers in each class in Years 3 to 6. This restricts pupils' regular access to computers, particularly in large classes. The school recognises the need to increase the range of resources for music and religious education.
64. Taking into account the pupils' good achievement and the quality of the education now provided in relation to the funds available, the school provides good value for money; another positive improvement since the last inspection.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

65. In order to sustain the development of this increasingly successful, self-evaluating and self-improving school, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

Continue to promote the teaching and learning strategies currently implemented with increasing benefit in English, mathematics and science, in a more consistent fashion in the full range of subjects across the school (paragraphs 6, 16, 31, 91, 96, 129, 132-136, 150, 154) and:

- ensure that pupils are able to use and develop further their literacy skills, especially writing, to enrich their learning, in subjects such as religious education and history;
- identify and plan more precisely where and how increased opportunities for reflection and research can raise expectations, aid understanding and thereby also improve the quality of pupils' recorded work, for example, in art and design, religious education and music;
- provide pupils with sufficient opportunities to extend their learning by using ICT across the curriculum.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

| | |
|--|----|
| Number of lessons observed | 49 |
| Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils | 35 |

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

| | Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|------------|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| Number | 1 | 19 | 22 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Percentage | 2 | 39 | 45 | 14 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

| | Nursery | YR– Y6 |
|---|---------|--------|
| Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils) | N/A | 180 |
| Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals | N/A | 5 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

| | Nursery | YR– Y6 |
|---|---------|--------|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs | N/A | 1 |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | N/A | 24 |

English as an additional language

| | No of pupils |
|---|--------------|
| Number of pupils with English as an additional language | 2 |

Pupil mobility in the last school year

| | No of pupils |
|--|--------------|
| Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission | 29 |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving | 10 |

Attendance

Authorised absence

| | % |
|-------------|-----|
| School data | 4.3 |

Unauthorised absence

| | % |
|-------------|-----|
| School data | 0.0 |

| | |
|---------------------------|-----|
| National comparative data | 5.4 |
|---------------------------|-----|

| | |
|---------------------------|-----|
| 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 | 12 | 12 | 24 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | Reading | Writing | Mathematics |
|---|----------|----------|----------|-------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | 12 | 12 | 12 |
| | Girls | 12 | 12 | 12 |
| | Total | 24 | 24 | 24 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 100 (91) | 100 (95) | 100 (100) |
| | National | 84 (84) | 86 (86) | 90 (91) |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|----------|-------------|----------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | 12 | 12 | 12 |
| | Girls | 12 | 12 | 12 |
| | Total | 24 | 24 | 24 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 100 (95) | 100 (100) | 100 (95) |
| | National | 85 (85) | 89 (89) | 89 (89) |

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

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

| | | | | |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
| | 2002 | 13 | 14 | 27 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above | Boys | 11 | 11 | 12 |
| | Girls | 12 | 13 | 13 |
| | Total | 23 | 24 | 25 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School | 85 (84) | 89 (78) | 93 (89) |
| | National | 75 (75) | 73 (71) | 86 (87) |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above | Boys | 11 | 10 | 11 |
| | Girls | 13 | 12 | 13 |
| | Total | 24 | 22 | 24 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School | 89 (85) | 81 (74) | 89 (74) |
| | National | 73 (72) | 74 (74) | 82 (82) |

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

| Categories used in the Annual School Census | No of pupils on roll | Number of fixed period exclusions | Number of permanent exclusions |
|---|----------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| White – British | 173 | 0 | 0 |
| White – Irish | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| White – any other White background | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| Mixed – White and Black Caribbean | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Mixed – White and Black African | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Mixed – White and Asian | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Mixed – any other mixed background | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Asian or Asian British - Indian | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Asian or Asian British - Pakistani | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Black or Black British – Caribbean | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Black or Black British – African | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Black or Black British – any other Black background | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Chinese | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Any other ethnic group | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| No ethnic group recorded | 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) | 8.37 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 21 |
| Average class size | 25.7 |

Education support staff: YR– Y6

| | |
|---|-----|
| Total number of education support staff | 8 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 125 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Financial year | 2001/2002 |
| | £ |
| Total income | 407,566 |
| Total expenditure | 403,241 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 2,474 |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 63,066 |
| Balance carried forward to next year | 67,391 |

Recruitment of teachers

| | |
|--|-----|
| Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years | 1 |
| Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years | 3.2 |
| | |
| 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 | 180 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 76 |

Percentage of responses in each category

| | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school. | 70 | 29 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| My child is making good progress in school. | 63 | 37 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Behaviour in the school is good. | 46 | 50 | 1 | 0 | 3 |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home. | 50 | 43 | 4 | 0 | 3 |
| The teaching is good. | 58 | 42 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on. | 50 | 46 | 3 | 1 | 0 |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 70 | 29 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best. | 64 | 31 | 1 | 0 | 4 |
| The school works closely with parents. | 43 | 49 | 5 | 0 | 3 |
| The school is well led and managed. | 46 | 49 | 0 | 0 | 5 |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible. | 58 | 39 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. | 53 | 41 | 1 | 0 | 5 |

Other issues raised by parents

A few parents made observations regarding a health and safety issue and the inspection team recommended improvements to be made.

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

66. Children enter the Reception class full time, in September. Parents can choose to send their children part-time, if they so wish, until such time that they feel that their children are ready to attend full time. This flexible arrangement eliminates unnecessary pressure on these young children and ensures a smooth transition into full-time attendance.
67. The levels of children's attainment on entry to school can vary considerably from year to year. The current group of Reception children entered with broadly above average levels of attainment. Most children make very good progress, especially in understanding how to use and apply their skills to aid their learning, in all areas of the Early Learning Goals. This represents very good achievement over time and is a direct result of the excellent quality of education provided by the teacher and the classroom assistant. The previous inspection report judged the provision for children to be a strength of the school. The present provision is now even better.
68. The children follow a very well-constructed and vibrant curriculum. The staff provide the children with a wide and imaginative range of activities, routines and experiences that are carefully planned to match the learning needs of the children. The inspiring, very high quality work of the Reception teacher and her assistant is seen in the way that they seize opportunities to extend children's learning. This creates a very positive atmosphere and makes learning fun for all the children.
69. The teacher plans the curriculum thoroughly to make it appropriate for the children's stage of learning. She works very closely to the spirit of Foundation Stage and provides the children with many good opportunities to explore and to investigate inside and outside the classroom. The teacher has developed very good assessment procedures and, together with the classroom assistant, she uses the information to plan the next step of children's learning. The staff support the children very well, as they embark on the early stepping stones to learning. This enables the children to transfer smoothly from the later stepping stones into the first level of the National Curriculum in Year 1.
70. The co-ordination by the Reception teacher of all teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage is excellent. The teacher and the classroom assistant have very close partnership with parents and this is evidenced in the warm relationships that exist. There is a very strong emphasis on valuing each child and this helps the children to feel included and have a really positive start to their education.

Personal, social and emotional development

71. Children achieve very well in their personal, social and emotional development. This area is very well taught, and as a result, children far exceed the Early Learning Goals by the time they enter Year 1.
72. The children understand very well what is expected of them and they play and amicably co-operate with one another. For example, in the Toy-maker's Shop, the children organise selling of the goods they have made and already know the importance of treating customers courteously. They chat happily with visitors and each other, and concentrate very hard on their activities.
73. During the snack time, the children sit at tables in the 'teachers' restaurant', where they readily help to tidy up so that the next session is ready for the activities. The children's behaviour is exemplary. They sit quietly in assembly, listen well and participate fully in this important part of their school day. The children quickly learn what is fair, by the teacher and the classroom assistant providing clear routines and procedures for taking turns, thereby ensuring that everyone has an equal opportunity to participate in all learning activities. Consequently, the children understand what is expected of them and get involved in their tasks with remarkable independence.

and maturity. There is a calm and productive atmosphere in which the children learn to co-operate with each other.

74. The children fully participate in the successful school council; two of them represent the class. During the inspection, for example, the children were consulted by Year 6 representatives to take a vote, whether they would prefer to have a shop or a trolley for their Tuck. Through these activities, the children develop an understanding of what it means to live in a community. Moreover, this participation is an excellent preparation for involvement in the democratic processes and in citizenship.

Communication, language and literacy

75. Children start school with language skills which are above expectations. They make very good improvement over their time in the Foundation Stage, particularly in using these skills to communicate warmly with their peers. The very good teaching that the children receive helps them to develop their skills, so that, by the time they enter Year 1, the children attain above average levels for their age in this area of learning.
76. In the Reception class, the children communicate very effectively and with considerable confidence through the very good opportunities provided by the teacher and the classroom assistant. For example, in their 'show and tell' session, the teacher is very skilful in encouraging talking through challenging questions and valuing children's contributions. She asks, "Do you know why the word binoculars begins with bi?" They eagerly offer words such as 'bicycle', with the teacher adding a new word such as 'biped', in order to extend the children's language skills. The teacher builds effectively upon the children's vocabulary, for example, explaining unusual words such as 'aloft'. The children learn to pose questions in these sessions and to give explanations. The final session of each lesson is used successfully for the children to reflect on what they have learned. They delight in recalling their activities and sharing them with the class.
77. The teaching of reading and writing is very carefully planned to enrich the children's learning. The teacher uses a variety of strategies, such as using a puppet in order to teach the sounds of letters, which they begin to recognise in their books. The children delight in their stories because the teacher dramatises her reading and uses a variety of toys to help her, as observed in her reading the Kipper story. The children eagerly use their writing corner to write postcards to their friends and family. They use clearly formed letters, with good spaces between the words, for example, when writing, Little Miss Muffet.

Mathematical development

78. Children achieve very well in their mathematical development through the very good teaching they receive. They begin Year 1 with understanding and skills at a level that is higher than expected for their age.
79. The teacher seizes every opportunity to enable the children to apply their developing knowledge and understanding of mathematics. For example, she uses registration and number songs to reinforce addition and subtraction of numbers. In an excellent lesson observed during the inspection, the teacher rapidly moved the children's learning on by providing practical activities and drawing their attentions to number patterns. The children were delighted to see the way that double numbers, such as 11, 22, etc, are arranged in a diagonal line. They recognise the hour clock confidently. The rich environment provides the children with many interesting materials to sort, count, talk about and play with, including sand and water. In activities, such as 'More tea, Vicar?' the children learn about capacity. They use the computer to consolidate their understanding of addition and subtraction of numbers.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

80. This area is taught very well indeed and consequently, the children make very good progress. By the time the children enter Year 1, they show levels of understanding which are above those expected for their age.
81. The children learn very effectively about the world around them through the teacher's carefully planned activities, which stimulate their interest. Activities enable the children to investigate their surroundings, find out about the past and present events in their own lives and explore aspects of their environment. For example, on their Welly Walk, the children learn about road safety, people who help us and learn to recognise signs of changing seasons. They make kites and find that the top of the hill is a good place to fly them, but hedges shelter them. They learned about the Foot and Mouth disease and that they must not cross the fenced fields because of the possibility of spreading it. They confidently talk about the mole holes they saw on their walk and learn to observe the wider world through their visits to caves in Wales or to the Birmingham Sea Life Centre.

Physical development

82. Children achieve very well in their physical skills through the very skilful teaching. They enter Year 1 with levels of attainment above those expected of children of this age.
83. The Reception teacher provides the children with a very wide and interesting range of activities for this development. These help the children to improve their skills such as climbing and jumping, as well as improving their finer motor skills when using pencils and scissors. There is an attractive garden area for the children, recently developed by the governors. It is well used during breaks and is discrete to the children. There is a good supply of wheeled toys, which the children use when older pupils are in their lessons.
84. The children handle colouring pencils, play-dough, which they make with their teacher, and construction equipment skilfully. The teaching provides very good opportunities for indoor physical education, as observed during the inspection. Children move with remarkable control and co-ordination. They use space well without encroaching upon that of other children. When going on their Bear Hunt, the children move without bumping into anyone and stop, stand absolutely still, when the music stops. They understand the importance of warm up and cool down, as observed in the lesson. They returned to their class quietly, dressing themselves with increasing independence.

Creative development

85. The children's achievement in creative development is very good, reflecting the very good teaching that they receive. By the time they enter Year 1, they exceed the Early Learning Goals in these area of learning. They achieve very well through the wide and imaginative experiences provided for them by the teacher and the classroom assistant.
86. The children enjoy learning and joining in with songs, rhymes and stories. In their music and dance session, for example, the children use a variety of instruments imaginatively for their Hunter Story. When going on their Bear Hunt, the children pretend to be giraffes with very long necks, or march to a band or dodge the rain. In the outdoor circle activities, the children sing and mime favourite songs, using movements imaginatively. The teacher promotes laughter and the children often bubble with excitement as they move to songs such as Oh, Cokey, Cokey.

ENGLISH

87. Standards are well above average in speaking and listening, reading and writing by the end of Year 2. Pupils are achieving well from their above average attainment on entry to the school. By the end of Year 6, standards are above average in all areas of English. This also indicates good achievement, for this year group is a larger than average group for the school and it contains a

greater than normal number of pupils with specific learning needs. Recorded assessments clearly show that this group of pupils are achieving well from their previously average levels of attainment at the end of Year 2. Throughout the school, all pupils, including higher attainers and those with special educational needs, are achieving well. This is because the school has a well-planned curriculum, teaching is good and there are very good systems to assess pupils' attainment. Standards are higher than those reported during the last inspection when they were judged to be average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6.

88. In speaking and listening, pupils in Year 2 demonstrate careful listening. Higher-attaining pupils talk with confidence about the books they have read. Pupils give clear views about a poem they have read and say why they like it. Most pupils in Year 4 talk and listen with assurance. For example, in one lesson seen, pupils clearly expressed their views about whether the school should have a tuck shop. They argued for healthy produce to be sold and expressed concern about the possibility of additional litter. Most pupils in Year 6 are confident speakers. For example, when reading a text about 'Hunter spiders', they express their opinions and ideas and demonstrate a good understanding. They use a range of vocabulary, including words such as habitat, arachnid, thorax and abdomen. They talk articulately about their school studies.
89. In Year 2, higher-attaining pupils read independently with accuracy, fluency and expression. One pupil reading Tolkien's 'The Hobbit' showed a clear understanding of the characters and themes of the book. Medium-attaining pupils read a range of texts accurately and demonstrate a clear understanding of these. Lower-attaining pupils reach nationally expected standards in reading. They read simple passages and show a sound understanding of the story. They used phonics and graphics to identify unfamiliar words. By Year 6, higher-attaining pupils are confident readers and read a range of challenging texts such as Bill Bryson's 'Lost Continent'. Medium attainers read J K Rowling's 'Harry Potter' stories with interest and enthusiasm. They show a clear understanding of the characters and the plot and express their views and opinions when comparing the film with the books. Lower-attaining pupils generally read accurately but make few errors. Throughout the school pupils show positive attitudes to reading and have established good reading habits. Pupils keep a detailed record of their reading. The good home-school reading partnership has a positive effect on pupils' attitudes towards reading and the standards attained.
90. In Year 2, higher-attaining pupils' writing is structured and detailed. Ideas extend logically into sequences of sentences. Spelling is usually correct including words such as because, through and puppet. Medium-attaining pupils produce sequences of sentences with capital letters and full stops used correctly. Lower-attaining pupils produce short sentences with capitals and full stops. Handwriting generally shows accurate form and consistent size but there are inconsistencies in the quality of handwriting. By Year 6, higher attainers' writing is well-structured into paragraphs of simple and complex sentences. Spelling is accurate and punctuation such as commas, apostrophes and inverted commas are used correctly. Medium-attaining pupils produce clear reports. For example, they produce a report about the murder of King Duncan in Macbeth's castle. Their writing is interesting and words are chosen well for effect. Capital letters and full stops are employed correctly and the use of other punctuation is developing well. A lower-attaining pupil used word processing to produce a report of King Duncan's murder. The work was well presented and different fonts are used to good effect. In the main, ICT is underused throughout the school to develop pupils' writing skills. The school is not sufficiently using computer technology as an effective tool for pupils to draft and edit their writing. Across the school, pupils' written presentation is satisfactory overall but varies considerably. The school does not have an agreed policy or guidelines for the presentation of pupils' work.
91. Throughout the school, pupils apply their literacy skills satisfactorily. In history, design and technology and geography, there are opportunities for pupils to use and apply study skills and pursue independent study and research. However, opportunities for this are not consistent throughout the school. By the end of Year 6, pupils are not applying study and writing skills to subjects such as history and geography as much as they could. As a consequence, some of the written work is brief and lacks the necessary breadth and depth.

92. The quality of teaching is good overall and this contributes to good learning. Teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good. During the inspection, very good teaching was seen in Years 1, 3 and 4. English lessons are well planned and structured and clear learning objectives are identified. These are effectively shared with the pupils and so they know what they are to learn. Teachers' explanations and instructions are clear and informative. Pupils listen attentively and follow instructions very well. They acquire new knowledge and extend their vocabulary. Teachers use questioning effectively to challenge the pupils' thinking and check their understanding. Pupils respond well to teachers' questions and demonstrate that they understand the work. Pupils' attainment is assessed very well and this information is used effectively to guide future teaching and learning. As a consequence, tasks and learning resources are well matched to the different attainment and needs within a class and so all pupils are appropriately challenged. Pupils are very well managed, good relationships have been established and this leads to positive pupil attitudes and good behaviour. Lessons are well structured and generally maintain a good pace. Pupils' interest is maintained and they remain 'on task' and are productive. Teaching assistants are well deployed and provide effective support to pupils especially those with special educational needs. ICT programs are used well to develop pupils with special educational needs' spelling and reading skills.
93. The subject is very well led and managed by a knowledgeable and enthusiastic co-ordinator. The co-ordinator's role is well developed and the very effective leadership contributes to the above average standards attained and the good teaching. The National Literacy Strategy and a commercial scheme are used well to plan the English curriculum. The co-ordinator has observed and monitored teaching throughout the school and so has a clear insight of teaching and learning quality. Classroom observations and their findings are very well linked to performance management and school improvement planning. Teachers' planning is effectively monitored. The school has a very good system for assessing and recording pupils' attainment. Assessment is used well to inform future planning to set learning targets for pupils. Pupils' attainment in reading, spelling and writing is effectively tracked as they move through the school. The school has a good range of fiction books and commercial reading schemes. These are attractively displayed and inspire pupils to read widely. The school makes good use of the Local Education Authority library loan service for non-fiction books. Overall, the school has made good improvements in English since the last inspection.

MATHEMATICS

94. Pupils currently in Year 2, a particularly able group, are on course to attain standards that are well above the national average by the end of their school year and this represents good achievement in relation to their prior attainment. Standards are above average by the end of Year 6. This also indicates good achievement for this year group is a larger than average group for the school and it contains a greater than normal number of pupils with specific learning needs. Taken together, these standards represent very good improvement since the last inspection when standards were judged to be in line with the national average at the end of Years 2 and 6. Several factors have led to this impressive improvement. Firstly, the continued development of the curriculum, with close adherence to the recommended practices outlined in the National Numeracy Strategy, has established good progression in the pupils' learning and acquisition of skills. Secondly, with strong encouragement from the headteacher and more recently from the relatively recent co-ordinator, colleagues have improved their practise and place a greater emphasis on investigation and practical learning and this has helped the pupils to extend their understanding. Finally, the strong collaborative support and sharing of expertise between all staff has raised expectations of what pupils can and should attain. As a consequence, standards have risen and continue to rise rapidly, especially in Years 3 to 6. The substantial increase in the number of pupils attaining the higher than average Level 5 standard in the national tests earlier this year, bears testimony to this improvement.
95. The overall trend in national test results since 1999 also shows increasing standards in the attainment of Year 2 and Year 6 pupils and the trend for results at the end of Year 6 is significantly greater than that seen nationally. Observations of lessons, discussion with pupils and an examination of the pupils' work, showed that all pupils, including higher attainers and pupils with

special educational needs, are fully included in lessons and, in response to good teaching, achieve well in relation to their varying starting points. Indeed, evidence strongly suggests that an increasing number of pupils are achieving very well in response to ongoing improvements to the quality and consistency of the teaching and learning across the school.

96. Observations of lessons and of the pupils' work show that by the end of Year 2, pupils have developed above average facility in number for their age. They add and take numbers to 100 effectively and show above average skills in interpreting patterns in number. Their knowledge of shape and space, especially in two dimensions, is above the norm and they use number grids well to further their understanding. Many pupils draw simple bar graphs accurately but there was little evidence to show that ICT is used to best effect in promoting even higher standards in data-handling. Measuring skills, for example, of length using centimetres, show good progression with pupils able to work effectively at their own level. By the end of Year 6, most pupils attain expected standards, with many exceeding these. Attainment is strong in knowledge and use of number, awareness of fractions, including decimals and in measurement in general. Above average pupils multiply and divide mentally three-digit by two-digit numbers accurately. Average attainers understand percentages and ratios and lower-attaining pupils use terms such as symmetry and proportion when evaluating shapes. All pupils respond well to the clear ways forward identified by the teachers in their marking and work shows that pupils make good progress in using and applying mathematical skills in problem-solving situations.
97. The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school. Teaching and learning have been strengthened significantly since the last inspection through a combination of the factors mentioned earlier but also by key appointments and effective professional development. This improved provision is impacting well on pupils' learning and is particularly effective in enabling pupils to build steadily on their previous knowledge. For example, all teachers promote a lively mental session at the beginning of lessons; the pupils look forward to this with interest and enjoyment. This was especially seen in a lesson in Year 3, where the teacher made good use of the computer to focus the pupils' attention.
98. All teachers plan thoroughly and in appropriate depth. They use questioning skilfully to all pupils from across the full range of prior attainments, to motivate and enthuse pupils. For example, in a lesson in Year 1, the teacher developed the pupils' understanding of additions being completed accurately in any order. The teachers manage the pupils' behaviour warmly and effectively and, as seen in a lesson in Year 6, this helps to focus the pupils' concentration and raises expectations. All teachers, including temporary teachers, have good subject knowledge and promote the pupils' thinking through well-thought out activities linked to the pupils' previous attainment. For example, in a lesson with pupils in Year 2, the teacher promoted their understanding of multiplication by 'putting socks on the Teddy Bear'. All teachers begin their lessons by making close links with previous learning; they share the learning objectives precisely with pupils, both during introductions and during the plenary discussions at the end of lessons. These strategies are very successful in promoting the pupils' self-esteem and in reinforcing a good progression in the pupils' learning. This was seen well in a lesson in Year 4 where the teacher introduced the notion of equivalent fractions and reviewed new learning successfully at the end of the lesson by grouping coloured sweets in separate packets. This visible, real-life situation enhanced the pupils' understanding significantly. Such strategies ensure that pupils have opportunities to assess their own attainment and can see the progress they make. Teachers consistently invite pupils to explain their strategies for solving problems and this too is promoting the pupils' enthusiasm for learning that is stimulating the rising expectations and standards.
99. All staff have worked hard and effectively to improve the procedures for assessing the pupils' work and progress. These are now being used consistently and successfully across the whole school. The headteacher, subject co-ordinator and key stage co-ordinators monitor and evaluate the pupils' performance in national tests and school-based year-group tests. These are used to check the effectiveness of teaching and learning and to set targets for groups and individual pupils and for improving provision. Individual teachers know their pupils well and mark their work diligently and establish relevant lesson objectives and ways of improving the pupils' work. Increasingly, and with

good effect, all teachers involve pupils in self-assessment and this correlates productively with the school's active promotion of the pupils' personal development.

100. Pupils use and develop their numeracy skills well to aid learning in other subjects, for example, when studying time lines in history or when measuring proportion in art and design, distances in geography or when checking how long some substances take to dissolve in science. Literacy skills are enriched through class discussions and during the lively mental/oral sessions at the beginning of lessons and through the careful attention that teachers give to subject-specific vocabulary. Examples of such key words are 'equivalence' when studying fractions and 'compound' when examining different shapes. These strategies are particularly successful in lifting the pupils' understanding and confidence.
101. The curriculum is well planned and supports a clear progression in the pupils' development of skills and understanding. Opportunities for pupils to learn through problem solving have been increased beneficially since the last inspection and these are now promoting higher standards, especially for potentially higher attainers. The co-ordinator provides very good leadership. She has particular talent and interest and with strong support from the headteacher and colleagues is rigorous in the pursuit of higher standards. She has monitored teaching and learning and planning. She has been particularly effective in strengthening the level of consistency in provision across the school and in developing the use of assessments of pupils' work to increase the level of challenge offered to the pupils. Through her own example she is also promoting the use of key vocabulary and the use of ICT to achieve improvement. Resources for learning are generally good. In the main, they are used well. A few teachers use ICT effectively and regularly in numeracy lessons but this is not a consistent feature across the school and there is scope to increase the use of ICT to aid pupils' learning.

SCIENCE

102. Standards in science are well above average for the pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve very well throughout the school. Learning through scientific enquiry and experimental work contributes strongly to this very good achievement. Since the previous inspection, which judged standards to be average, the school has made very good improvements in science.
103. The very good quality of teaching throughout the school is at the heart of the pupils' very good achievement. All the pupils have the opportunity to engage in a range of rich experiences through experimentation and investigation. The pupils in Year 1 become used to making observations, such as noticing that materials are chosen for specific purposes on the basis of their properties. They then sort materials and group them accordingly. Already, these pupils understand how to make their test fair, when exploring the most suitable material to make an umbrella. They communicate their findings clearly. These experiments become more sophisticated in Year 2, where the pupils describe the manner in which cheese will alter when heated and conclude that the process cannot be reversed.
104. As the pupils move through the school, they build on their knowledge, skills and understanding through the very effective teaching they receive. In Year 3, for example, the pupils observe and record, using appropriate scientific vocabulary, such as permeable, their observations on rocks and soil. They confidently discuss permeability and what happens, for example, to water when it freezes. By emphasising specific vocabulary the teachers help the pupils to use and extend their literacy skills.
105. The pupils have full and thorough experience of all aspects of science. For example, in a very effective lesson in Year 4, the pupils built a range of switches in order to make the electrical devices function. They talked confidently about conductors and insulators, and give good examples of safety mechanisms. They understood why they wanted to create a circuit with a gap in it. Similarly, in Year 5, the pupils drew conclusions on the basis of their experiments and observations about what factors affected pitch.

106. Lessons are made interesting and valuable in many ways. The teachers give a scientific feel to lessons, using a very good range of vocabulary associated with the topic. For example, in Year 5, the teacher reminded the pupils that “good scientists check their findings over and over again”. Similarly, in Year 3, the teacher clearly explained to the pupils the properties of rocks. Through her challenging questions, the pupils gained new knowledge and understanding of the properties of rocks.
107. The teachers make interesting introductions to lessons. In Year 6, the teacher led a very good brainstorming session about the factors that affect dissolving, making sure that all the pupils’ ideas were explored. The pupils were at once interested and suggested factors which might affect the speed with which sugar would dissolve. They showed secure understanding of making their test fair by changing one factor and measuring the effect.
108. The teachers make very good preparations for experimental work and managing their pupils well. In Year 5, the teacher used a well-organised system of rotating groups to test out the sounds on a variety of plucking and blowing equipment, so that the pupils were able to listen to sounds without being overwhelmed with noise. Throughout the school, the quality of group work and discussion promotes pupils’ understanding and knowledge of science. In addition, the pupils use their developing skills of English and mathematics. There are some instances of ICT being used to support learning, but generally, this area is underdeveloped.
109. The subject is managed very well. The co-ordinator, through her enthusiastic approach and careful analyses, has been pivotal in standards rising steeply from well below average in Year 2001, to well above average at the time of the inspection. The schemes of work have been updated and appropriately adapted from the national guidelines to meet the needs of all pupils in the school. There is rigour to this approach. The higher-attaining pupils are consistently provided with challenging tasks that meet their specific needs. Similarly, the lower-attaining pupils have their asks modified appropriately, without losing the rigour required to ensure maximum progress for them. There is an active, well-run after-school science club, where the pupils can extend learning further, through experiments and investigative problem solving. At the time of the inspection, the pupils were testing the durability of their packaging and how this can protect raw eggs when they are dropped. The co-ordinator has been very active in exploring avenues to continue this development by, for example, working closely with the local high school. This effectively ensures that pupils build well on previous learning and are ready for the next phase of their education.

ART AND DESIGN

110. Pupils attain average standards by the end of Years 2 and 6 and achieve satisfactorily in developing their techniques, knowledge and understanding as they move through the school. Pupils of differing prior attainment, including those with special educational needs, are also able to express themselves well through art and design. Since the previous inspection, the school has maintained its standards.
111. Art and design is taught on a half-termly basis. It was, therefore, not possible to see any lessons in Years 1 and 2 or in Years 5 and 6. Judgements are made on the basis of scrutiny of pupils’ work and of displays around the school.
112. The pupils in Year 1 draw detailed self-portraits, using pastels. The attractive display, alongside prints of a variety of artists, gives the pupils an insight into the way portraits are painted. By Year 2, the pupils explore and develop their techniques to paint self-portraits and to investigate ideas, methods and approaches, for example, when making the aquarium mural, entitled, ‘Can buildings speak?’
113. As the pupils move through the school, they continue to build on their skills, knowledge and understanding, through imaginatively planned activities often based on topics from other subjects. Portraits in Year 3, based on the techniques used by the Romans and designs for mosaics, helmets and shields, show that the pupils utilise their experience of materials and processes and successfully extend their techniques to attain average standards. The pupils successfully use ICT

in Year 4 to enhance their work, for example, as seen in an effective display entitled Dreams. They also explore shape, texture and tone through printmaking, to good effect. In the lesson observed in Year 6, the pupils were able to show how people move when in action. They clearly understood the importance of practising their techniques, and how they can use line, tone, shape and colour to represent figures.

114. Evidence from previously completed work shows that the pupils use an appropriate range of media. They are beginning to use sketchbooks to develop skills and ideas. In Year 5, the pupils were observed producing clear sketches of jugs and urns, using oil pastels to great effect. The teacher seized the opportunity to introduce the work of artists, such as Matisse, Monet and Cezanne, to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding. Discussions enrich the pupils' literacy skills and consideration of proportion in their drawings increases their numeracy skills.
115. The quality of teaching is good, as observed in Year 5. The teacher helped the pupils to focus well on detail, by demonstrating techniques such as drawing and shading, to enable the pupils to improve the final work. The work was well planned and challenging and the pupils worked with obvious pleasure.
116. The subject co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership and works hard to enthuse and to inspire her colleagues. She has developed suitable long-term plans for the progressive development of techniques, knowledge and understanding for each year group. The co-ordinator has sensibly adapted the national guidelines to suit the needs of the school. At present, however, the quality of provision varies from satisfactory to very good across the school and not all pupils have sufficient opportunities to reflect creatively in their work or to support their ideas expressively in writing and this is limiting the achievement of some pupils. Overall, there is a good range of resources to support learning.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

117. During the inspection, four lessons in design and technology were seen. Judgements about standards and provision are made from these lessons, from assessing pupils' past work, from discussions with the co-ordinator and viewing teachers' planning. A good range of pupils' past work was available for viewing.
118. Standards are average by the end of Year 2 and pupils are achieving satisfactorily. These standards at Year 2 are similar to those reported during the last inspection. By the end of Year 6, standards are above average and most pupils, including higher attainers and those with special educational needs, are achieving well. This is because pupils receive good teaching and are offered a well-planned curriculum with good opportunities to work with a range of materials, tools and techniques. These are enabling the pupils to develop their skills to a greater degree than in Years 1 and 2. Standards have improved in Year 6 from average to above average since the last inspection.
119. Pupils in Year 1 assemble strips of card to make simple sliders and lever mechanisms. They explain how they could make the design better. In Year 2, pupils design and make a variety of winding mechanisms using construction kits. They produce labelled sketches of designs for vehicles. In a Year 2 lesson seen, pupils designed Christmas decorations of felt. They produced sketches of stars, boots, Christmas trees and explored different joining techniques. In the making, they chose coloured felt of green, red or yellow. They cut the material carefully and joined it effectively with thread.
120. In Year 3, pupils designed and made different frames, using wood, plastic, card or straws. They used a variety of joining techniques using paper clips, split pins and rubber bands. Pupils tested and evaluated their work to see how rigid their structures were. In doing this they were able to modify and improve their design. In a Year 4 lesson, pupils designed and made a light for Father Christmas. They produced good labelled sketches of their designs. Most applied their knowledge of electric circuits gained in a previous science topic well. For example, in their sketches,

electrical symbols were used correctly. Pupils used different containers, tools and electrical components in constructing their light.

121. In Year 5, pupils design and make different musical instruments. They explore different instruments beforehand by examining actual instruments and finding out information in books. The initial research helps pupils to generate ideas for their own instruments. They produce labelled sketches to communicate their ideas. Different instruments, including drums, maracas and tanpuras, are made using a range of materials including wood, card, rubber and wire. Appropriate cutting and joining techniques are used and the products are attractively finished in paint. Pupils in Year 6 design and make fairground rides. One group made a scaled model of a 'big wheel' of wooden strips and dowling. The models showed a very good understanding of structures and joining techniques. An electric motor with a belt system was used to drive the wheel. The end product is impressive showing that pupils worked with precision with a variety of tools, materials, components and processes.
122. The quality of teaching is good and pupils make good gains in the development of designing, making and evaluating skills. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of design and technology and how to teach it. Lessons are well planned and organised and pupils are provided with a range of interesting activities involving a variety of materials, tools and techniques. Pupils show a keen interest and work with concentration. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to research, design and make in groups. As a result, collaborative working is well developed and pupils demonstrate good relationships. Teaching assistants and voluntary helpers are effectively deployed and contribute significantly to pupils' learning. They help to ensure that all pupils, particularly those with special educational needs, are fully included in all activities. Digital photography is used well to record pupils' work.
123. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and knowledgeable. She provides very good leadership and this has a positive effect on standards and provision. The curriculum is well planned and this helps to ensure that pupils acquire knowledge and skills in a steady and systematic way as they move through the school. The curriculum is enhanced by a 'Challenge Day' for pupils and parents at a local secondary school. The school has a manageable system for the assessment and recording of pupils' attainment of key skills. There is a good annotated photographic record of pupils' work. An effective partnership with a local secondary school has been established and this has led to the effective sharing of staff expertise and learning resources. The school has a good range of materials, tools and components and these have been recently improved. Overall, the school has made good improvements in this subject since the last inspection.

GEOGRAPHY

124. Pupils attain above average standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. In response to good teaching and learning across the school, most pupils, including those with special educational needs and higher attainers, achieve well in relation to their differing levels of prior attainment as they move through the school. This represents a good improvement in standards since the previous inspection and results from ongoing development of the curriculum.
125. The pupils improve their knowledge and understanding of the local area well, using geographical skills to support their learning. The pupils in Year 1 identify accurately features that they see on the way to school. In a very effective lesson observed during the inspection, the pupils showed clear understanding of buildings and work that people do. They made very good links between the two through a visitor who came to talk to them about the jobs that people have in connection with the village hall. Their understanding was further increased through homework, where they were given the task of interviewing people about their work. In Year 2, the pupils develop above average mapping skills of Lugwardine and further afield, including London. This type of work utilises and develops the pupils' numeracy skills effectively. They are beginning to identify and describe the differences between Hereford and Uganda, for example.
126. By Year 5, the pupils have a good grasp of geographical terms and skills. They use these effectively to investigate the city of Gloucester and make thorough traffic investigations. Following

a well-planned field study to the River Lugg, the pupils in Year 6 were able to explain how physical and human processes can cause changes in places and environments. The quality of teaching and learning is good across the school. Teachers have good knowledge and utilise this well to challenge and interest pupils through thought-provoking questioning. They value the pupils' responses in discussions and promote good relationships that lift the pupils' confidence. In the lesson in Year 6, the teacher posed challenges to pupils, for example, to calculate the speed of the river, on the basis of their observations. Throughout the school, the teachers use English, mathematics and science effectively, to reinforce learning in the subject. In particular, discussions are valuable in reinforcing and using the pupils' developing literacy skills. ICT is presently underused, but the co-ordinator is aware of the opportunities that can be provided to consolidate learning in both subjects and is seeking to introduce these.

127. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic, and has been very active in re-organising teaching and learning in the subject. Through her effective leadership, she has developed an enquiry based curriculum, similar to science. This is now paying dividends, as seen in the rising standards. A good range of learning resources enables the teachers to promote the pupils' research skills and a geographical study makes a worthwhile contribution to the pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development.

HISTORY

128. During the inspection, two history lessons were seen. Judgements about standards and provision are based on these lessons, the study of pupils' work, discussions with staff and viewing teachers' planning. By the end of Year 2, standards are above average and pupils are achieving well in this subject. Standards by the end of Year 6 are average. As this is a large year group containing more pupils with specific learning needs than other year groups in the school, these standards indicates that pupils are achieving satisfactorily. Inspection shows that the pupils' achievement is beginning to improve in response to more consistent teaching across the school. Since the last inspection, standards have improved by the end of Year 2 when they were judged to be average. Standards by the end of Year 6 are similar to those reported last time.
129. In Year 2, pupils demonstrate a clear knowledge and understanding of the life and work of Florence Nightingale. They know and describe how she improved hospital hygiene and patient care in Scutari during the Crimean War. Through the use of time lines, pupils are developing a sense of chronology and develop useful numeracy skills. In Year 4, pupils acquire knowledge and understanding of the Vikings in Britain. They discover why the Vikings chose to invade and settle in this country. Pupils apply well knowledge and skills gained in art and design and design and technology to support their work. They design and make decorative Viking jewellery from fine wire. Impressive Viking ships are built of card, straws and fabric for the sails. Pupils weave woollen yarns in Viking style. Pupils apply their writing skills well in Year 4. They produce clear accounts of the day in the life of a Viking or a diary account of a Viking raider. At the time of the inspection, Year 6 had not studied any history, as geography was the focus. The range of Year 6 history available for viewing was limited. The study of last year's Year 6 work shows that pupils studied life in Britain since 1940. The work shows knowledge of transport, fashion and music of each decade. However, there is little linking of the decades and linking causes and effects of events and changes. While there is some evidence of independent research using different sources, this is not sufficiently developed. Furthermore, pupils are not sufficiently applying and developing their writing skills in history. As a result, some of the written work lacks structure and depth. There is little evidence of ICT being used in Year 6 to support learning in history.
130. The quality of teaching and learning is at least satisfactory. The lessons seen were well planned and had clear learning objectives. In these lessons, pupils had opportunities to use a range of books and artefacts to find out about the past. ICT was also used effectively in a Year 5 lesson and pupils found useful information about the Aztecs. However, evidence from the study of pupils' work indicates that opportunities for independent study and the use of ICT are not consistently used well throughout the school. In the main, a good range of learning resources is used to promote learning but in some classes there is an over-reliance on worksheets which do not always fully meet the different levels of attainment within the class. The marking of pupils' work is

generally good. Comments of praise are given for good work and guidance is provided to help pupils improve.

131. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and provides good leadership. The planning of the history curriculum is good. The co-ordinator has had opportunities to observe and support teaching and teachers' planning is effectively monitored. History is enriched by a range of educational visits and visiting speakers. For example, Year 3 visit Hartlebury House when studying the Victorians and Year 3 visit the Caerleon in Usk when studying the Romans. Learning resources have improved recently and are of good quality. The co-ordinator has organised these well into topic boxes for easy access. Overall, the subject has made good improvements since the last inspection.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

132. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are average by the end of Year 2 and the end of Year 6. Standards have improved since the last inspection when they were judged to be below average throughout the school. All pupils, including higher attainers and those with special educational needs, are achieving satisfactorily.
133. In Year 2, pupils use a 'paint' program to create pictures. They produce attractive pictures of different animals such as bears and fish. They choose and paint with different colours. They choose different brush sizes and use the 'fill' tool. One higher-attaining pupil produced a picture of a light blue shark in a dark blue sea. The picture included a smaller fish in orange and green seaweed. Pupils show basic keyboard familiarity. They enter words and are beginning to create sentences and use the enter/return key and space bar appropriately. However, keyboard skills are not well developed because pupils receive insufficient direct teaching in this area.
134. Pupils in Year 3 are producing a book of their village study of Bartestree using a computer program. The book includes digital photographs of the village. The results of a survey of different types of houses in the village are presented as a bar graph. The pupils have imported a map of the village. On this map, red dots are positioned where the photographs were taken. Pupils in Year 3 use a CD ROM encyclopaedia to find information about life in Roman Times. Pupils in Year 6 produce multi media presentations. They use text-editing facilities and import photographs and images. They link a range of screens and use different effects. Some pupils in Year 6 use spreadsheets to support their work on area and perimeter in mathematics. Last year's Year 6 used a word-processing program to enhance their River study project. The presentation was good and different fonts were used to good effect. In one project on the Amazon, pupils imported maps and images of macaws, tropical plants and crocodiles.
135. While there are good examples of ICT being used to support teaching and learning in other subjects, this is not yet consistent throughout the school. In particular, the school is not using word processing sufficiently to develop pupils' writing skills. The power of word processing for drafting and editing writing is not fully realised.
136. Little direct teaching of ICT was seen during the inspection. The teaching that was seen was satisfactory. While teachers' instructions and demonstrations are informative, whole-class demonstrations are difficult, as the school does not have a projector and screen or an interactive whiteboard. With a whole class around one computer, not all pupils can see well enough. There is one computer per class in Years 1 and 2 and two computers per class in Years 3 to 6. While there are laptop computers and some computers in other areas, ensuring that all pupils have regular and equal access to ICT opportunities is difficult and direct teaching requires considerable organisation, particularly in the Year 6 class where there are 36 pupils. Computer programs are used well to develop spelling, reading and numeracy skills for pupils with special educational needs. Teaching assistants and voluntary helpers are well deployed and effectively support pupils' learning in ICT.
137. The leadership and management of ICT are sound. The school has increased the number of computers and the range of software since the last inspection and these are now satisfactory. All teachers have received recent training and this has increased confidence and expertise. These

improvements are having a positive effect on standards. The planning of the curriculum for ICT has also improved and is based on a commercially produced scheme. The scheme is used effectively to help teachers plan their lessons and helps to ensure that pupils acquire knowledge and skills in a progressive and systematic way as they move through the school. Digital photography is used well to record pupils' work in a variety of subjects, for example, in physical education. Overall, the school has made sound improvements since the last inspection.

MUSIC

138. As at the time of the last inspection, pupils attain average standards at the end of Years 2 and 6. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve satisfactorily as they move through the school. Overall, there has been satisfactory improvement since then.
139. By the end of Years 2 and 6, the pupils' singing is enthusiastic and tuneful. The teachers build effectively upon the pupils' previous skills and ensure that they learn new skills in singing. For example, in Year 5, the pupils control their voices and sing with obvious enjoyment, using clear diction. They understand musical terms, such as staccato, or legato and apply this understanding to their music making. By Year 6, the pupils know how to improve their expression musically, as well as in diction. They practise their songs from Snow White in preparation for the Christmas production. They sing whole-heartedly and demonstrate average skills.
140. The pupils have full access to all aspects of music, through which they progressively build knowledge, skills and understanding of music. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. It is good in Years 1 and 2, because pupils benefit from a more 'active approach' to learning and have more 'hands-on' opportunities to use percussion instruments. For example, in Year 1, the pupils learn to compose and perform, using a variety of instruments. They follow the teacher's conducting and adhere to her direction, by looking at her, in order to keep control of their sounds. The teacher successfully extends this skill, by giving the pupils opportunities, to 'have a go' at conducting, which they volunteer with alacrity. Teaching is satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. As in Year 1, pupils in Year 6 learn to accompany their singing using xylophones and a variety of percussion instruments. The pupils learn to record notation in different ways, when composing their own lyrics, for example. Occasionally, pupils lose concentration, however, and learning is restricted.
141. The curriculum is effectively enriched through after-school clubs, such as recorder and band, which are both well attended. In addition, the pupils have opportunities to learn to play instruments, such as strings, brass and woodwind, for which their parents pay. These activities make a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
142. The co-ordinator, who works part-time, provides satisfactory leadership and is enthusiastic about the subject, but she recognises the need to develop the subject further. She plans to refine the schemes of work to ensure clear guidance to teachers of what the pupils need to learn next and how the teachers may achieve this. The school has a good supply of resources and teachers generally use them effectively to enrich the pupils' learning. However, there was little evidence to show that ICT is used to benefit pupils in this subject.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

143. Standards are above average for pupils in Years 2 and 6. The current Year 6 group of pupils is large and has changed significantly as pupils have moved into or left the school and now contains more pupils with specific learning needs than other year groups in the school. Consequently, these standards represent good achievement for all pupils, including higher attainers and pupils with special educational needs, in relation to their differing levels of prior attainment, as they move through the school. Overall, they show that since the last inspection, standards have been sustained well in Year 2 and have been raised at the end of Year 6. This improvement reflects the strengthening emphasis placed on the subject across the school. All pupils attend swimming lessons in Years 3 and 4 and, with parental support, all pupils meet the expectation of swimming 25 metres unaided by the time they leave the school. Additional time has been allocated to the

subject and staff are keen to promote the benefits of mental and physical fitness, resulting from physical activity, as enrichments to pupils' learning. With full support from the headteacher, colleagues and governors, the co-ordinator has raised the status of the subject throughout the school. She has much experience and expertise and has promoted a well-balanced curriculum in which the benefits of high standards of skill and of fair play and good 'sportsmanship' receive full and equal recognition. As a consequence, colleagues now teach confidently and pupils learn well and enjoy their work.

144. Work in the subject is given consistent emphasis throughout the school. It is significantly enriched by the school's active involvement, by competitions with local schools and by a very good range of school clubs. These include netball, football, cricket and rounders and the school has enjoyed considerable success in recent rounders and netball tournaments, reflecting the pupils' above average skills and the good quality teaching and coaching they receive. Activities take place during school time, after school, during lunch times or at the weekend and they are well supported by the staff and by parents. These 'extra' opportunities significantly enrich the pupils' learning and several pupils go on to represent their sports at a higher level after they leave.
145. Evidence from lessons, observations of pupils at play and participating in after-school clubs, show that most pupils develop their skills effectively as they progress through the school. They enjoy the work and respond enthusiastically to their teachers and instructors. Pupils in Year 1 respond well to the teacher's guidance and show appropriate awareness of space and improve their skills in linking gymnastic movements. The pupils develop good co-ordination when running and attain above average ball skills during ball games such as 'Tag Rugby'. The pupils enjoy competition and the teachers and coaches use this beneficially to increase the pace of work, to challenge and to increase the pupils' skills. During a Year 5 gymnastics lesson, for example, the pupils showed good awareness of balance and control and demonstrated these carefully as they evaluated each other's efforts. These approaches promote the pupils' learning and improve standards. The pupils have positive attitudes towards sport and know how to benefit from individual or collaborative exercise.
146. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school. All teachers place a strong emphasis on safe practice. Warm ups before activity are thorough, pupils are reminded of the need to be aware of others when moving, especially in the school hall where space is very limited for the older pupils. The teachers are equally diligent in teaching the impact of exercise on health and pupils learn from a young age of the benefits and impact of exercise on their bodies. As a consequence, the pupils see and understand the value of physical activity and respond with increasing eagerness as their teachers raise expectations, emphasise skills and strive to improve their performance. Most teachers show very good knowledge, not least the co-ordinator, who leads very well by example and enthuses colleagues and pupils alike. She has promoted a strong emphasis on the teaching of specific skills and this is enabling teachers to sustain the pupils' good learning. They accomplish this by reminding pupils of previous work and by sharing clear learning intentions at the beginning and end of lessons. This was seen to good effect in a lesson in Year 6 where the teacher also encouraged the pupils to evaluate each other's sequenced movements, thereby raising standards. The teacher in Year 4 also assessed the pupils' skills well during outdoor 'Tag Rugby' and stimulated the pupils' enthusiasm by involving them well in evaluating their learning. All adults working with the pupils give lots of praise and this enriches their learning.
147. Teachers are beginning to use ICT effectively to support pupils' learning, for example, the digital camera to examine team tactics and individual skills. Outdoor pursuits during residential trips are also recorded on videos and contribute well to the pupils' achievements.
148. The curriculum is very strong and it is planned in depth in all strands, ensuring that pupils develop their skills well as they progress through the school. The teachers know their pupils well and use their observations and assessments of the pupils' skills in lessons to enrich learning. Increasingly pupils are required to complete their own recorded evaluations of their work. This is supporting their progress and is using and developing their literacy skills appropriately. Resources for learning are good. The small size of the hall limits the type of activity for older pupils but this is more than compensated for by the school's spacious, well-considered outdoor facilities and by the pupils'

mature attitudes when working in the hall. The subject makes a valuable contribution to the pupils' spiritual and social development and is a developing strength of the school.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

149. Standards are above those found at the time of the last inspection for pupils in Year 2 and are now above the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus for pupils of this age. The standards attained by pupils at the end of Year 6 are broadly average and match those found during the previous inspection. The quality of the pupils' work in Years 1 and 2, and earlier in reception, has been strengthened by the strong provision for the pupils' personal, social and moral development and by good use of visits and visitors to widen the pupils' experiences and to provide 'first-hand' learning opportunities that enrich their discussions. As a consequence, most pupils achieve well as they move through Years 1 and 2.
150. The development of religious education through Years 3 to 6 slowed as the school increased the emphasis on subjects such as English, mathematics and science and introduced a new scheme of work for personal, social and health education (PSHE). For a time, religious studies lacked appropriate emphasis. More recently, however, with support from governors and members of local faith communities, the headteacher, as co-ordinator, has introduced an improved scheme of work. This offers good support to colleagues and has stimulated improved teaching and has brought more progression in learning for the pupils. Religious education now has an established and rightful place in the school curriculum and receives enrichment from topics such as 'friendship and responsibilities' promoted in the PSHE programme. Pupils in Years 3 to 6, including pupils with special educational needs, now achieve satisfactorily in relation to their prior attainment and are responding with increasing effect to the more effective teaching. However, until recently, older pupils in Years 5 and 6 have had limited opportunities to reflect about the impact of religious belief in writing, and as a consequence, several potentially higher-attaining pupils could achieve more.
151. All teachers place a strong emphasis on discussion and promote the pupils' interest through careful questioning. They value the pupils' responses and promote positive attitudes. Good links are made with work in PSHE and in lessons, discussions about religious belief and practice, also connect well with the school's productive introduction of 'circle time' class discussions and the new school council, whereby representatives of each class discuss whole-school issues. Together, these areas of provision enrich the pupils' personal development. Work in the subject makes an important contribution to the pupils' spiritual, social and moral development.
152. Observations of lessons, discussions with pupils and evaluations of the pupils' work, show that pupils in Years 1 and 2 develop a good awareness and respect for other faiths. Studies in Judaism, for example, promote their knowledge of religious belief and show how customs are often based on stories, signs and symbols. They make useful connections between Christianity and other faiths and visits to the local church and good links with stories from the Bible and from other sources in whole-school assemblies help the pupils to acquire an above average knowledge and understanding. Older pupils show respect towards the views and beliefs of others. However, they have insufficient opportunities to reflect, especially in a variety of ways other than through discussion, about how religious faith can influence people's lives and why people follow specific beliefs and practices. Even though their writing skills are developing well, not all teachers expect or require their pupils to write reflectively or expressively during their religious education studies and this is limiting pupils' achievement and understanding. Teachers place a strong emphasis on discussion, however. For example, in Year 6, the teacher invited a representative of a local faith community to talk about her experiences and beliefs concerning baptism and this led to productive oral work. All pupils also take part in such discussions across an appropriate range of world faiths and these help to prepare them for life in Britain's multicultural community.
153. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and there are clear indications that the new scheme of work offers good support to the teachers. For example, teachers identify specific learning objectives for each lesson and share these productively with the pupils. As a consequence, pupils acquire a greater appreciation of why religious studies are important and this

raises their interest and enthusiasm. Evidence indicates that teaching has improved relatively recently and has not yet had time to impact fully on pupils' achievement.

154. All teachers promote warm relationships and value the pupils' responses and this helps to stimulate lively discussions that aid the pupils' understanding, as for example, in the lesson in Year 6 where the pupils questioned a visitor about the symbolism of baptism. The teachers emphasise specific vocabulary such as 'witness', 'significance' and 'immersion' and this helps to deepen the pupils' understanding and also enriches their literacy skills. Teachers have good knowledge and use this well, for example, as in a lesson in Year 2, when retelling the story of the Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt. The teachers frequently take the pupils on visits to the local church or to religious centres further afield. They invite members of the community to talk about their religious practices, such as in a lesson in Year 2, where a member of the Jewish faith came to talk to the pupils and showed them various artefacts. Such experiences have a powerful effect in promoting the pupils' awareness. Teachers include all pupils equally and pupils with special educational needs are as confident as other pupils in offering their ideas. Some teachers provide appropriate opportunities for pupils to write reflectively, but as with the use of ICT to enrich learning, such practice is inconsistent across the school and restricts pupils' achievement.

155. The curriculum is well balanced and provides good breadth and meets the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. The headteacher, as co-ordinator, has expertise but other priorities have meant that she has had limited opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in this subject and this has led to some inconsistency in emphasis across the school. To address this she has been effective in developing a supportive scheme of work that is helping to improve the quality of pupils' learning. This includes appropriate emphasis on assessing pupils' work and teachers are beginning to use assessments beneficially to inform teaching and learning. Resources for learning are satisfactory but ICT is not always used to best effect in supporting pupils' learning, for example, through research or by enhancing the quality of their recorded work.