

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **SANDRIDGE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

St Albans, Hertfordshire

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117148

Headteacher: Mrs Mary Weller

Reporting inspector: Mr Andrew Matthews  
Rgl's No. 19410

Dates of inspection: 19 - 21 May 2003

Inspection number: 254467

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:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Woodcock Hill Sandridge St Albans
Postcode:	AL4 9EB
Telephone number:	01727 850576
Fax number:	01727 837333
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Robert Enever
Date of previous inspection:	January 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
19410	A. C. Matthews	Registered inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Design and technology Physical education Special educational needs	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? a) The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
13828	R Ibbitson	Lay inspector		How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
22254	H Callaghan	Team inspector	Science Geography Music Religious education Foundation stage	
23385	S Gerred	Team inspector	English Art and design History Educational inclusion English as an additional language	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

The inspection contractor was:

Cambridge Education Associates Ltd  
Demeter House  
Station Road  
Cambridge  
CB1 2RS

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Sandridge School is an infant and junior school, which has an attached Nursery. The school is situated in the Sandridge ward of Hertfordshire, and the majority of pupils come from this ward. Pupils come from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds and in the majority of families, both parents are working. The roll has fallen since the last inspection in 1998 and the school is smaller than average. There are 116 full time pupils – 61 boys and 57 girls aged between 4 and 11 and taught in four classes. In addition 16 pupils attend the Nursery part-time. There is an average proportion of pupils from different ethnic backgrounds and this has grown in recent years. An average proportion of pupils has English as an additional language, with two at an early stage of learning English. A below average number of pupils is eligible for free school meals. There are 37 pupils on the special needs register, which at 29 per cent is above the national average. There are no pupils with a statement of special educational needs. There are two intakes into the Nursery, in September and January. Pupil mobility rate was 6 per cent last year, which was below most other schools, with four pupils joining and four leaving the school at other than the normal times. Pupils' attainment on entry to full-time education in the Reception class is below average.

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

Sandridge is an effective school with many good features. The leadership and management of the headteacher are good and she is given very good support by knowledgeable governors and a dedicated and hardworking staff. The quality of teaching is good overall and leads directly to above average standards at the end of Year 6. Although the school has an above average funding per pupil, it provides good value for money

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

- The school is well led and promotes its aims successfully.
- Good quality teaching motivates pupils and helps them make good progress and achieve above average standards in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils form strong relationships with each other, work hard, take their responsibilities seriously and behave well.
- The school has built very strong relationships with parents who are very pleased with the caring and supportive provision for their children.
- Children make a good start to their education in the Nursery class.

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

- The continuity of the learning experiences as pupils move from Nursery through Reception into Year 1.
- Pupils' attendance.

*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 a good improvement since it was inspected in January 1998 because the previous headteacher developed good procedures for evaluating its performance and was not afraid to challenge weaknesses. Five issues were identified during the last inspection and members of staff and governors have worked successfully to address the great majority of these. Higher-achieving pupils are now well challenged by their teachers and achieve well. The school has developed effective assessment procedures that guide teachers' planning and enable the school to track the pupils' progress through each academic year. Teachers have good management skills and this ensures that pupils behave well during lessons. All statutory requirements, including the school's prospectus, the governors' annual report to parents and the pupils' annual reports, are now met. Due to the high turnover of staff and the long term absence of one teacher, the role of subject co-ordinators has not been fully developed. However, in mathematics, English, science and information and communication technology (ICT), the role of the co-ordinator is strong and is helping to improve standards. There have also been

improvements in national test results, the school's relationship with parents, the role of governors and in the quality of teaching.

## 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	B	E	B	B
Mathematics	B	E	A	A
Science	C	E	A	A

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

Children make good progress in the Nursery class and particularly good progress in their mathematical development and in their personal, social and emotional development. When children leave the Nursery other children who have not had the benefit of the school's good quality Nursery education join them. This results in the overall attainment of children on entry to the Reception class falling to below average. The present Reception group of children has a much higher than average proportion of children with special educational needs and due to staff illness, these children have also experienced a disrupted education since the beginning of the school year. However, they are now making appropriate progress because they are being increasingly well challenged by the two teachers who now share the class responsibility. Despite these improvements, only a minority of these children will reach the expected standards in their literacy and numeracy by the end of the year. In all the other areas of learning, the children will reach the national expectations. Year 1 pupils who are in the same class as the Reception children are making satisfactory progress, but their attainment is below average, again due to the high proportion of pupils in this group with special educational needs. Pupils in the Year 1/2 class are making good progress, and their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is above average. This good progress is well developed as pupils move through the school. Pupils in the Year 3/4 class have made particularly good progress during the year because of the consistently good quality teaching in all areas. Pupils in the present 5/6 class also make good progress and by the end of Year 6 pupils are achieving above average standards in English and mathematics and average standards in science. The standards are below the high standards of last year, particularly in mathematics and science, mainly because of a fall in the proportion of pupils achieving at the higher levels. However, the school has set challenging targets for these pupils to achieve in this year's National Curriculum tests, and evidence from the inspection confirms that they are on course to exceed these targets in both English and mathematics. These pupils have well developed speaking and listening skills and make good use of their literacy skills in subjects such as science and history and this experience helps them to develop their writing, spelling and grammar further. Pupils are particularly confident in their use of the Internet and make good use of the information they obtain in other subjects. Pupils develop above average skills in physical education and teams have been very successful in area competitions in football, netball, athletics and swimming. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress in lessons. The great majority of pupils with English as an additional language are in the Reception/Year 1 class, are appropriately supported and make satisfactory progress. Teachers set challenging work for the higher-ability pupils who achieve high standards.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are enthusiastic about school and have positive attitudes



	to their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good at all times.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils have good relationships with each other, take their responsibilities seriously and show increasing confidence as they become older.
Attendance	Below average. The great majority of pupils attend school punctually but a small minority has poor attendance records.

The positive relationships have a noticeable impact on the way that pupils learn when they work together in classes. Pupils respond well to the good quality teaching and take their responsibilities seriously. The school council is well established and is giving the pupils a valuable insight into democratic processes and the importance of citizenship.

### TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection, is now good overall and this leads directly to the good progress that pupils make as they move through the school. This is particularly so in the development of their numeracy and literacy skills, where teaching is consistently good. Pupils make a good start in the Nursery, where the teacher and Nursery nurse work very effectively together and introduce the pupils to a good range of learning experiences. During the last year, children's progress has slowed in the Reception/Year 1 class as, due to staff illness, they have been taught by six different teachers. However, two experienced teachers are now sharing the teaching of the class and, during the inspection, some good and very good teaching was observed. Pupils in the Year 1/2 class are making consistently good progress because of the experience, expertise and enthusiasm of their class teacher. The teaching in Years 3 to 6 is consistently good and pupils' in the top class have also benefited from 'booster groups' to further improve their attainment. Teachers have good subject knowledge, explain things clearly and create a positive learning environment, where pupils feel valued and want to do their best. This is clearly reflected in the large amount of work that pupils have completed since the beginning of the school year. Teachers use questioning effectively to challenge pupils' thinking and deepen their understanding. As a result of good teaching, pupils develop increasing independence, with the older pupils showing a marked degree of maturity. The marking of pupils' work is particularly high quality in the Year 3/4 class where the teacher regularly identifies for pupils how they can improve their work further. In other classes, the marking is thorough but does not consistently inform pupils about areas that need improvement. Teachers plan most effectively for pupils to use information and communication technology to support their learning in many of the subjects. They work closely with the skilled teaching assistants who help to ensure that pupils of all abilities are fully included in the activities and achieve appropriately.

### OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall, although the curriculum for the Reception pupils is not consistently meeting the needs of all pupils. The curriculum for all other pupils is broad and balanced and incorporates information and communication technology well into the pupils' learning. There is a good

	range of activities outside the normal school day, particularly for the younger pupils, and this provides valuable opportunities for pupils of different ages and genders to work and play together.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils' Individual Education Plans have clear targets and pupils benefit from well-focused support in lessons.

Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. Pupils receive appropriate support in lessons and outside specialist teachers are brought in when required.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Pupils are given carefully planned opportunities to develop their moral and social skills by working and learning together. Pupils' spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory overall but there are comparative weaknesses in pupils' understanding of a multi-cultural society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. Procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare are well established. Pupils' work is carefully assessed and this information is used effectively by the school to track pupils' progress and by the teachers to plan appropriately challenging work.

Parents have very positive views of the school and give good support to their children with homework. Parents also give valuable help in the classroom, with extra-curricular activities and when accompanying school trips.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The new headteacher is reflective, committed to improve the school further and is building well on the strong leadership and management of the previous headteacher.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors work hard to evaluate the school's effectiveness and to promote its ongoing development. Even greater use could be made of their expertise in helping the school to judge the effectiveness of its developments.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The processes and systems that the school has developed are effective and enable the school to keep a clear track of pupils' progress and ongoing developments.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school uses its budget carefully to maintain good standards whilst improving the quality of learning resources. The school applies the principles of best value well, particularly in its consultation with parents, when buying resources and in the monitoring of its National Curriculum test results.

The new headteacher has rightly spent her early days in the school gathering evidence about the school's performance. She has correctly identified the impact of staff turnover on the progress of pupils in the Reception/Year 1 class and has put in to place effective strategies to address this situation. Due to the high turnover of staff, the deputy headteacher has at present too many responsibilities. However, since the last inspection, co-ordinators have played an integral part in improving standards in English, mathematics and science and developing the information and communication technology provision in school. The experience and number of teachers and support staff is appropriate for the needs of the school. The school is fortunate to have good-sized classrooms and spacious outdoor areas. Learning resources are satisfactory overall, good in music but unsatisfactory in design and technology.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The school is very well managed and staff are approachable.</li><li>• Teachers know their pupils well and expect them to work hard.</li><li>• The school has good relationships with the parents who play a valuable part in its life.</li><li>• Pupils enjoy coming to school, make good progress and behave well.</li><li>• The improvements made since the last inspection.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Information about children's progress.</li><li>• Out of school activities.</li></ul>

The inspectors fully endorse all the parents' positive comments but do not support parents' concerns about out of school activities which inspectors judged to be good, particularly for the younger pupils. Inspectors also felt that parents were well informed about the curriculum and that the annual reports painted a true and accurate picture of the achievements of the pupils and what they needed to do to improve further.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. When the school was last inspected in June 1998, the standards of attainment were average in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2 and average in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. Since then standards have fluctuated according to the prior attainment of the intake, but overall the school's national test results have improved in line with the national average. When compared to all schools nationally and schools in a similar context, the school's performance in the 2002 National Curriculum tests for Year 2 pupils was above average in writing, average in reading but well below average in mathematics. In the 2002 National Curriculum tests, the attainment of Year 6 pupils was above average in English and well above average in mathematics and science. Statistics show that this group of pupils made very good overall progress since taking their National Curriculum tests in Year 2. However, it must be remembered that cohorts in the school are smaller than the national average and this can lead to distortion in the statistics.
2. The marked improvement in the performance of Year 6 pupils in 2002, compared with 2001, was due to a higher proportion of pupils achieving the expected level and a significantly increased proportion of pupils gaining the higher levels. However, inspectors also found that measures adopted by the school, especially the procedures for monitoring, evaluating and developing the quality of teaching, and also the way that the school tracks pupils' progress through each year, are having a positive impact on standards of achievement. This is particularly so for the present Year 6 pupils, whose attainment has improved significantly since they were in Year 2. Then, no pupils achieved the higher levels. Evidence from the inspection shows that these pupils have made very good progress overall, leading to attainment that is now above average in English and mathematics and average in science. Standards of attainment for the present Year 2 pupils are well above average in reading and above average in writing and mathematics. This shows a significant improvement in reading and mathematics compared to the previous year. Standards in other subjects are generally in line with national expectations for pupils in Year 2 and Year 6. In physical education, standards are above national expectations. While standards in information and communication technology are in line with national expectations, pupils make good use of their computer skills, particularly in Years 3 to 6, to support their learning in other subjects.
3. Despite the smaller than average year groups, there are some differences between the performance of boys and girls at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Over the last three years, girls have outperformed boys at the end of Year 2 but boys have outperformed girls at the end of Year 6. During the inspection, there were no discernible differences between the attainment of boys and girls in the different year groups, except in Year 6 where the higher-achieving pupils were predominantly boys. The absence of a clear pattern from year to year, points to the need for the school to continue to monitor the differences closely.
4. The continued good quality leadership and the clear focus of the school on improving achievement demonstrate clearly that the school has a good capacity to sustain the clear improvements since the last inspection. However, the school's task in continuing to raise attainment has been made more difficult by two factors. The continuity of the pupils' learning has been disrupted during the last four years by a high turnover of staff and, more recently, by the long-term absence of a teacher of the younger children. There have also been wide fluctuations in the proportion of pupils with special educational needs. This is particularly the case with the present Year 1 group of pupils, almost half of whom are on the special educational needs register.
5. The attainment of children on entry to the Nursery is average but a significant proportion of them have weaknesses in their mathematical development. Children in the Nursery make good progress, with most achieving the expected levels by the time they join the Reception class. However, when pupils move up to the Reception class, other children who have not had the benefits of the school's good quality Nursery provision join them. As a result, the overall

attainment of children entering full-time education, falls to below average. This particular group of Reception children has a much higher than average proportion of pupils with special educational needs and their overall attainment when they entered Reception was well below average. The long-term absence of the Reception/Year 1 class teacher, has resulted in these pupils being taught by six different teachers during the present school year. Not all the teachers taking the class were experienced in teaching this age group and, as a result, the progress of these pupils has not been as good as in the Nursery class. To counteract this, the new headteacher has adopted a good strategy to ensure that the needs of the pupils will be fully met for the duration of the present school year. However, evidence shows that, by the end of their Reception year, most of these children will not achieve the expected standards in communication, language and literacy or in their mathematical development. In all other areas the children will achieve the Early Learning Goals<sup>1</sup>. The children have made noticeable progress in their personal, social and emotional development this year.

6. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set for them in their Individual Education Plans (IEPs). Children in the Nursery have their needs identified early and make good progress in relation to their specific targets because the staff adopt appropriate strategies to address the weaknesses. Progress for these pupils has slowed in the Reception/Year 1 class this year but overall the pupils have made satisfactory progress. In the rest of the school, pupils make good progress because their IEPs clearly identify small, achievable targets for improvement. Their progress is also helped by the well-focused work of the teaching assistants who work and plan closely with the class teachers to ensure that these pupils' learning needs are met through individual and group support. Some pupils with specific needs also benefit from the expertise of a part-time special needs teacher. All the pupils with English as an additional language are in the Reception/ Year 1 class. They receive appropriate support and make overall satisfactory progress in acquiring their basic language skills. The small number of Traveller children achieve well and, like all pupils in the school, their progress is closely tracked through each school year. Higher-achieving pupils are consistently well challenged and make good progress, with most achieving very high standards. The school has identified a small number of pupils as 'gifted and talented' in the sporting sphere. These pupils are individually encouraged to join local sporting clubs and, as a result, achieve very high standards in their individual sports.

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

7. As at the time of the last inspection, pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are good and make an important contribution to their learning. Pupils have good attitudes to the school and to their learning. Most settle down quickly in lessons, listen attentively to their class teachers and concentrate well on their work. They co-operate well in classes. For example, in a Year 5/6 physical education lesson, all pupils worked hard to emulate the robotics dance style of the 1980's and, by working in small groups, both boys and girls developed a good interpretation of the style.
8. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Pupils move around in a sensible manner and at lunch times they wait patiently for their meals while chatting to their friends. They see lunch times as a social occasion and enjoy mixing with other pupils. They eat sensibly and afterwards play well together in the spacious grounds. During the inspection, there were no signs of aggressive behaviour or of racial intolerance. Pupils respect the school's ethos and know the difference between right and wrong; they are generally considerate, courteous and polite to visitors. Some of the younger pupils feel there is some bullying but all agree that on the rare occasions it does occur, teachers deal with it quickly and effectively. Children treat school property with respect and there are no signs of litter or graffiti.

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<sup>1</sup> Early learning goals - these are expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage. They refer mainly to achievements children make in connection with communication language and literacy; mathematical development; and personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development. There are many goals for each area of learning, for example, in language and literacy pupils should be able to write their own name and other things such as labels and begin to write simple sentences.

9. Pupils have good relationships with their teachers, support staff and with each other. Pupils' friendships are very important to them and are given as one of their main reasons for liking school. Pupils' good relationships with teachers are an important factor in their learning as pupils have the confidence to ask for help when they are unclear about an aspect of their work.
10. The personal development of pupils is good. In assemblies, pupils take seriously the periods for reflection when they think about such themes as bravery and honesty. In their personal, health and social development lessons they gain a good understanding of moral and social perspectives. Pupils in the Year 1/ 2 class for example, discussed the environment and talked about solutions to the unsightly litter they had seen on their journey to school. School council representatives, elected by their peers from Year 2 and above, take their responsibilities very seriously. Meetings are minuted and findings fed back to each class. The council gives children a chance to consider and contribute to the life of the school and helps them to understand the benefits of collaborating well together. One of the popular decisions of the council was to install a bird identity notice board enabling pupils to recognise the large variety of birds that can be observed in the grounds. Pupils throughout the school cheerfully accept certain monitoring roles, such as ringing the lesson bell, taking registers back to the office and looking after the library. All pupils in Year 6 have individual responsibilities, which they perform well.
11. Pupils show good respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of others. Through religious education lessons, pupils understand that others may have different beliefs to them and they learn to respect views different to their own. A discussion with some Year 6 pupils revealed that they have a good knowledge of many religions and two pupils felt that having different beliefs should make no difference to friendship. Through the school council, pupils are involved with raising funds for chosen charities, such as the 'jeans for genes day' and the 'red nose day'. Consideration of these charities helps pupils to be aware of the needs of others less fortunate than themselves and to realise that in a small way they can help to make other people's lives better.
12. Children in the Nursery leave their parents and carers confidently in the morning and settle to daily routines well. Most children work and play alongside each other happily and share toys and equipment without fuss. They confidently join the other pupils in Reception, Years 1 and 2 for assemblies. In these they show good levels of concentration and attention to the story and when listening to each other's ideas. There are a few children in the Reception class who find working with other children difficult and the teachers and learning support staff give them much encouragement and support, recognising their specific learning needs. Most children show good attitudes to their tasks and help to clear away at the end of lessons.
13. Although most pupils attend school regularly and promptly, the overall attendance rate is below the national average and is lower than at the time of the last inspection. Illness over the year has had an adverse effect on the attendance rate but the main reason for absence is due to pupils taking holidays in term time. There is additionally a very small number of pupils who have a very poor attendance and this has led to a downward trend in attendance over the past three years.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?**

14. Evidence from pupils' work shows that the overall quality of teaching has been good during the present school year and this relates directly to the good progress that pupils make as they move through the school.. Since the last inspection, the quality of teaching has improved, particularly in the proportion of good and very good lessons. The main reason for the improvement is due to the consistently strong approach adopted by both the current and previous headteacher. As a result of the regular checks on the quality of teaching and learning, there have been clear improvements in the quality of teaching in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science.
15. Children in the Nursery make a very good start to their education due to the good quality teaching provided by the experienced teacher and Nursery nurse. Activities are well planned and provide a range of good quality opportunities to stimulate children's learning. Children in the Nursery

regularly make very good progress, especially in their personal and social development and in their mathematical skills. Currently, a good proportion is already well on their way to meeting the standards expected at the end of Reception in these aspects. The teacher and the Nursery nurse work well together to monitor all children's activities. They use good intervention skills and questions to develop and consolidate children's language and ideas.

16. The quality of teaching in the Reception class is satisfactory overall. There have been significant difficulties in maintaining continuous teaching in the Reception class this year due to the long-term illness of the class teacher. This has caused considerable difficulties in maintaining the effective learning of children from the Nursery through Reception and into Year 1. There are very good relationships between the adults and the children in the Reception class and the wide range of ages and capabilities are managed effectively. There is a large proportion of children with special educational needs in the class and these children are well supported and encouraged to succeed. In a lesson observed, for example, the teacher used a good range of different activities to consolidate and extend children's knowledge of letters and their sounds. There are still, however, insufficient opportunities for the youngest children to learn through structured opportunities of free choice play activities.
17. There are many consistent and characteristic strengths of teaching across the school and across subjects. Identifiable strengths are the capable management of the classroom and the good use of teachers' knowledge and understanding in the questioning of pupils. Teachers plan work carefully to ensure lessons are interesting and the work set is challenging to pupils of different abilities. In this way, all pupils are fully included in all learning opportunities that the school offers and achieve well. The Nursery nurse and teaching assistants are used effectively by the teachers and have a positive impact on pupils' learning. Teachers set homework regularly and pupils have a clear understanding of its importance and how it consolidates and extends their learning. Teachers mark pupils' work carefully and regularly but the marking does not consistently identify how pupils should improve their work. The quality of marking is very high in the Year 3/4 class where there is clear evidence of pupils improving their work, having followed their teacher's comments. There is a good emphasis on pupils taking care with the presentation of their work and in the amount of work they produce in a lesson.
18. English and mathematics, including the skills of literacy and numeracy, are taught consistently well through the school and this is an improvement since the last inspection. The development of pupils' reading skills is particularly good. In English, the co-ordinator sets high standards and all teachers have high expectations that are challenging for all pupils. The pace of learning is brisk and teachers use questioning particularly well to challenge and deepen pupils' thinking and understanding. For example, this was particularly effective when Year 2 pupils not only had to work out answers to number patterns but also explain to their peers what mathematical processes they had used to arrive at their answers. Teachers show good enthusiasm for the subject and this is transferred to pupils who, in turn, are eager learners, making good gains in their learning. However, sometimes the opening session of a numeracy lesson is too long for the higher-achieving pupils in the class who have the ability to work independently using their newly acquired skills and knowledge. As a result, they do not always make the progress of which they are capable. Teachers plan frequent opportunities for pupils to use their acquired literacy and numeracy skills to support their work in other subjects such as science, design and technology and history. Teachers make consistently good use of some pertinent and good quality computer programs which enable pupils to consolidate and extend their newly learnt skills.
19. Throughout the school, science and physical education are taught consistently well, with pupils achieving above average standards in physical education. In all other subjects, teaching is satisfactory. Good use is made of the expertise of specialist teachers for swimming and this has a direct impact on the good progress that pupils make in this area. However, in music, lessons are too short for the pupils to benefit fully from the music specialists' expertise. In Years 3 to 6 pupils make above average progress in ICT because of the good quality teaching. Throughout the school, teachers record pupils' progress carefully and information is used effectively by the teachers when they plan future work. As a result, pupils are consistently challenged and achieve well.



20. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Individual Education Plans (IEPs) are carefully drawn up to meet the precise needs of the pupils. Teachers use a wide range of successful strategies to motivate, involve and challenge these pupils, some of whom benefit from working individually or in small groups with a part-time special educational needs teacher. Records are carefully maintained and regularly updated to enable teachers to track pupils' progress carefully. There is careful evaluation of the pupils' IEPs and new targets accurately reflect the needs of these pupils. Good use is made of the teaching assistants to support these pupils and to ensure they are fully integrated into the learning of the class. The occasional example of inappropriate behaviour, such as was seen in the Reception class during the inspection, is dealt with effectively and enables the learning of the class to continue uninterrupted. Higher-attaining pupils are well challenged and achieve high standards. Pupils with English as an additional language, currently in Reception and Year 1, are taught satisfactorily. However, there are missed opportunities to emphasise key vocabulary and to develop language skills in lessons other than English. On the occasional times when the school has pupils from the Traveller community, their needs are appropriately identified and they are taught well.

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

21. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is appropriately planned to cover all the recommended six areas of learning. The school has recognised the need for improvement in the planning of children's continuous learning through the Foundation Stage and in preparing children for learning in Year 1. This term, big improvements have been made in the quality and appropriateness of the provision for children in Reception. It is now satisfactory overall and pays appropriate attention to supporting the significant number of children with special educational needs in both years in this Reception/ Year 1 class. The difficult task of maintaining an appropriate balance of activities, suitable for Reception children and those in Year 1 is improving. There is a satisfactory range of practical activities, teacher led tasks, and opportunities for children to learn through self directed play. However, the balance still needs some adjustment to ensure it meets the needs of all pupils in this mixed age class, whilst taking due account of the 'Stepping Stones'<sup>2</sup> for the youngest children.
22. The curriculum in Years 1 to 6 meets statutory requirements and includes all the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. It is sufficiently broad, balanced and appropriate to give pupils opportunities to learn well in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science and in physical education in Years 1 to 6 and in information and communication technology in Years 3 to 6. Strong emphasis is given to English, with early and additional literacy strategies being provided for underachieving groups of pupils in Years 1, 3 and 4. The time allocation for other subjects, including mathematics and science, is average. The school provides a satisfactory range of learning opportunities overall.
23. As there are mixed age classes, the curriculum is planned over a 2-year cycle without undue repetition. The school determines which aspects of subjects will be taught each year based on national guidance. However, it is left to individual teachers to decide in which term particular topics or units of work will be taught. This may be helpful in relation to the sharing of resources and in giving teachers some flexibility in organising their own timetables. However, the weakness of this system is that, unless there is effective communication between teachers before the start of the year, some subjects, such as history and geography, may not always be taught regularly enough, with up to a term or longer between one topic and the next. Another weakness is some inconsistencies in the planning for Year 1 pupils in the Year R/ 1 and Year 1/ 2 classes. This means that pupils in the younger class do not always cover work of a similar standard to those in the older class and are not always consistently challenged. This is particularly the case in science.

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<sup>2</sup> Stepping Stones are suggested activities in the Foundation Stage curriculum for teachers to follow to help children meet the required standards in the six different areas of learning by the end of the Reception year.

24. The school uses the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies as the basis for teaching skills in reading, writing and number. These are supplemented well in English with additional opportunities for guided reading and handwriting as well as additional opportunities for extended writing. These make a significant contribution to the above average standards seen and to the good improvement since the last inspection. In mathematics, teachers plan carefully to develop the pupils' numeracy skills in subjects such as design and technology and science. These experiences strengthen the pupils' understanding of how to apply their mathematical knowledge in different situations.

25. Pupils are given a better range of learning opportunities in information and communication technology than at the time of the last inspection because teachers plan more effectively for pupils to use their skills to support their learning in other subjects. An improved range of programs that fit closely with the on-going learning in literacy and numeracy lessons, not only consolidates the pupils' skills in these subjects but also enhances their confidence and understanding in the subject. Particularly effective use is made of the Internet in Years 3 to 6 to support and supplement the pupils' work in other subjects.
26. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and complies with the revised Code of Practice. These pupils have good access to a broad and balanced curriculum that is relevant to their individual needs. The quality of the support that they receive successfully enhances their access to the full National Curriculum alongside their peers.
27. Good attention is given to ensuring that all pupils have equal access to all learning opportunities. Higher attaining pupils and those with learning difficulties are well challenged or supported. The learning opportunities are satisfactorily matched to needs of pupils with English as an additional language. However, there are missed opportunities in lessons to emphasise key vocabulary and to develop these pupils' language skills in lessons other than English. There is suitable provision on the occasional times when there are pupils from the Traveller community who also need additional help.
28. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is satisfactory. Appropriate arrangements are made for sex and drugs education. Pupils are taught how to keep safe in a range of situations and Year 6 pupils participate annually in a project, organised by the local education authority, that prepares pupils for decision making in aspects of personal safety. In Years 5 and 6, emphasis is placed on pupils developing understanding of citizenship through discussion about rules, responsibilities, community and such issues as peer pressure.
29. The good range of after school activities has been maintained since the last inspection. These include clubs for activities as diverse as computers, choir, athletics, gym, sewing, board games, football and netball, bird watching and wildlife and New Zealand culture. The school participates very successfully in league fixtures with other local schools in sporting events. Pupils also have the opportunity to take part in the twice-yearly concerts organised by the St Albans Primary Music Association, perform in dramatic productions and sing in the local church services.
30. Day visits, such as those in the local area, to museums, a model farm and to the theatre are satisfactory examples of the enrichment of the history, geography and English curriculum. Visiting performers, such as musicians playing African rhythms, also enhance the music curriculum.
31. The school has developed successful links with the local community, which make a good contribution to pupils' learning. There are also strong links with the two main secondary schools to which pupils transfer at the end of Year 6. One of these schools has arranged a computer club and this has made a good contribution to these pupils' learning. There are also good examples of pupils visiting each other's schools and of staff working together to ensure links between the work undertaken at each stage of the pupils' education.
32. The overall provision for pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils have satisfactory opportunities to take responsibility. All pupils in Year 6 have regular tasks that they are expected to carry out, such as putting away chairs after assemblies and lunchtime and ringing the bell to signify the end of lessons and break times. From the Nursery onwards, all pupils act as monitors in their own class developing the understanding that they all play an important part in keeping their room tidy and helping one another. Pupils' sense of responsibility is further developed through the expectations for them to complete homework and to behave sensibly when moving around the school or working alone in the library. Pupils are encouraged to show a sense of initiative in their own work and this is further promoted as staff support their efforts to raise money for their chosen charities. The school council effectively promotes pupils' awareness of the school as a community, and how pupils can help to develop a happy and harmonious society.



33. Provision for social development is very good. Each teacher encourages pupils to work co-operatively both in pairs and small groups. This is particularly effective in mathematics, ICT, physical education and science, resulting in pupils developing good skills of co-operation and collaboration. Pupils of all ages are expected to show care and consideration for others and many frequently go to join lonely pupils sitting at the Friendship Bus Stop on the playground. Older pupils have regular opportunities to read with younger children in the school. Pupils have many chances to play competitive games against local schools in football, netball and at swimming. They learn about their home area and spend time considering qualities of their immediate environment. Recently, older pupils undertook the challenge to improve the aspects of their local environment of a local lane, suggesting ways in which it could be improved for the community. All this gives them very good opportunities to make positive and effective links with the wider community.
34. The provision for pupils' moral development is good. It is effectively developed in class discussions, in assemblies and in personal, social and health education lessons. There are clear expectations for pupils' good behaviour in the classroom and at playtime. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to consider their actions and to develop ways of avoiding conflict. Each year, pupils in Years 5/6 work with visitors on a project called "Hazards Alley" learning how to keep safe, exploring moral issues, and how to make informed choices that will guide them in the future.
35. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. Regular opportunities are provided for pupils to reflect on their ideas and feelings during assemblies, in religious education lessons, and as part of their personal, social and health education. These opportunities support pupils' spiritual awareness, but teachers do not always give pupils sufficient guidance on how to further develop these reflective skills and build a secure sense of self-worth. Pupils' understanding of their part in the community and the sense of belonging are well developed. Pupils are encouraged to respect each other's views and develop an understanding of the beliefs of other religions and cultures.
36. The provision for cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils enjoy regular trips to theatrical events and also listen to a wide range of music in assemblies. Aspects of other cultures are satisfactorily experienced through art, music, geography and religious education. Pupils have opportunities to listen to a range of stories from other cultures. They celebrate festivals from other faiths such, as Divali and the Chinese New Year and satisfactorily explore ideas of costume, ritual and importance of artefacts at these times. A visiting group of musicians playing African drums not only contributed to pupils' musical understanding but enabled them to experience rhythms and sounds from a different culture. Pupils in the Year 1/2 class have enjoyed creating their own Maori patterns as part of their studies on New Zealand. Geography satisfactorily supports pupils' social and cultural development through opportunities to learn about how people live in other countries, but only limited time is given to the study of the cultural similarities and differences of those people who live in England. A growing number of pupils are joining the school with a range of different ethnic backgrounds. However, as yet, few opportunities have been created to learn from these pupils and their families to help the rest of the pupils to gain an improved appreciation and knowledge of the multi-cultural society in which they live. Whilst this is an aspect that has improved since the previous inspection, it is still under-developed.

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

37. There are good procedures for checking pupils' attainment and progress. These are particularly good in English and mathematics. As well as national tests in Years 2 and 6, pupils take the optional tests towards the end of Years 3, 4, and 5. The results of these tests are carefully recorded. The information they provide is used effectively by the school to track the progress of pupils through each year, to set individual targets for pupils in English and mathematics, and to assess the effectiveness of the school's learning provision. Where weaknesses are highlighted, such as the limited opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematical knowledge in problem solving, the curriculum is changed to address the weakness. In this way the curriculum is being successfully 'fine tuned' to meet the needs of each year group and this is helping to ensure that pupils stay 'on track' to meet their own and the school's targets.

38. Satisfactory assessment procedures are used in the Nursery and in Reception to identify children's attainment and progress. Targets are set for the children's progress, and regular observations across all areas of learning are used to monitor their achievement. Information from baseline assessments is used successfully to identify children with potential special educational needs. Good levels of support are provided in the Nursery and in the Reception class to develop these children's knowledge and skills. Children in the early stages of learning English as an additional language are satisfactorily assessed and effective links are made with their parents to try and assess the children's knowledge of their home language.
39. There are satisfactory systems in place for checking pupils' attainment in all other subjects. Teachers regularly evaluate what has been planned and note which pupils have achieved what was expected and those that need more support. They use this information to guide pupils' next steps of learning. The school now recognises that it would be beneficial for teachers to pass on this information to the next class teacher. This would enable gaps in the pupils' knowledge and understanding to be addressed and would help to ensure that learning consistently builds on what pupils already know and can do.
40. The needs of pupils with English as an additional language in other years are evaluated satisfactorily and suitable provision is made for them to be supported. However, their specific needs in relation to the development of vocabulary and language are not always clearly identified. Consequently, some pupils in Year 1, whose English is at an early stage, occasionally work with pupils who have learning difficulties, and when this happens, they do not always make as much progress as they should.
41. The identification and assessment of pupils' special educational needs is good and these pupils are given good support in lessons to ensure they achieve appropriately and make good progress towards their own targets. The overall care given to pupils is good and has improved since the last inspection. The ethos of the school provides a caring framework in which staff and pupils can relate to each other and it is an important influence on children's attitudes and behaviour. Teachers and teaching assistants show a genuine concern for children and support them well.
42. The school's child protection procedures are satisfactory and accurate records are kept. However, the policy needs updating to cover the latest legislation. The headteacher is the named person responsible for child protection matters and is awaiting training. Staff are aware of the need to be vigilant and to ensure that any suspicions of child abuse are reported immediately to the headteacher.
43. Although the procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils are satisfactory they would benefit from more formal recording of pupils' personal development, particularly with a high turnover of staff. Although the school is well served by caring staff who know their pupils well there is at present little formal recording of their personal development beyond the annual pupil reports.
44. The school's arrangements for health and safety matters are good and clear, accurate records are kept. The procedures for carrying out risk assessment are particularly good. A governor is responsible for ensuring that the school maintains a high standard of health and safety. The governing body is also mindful of its responsibility for the security of staff and pupils in the school and has taken appropriate steps to ensure this. The school does not have an Internet safety policy. However, parents have been consulted regarding pupils' use of the Internet and the local educational authority has an effective system for ensuring that inappropriate material cannot be accessed.
45. There are good procedures for promoting good behaviour and for eliminating any oppressive behaviour. Whilst there are systems of rewards for good behaviour and sanctions for poor behaviour, it is the school's positive ethos that is most influential in the promotion of the pupils' good behaviour. The school records incidents of bullying and racial intolerance but these are rare and when they do occur, they are dealt with quickly and satisfactorily.

46. The monitoring and promotion of attendance overall is satisfactory but a greater effort is required to tackle the problem of children taking holidays in school time. Despite the best efforts of the school to improve attendance, some parents continue to take children out of school for family holidays and this is the main cause of the attendance rate being below the national average. Most parents are aware that regular attendance is crucial to learning and that when children are away from school, it puts added pressure on both the teacher and the child when the child returns.

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

47. Good improvements to the school/parent partnership have been made since the last inspection and the very good partnership established makes a significant contribution to pupils' learning. Discussions with parents during the inspection, as well as replies to the pre-inspection questionnaire and responses at the parents' meeting, show that parents have a high regard for the school. They are pleased that their children are happy in school and are making good progress. Because parents are welcomed in school, they are comfortable about approaching the school should they have concerns about their children. The school encourages parents who wish to help in the school and several regularly assist in the classroom and by listening to pupils read. Parents give teachers good support in the running of some after-school activities including netball and choir. They also accompany pupils on educational visits. Parents give good support to the school's activities with a significant number attending the governors' annual general meeting.
48. The quality of information to parents is good and has improved since the last inspection. Pupils' annual reports are informative, set targets for improvements and meet statutory requirements. Consultation meetings where parents discuss their children's progress with the class teacher are held in October and March. The school keeps good records of these meetings. There is a school open evening in July when parents can see school displays, visit their child's current class, and also see the class their child will be moving to in September. The governors' annual report to parents is comprehensive and fully meets statutory requirements. The school prospectus is well presented and particularly informative for new parents. Whilst attendance rates are not shown in the prospectus, the statistics are clearly stated in the Governors' report to parents which all parents receive. The school issues frequent and informative newsletters to parents on a wide range of aspects of school life. The school has revised its home/school agreement, which effectively emphasises the responsibilities of school, pupils and parents. Copies of the agreement are sent to all parents of new pupils for their signatures and are returned to the school. Parents also receive curriculum information, which outlines the work that pupils will be doing in the different subjects. The letters enable parents to be further involved in their children's work.
49. Parents make a good contribution to their children's education. The majority ensures that their children attend regularly and on time. They are interested in their children's education and encourage the prompt completion of homework. Whilst parents whose children are on the school's special educational needs register are kept fully informed about their child's progress, they do not all receive a copy of the Individual Education Plan. Parents also make a valuable contribution to the life and work of the school by being members of the active parents' association that raise funds for the school and through serving on the governing body.

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

50. At the time of the inspection, the headteacher had been in post for three weeks but, during that time, she has shown good leadership and management qualities that will enable the school to build further on its previous successes. The previous headteacher had made many significant improvements to the school since the last inspection and had successfully addressed the great majority of the key issues. The only exception to this was the development of the role of the subject co-ordinators. Due to high staff turnover and the long-term absence of one of the more experienced teachers, this issue has not been fully addressed. However, the new headteacher is taking on some curriculum responsibilities herself and is reallocating other co-ordinator roles to both the newly qualified teacher and the overseas teacher to begin to take effect from the

beginning of next term. This will enable the deputy headteacher to focus his expertise on a smaller range of subjects than at present. To familiarise herself with the school's provision, the headteacher is working alongside teachers to gain a clearer understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. She has rightly identified the importance of providing stable teaching for pupils in the Reception/Year 1 class. The plan to enable both part-time teachers to work together for a significant part of the school week is a good initiative, which will help to redress the impact of the high teacher turnover that these pupils have experienced during the present school year.

51. The governing body fulfils its functions well and their effectiveness has improved since the last inspection. They have made effective use of training courses alongside staff and have a clear view of the work of the school. Collectively they have a good combination of skills and experience and the school makes very good use of these; for example, one governor has designed a most impressive and informative website for the school. However, even greater use could be made of their skills in helping the school to evaluate the quality of its developments by, for example, talking formally to groups of pupils. Governors regularly visit the school and most have made formal visits to the classroom, after which a written report is produced and shared at the next full meeting of the governing body. Because governors are well informed about the school's performance, their role as critical friend to the school is well developed and enables them to make a valuable contribution to the school development planning process.
52. Issues relating to special educational needs (SEN) are well managed by the deputy headteacher who effectively oversees this important area. The school's SEN register is regularly updated and good use is made of the strengths of the co-ordinator in his monitoring of these pupils in the classroom. There are good procedures for drawing up pupils' Individual Education Plans and this process is overseen by the co-ordinator. Funding is well directed to provide good quality support. Records of individual pupils are well maintained and support from outside agencies is well managed. The governor for special educational needs has observed lessons and focused on the way teachers plan work to challenge the different abilities of pupils. As a result of visits to school and regular interviews with the co-ordinator, her reports to the governing body are detailed and informative and enable it to discharge its duties effectively.
53. The school's aims are most appropriate and well incorporated into the school's day-to-day routines. They highlight the importance of pupils fulfilling their potential, behaving well, showing tolerance towards each other and the building of an effective partnership between school and home to enhance the pupils' learning. School developments consistently reflect these aims and help to create a supportive atmosphere in the school, where pupils feel valued and challenged.
54. The school development plan is of good quality and carefully drawn up to ensure that both school and national issues are addressed and met. Careful financial planning ensures that the requisite budget is allocated to planned developments. The identification of priorities results from monitoring and evaluation by the school of parent questionnaires, information from the school council and feedback from various governing body committees. The school improvement process has been carefully developed and successfully ensures that the priorities identified are the most appropriate for the school. To make the plan even more effective, both timescales and success criteria need to be more consistently identified.
55. There are sufficient teachers and support staff to teach all aspects of the National Curriculum. Teachers have the necessary skills and knowledge to teach effectively and to ensure that pupils make good progress. The newly qualified teacher is following a well-managed induction programme. Her mentor and headteacher are giving her good support. Both regularly monitor classroom performance and provide positive and helpful feedback. The school has an effective performance management system, which links directly to the training programmes of individual staff. They attend regular in-service training, which is closely related to the priorities in the development plan. Support staff are appropriately deployed and give good support to small groups and individuals. Most are experienced and have been appropriately trained. The headteacher's plan to bring non-teaching staff into the appraisal system is a good initiative and should ensure that future training will be even better directed towards their needs.



56. The school's finances have been carefully managed since the last inspection and the school's above average income has been effectively targeted in its quest to improve standards. The present school finances are in good order and show a slightly above average carry forward to the next financial year. In the past some of this money has been used to provide extra classroom support. Some of the present under-spend has rightly been 'ear marked' for extra staffing provision in the Reception/Year 1 class. There are secure financial systems and effective control, and the governors are developing a much clearer picture of the impact spending is having on the standards that pupils achieve. Very good support is provided by the financial secretary, who is responsible for the day to day management of the budget and who also keeps clear records of curriculum spending, as well as records of other funds, such as those of school visits. The school administration is very efficient with well-established routines. The recommendations of the last audit report have been successfully addressed.
57. There is good accommodation for teaching the National Curriculum but the school's administrative area is cramped and its design unwelcoming. The accommodation is adequately maintained and the caretaker works hard to ensure that it is kept clean. The new library provides a stimulating and attractive reading area and its use as a learning resource is developing well. The school is fortunate to have spacious outside play areas with access to a large, open playing field for sporting activities. Resources to support learning in music are good. In all other subjects, there are adequate resources apart from design and technology where resources are unsatisfactory. Resources have improved since the last inspection in information and communication technology and these are used effectively by the pupils to support their learning.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

58. In order to improve the standard of education further the headteacher, governors and staff should:
- (1) Improve the learning experiences for the pupils in the Reception/ Year 1 class by ensuring that:
    - The curriculum for the youngest children takes due note of the 'Stepping Stones' of the Foundation Stage curriculum;
    - More opportunities are created for Reception children to learn through play;
    - Greater use is made of the Nursery facilities and resources for the children in the afternoon;
    - The learning experiences of the Year 1 pupils are carefully related to the curriculum being followed by the Year 1 pupils in the other class.
 (Paragraphs 15, 16, 21, 23, 60, 63, 64, 68, 95)
  - (2) Improve the pupils' attendance by:
    - Ensuring parents understand the educational disadvantages of taking their children away during term time;
    - Working even closer with the families where attendance is an issue.
 (Paragraphs 13, 46)

In addition to the above, the school should consider the inclusion of the following minor weaknesses in its future development planning:

Plan more opportunities for pupils to learn about their multi-cultural society.  
(Paragraph 36)

Develop a whole school policy for consistency in the marking of pupils' work and ensure the marking clearly identifies what pupils need to do to improve their work..  
(Paragraphs 17, 36, 84, 85)

Ensure all priorities in the school's development plan have clear success criteria and timescales. (Paragraph 54)

Make greater use of governors' expertise in helping to evaluate priorities in the school's development plan. (Paragraph 51)

Improve the resources for design and technology. (Paragraph 105)

Ensure relevant records are sent up to a child's new classteacher.  
(Paragraph 39)



## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed

29

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

40

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	4	18	7	0	0	0
Percentage	0	14	62	24	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 three 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)	8	118
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	17

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	37

#### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	4

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.8
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.4
National comparative data	0.5

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

Where a group of children number less than ten the results are not shown in the tables below

### 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	13	6	19

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	14	17	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	74 (81)	89 (81)	95 (75)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	17	13	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (75)	68 (75)	84 (81)
	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	12	5	17

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	14	17	17
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	82 (69)	100 (56)	100 (81)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	N/A	N/A	N/A
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	N/A (63)	N/A (63)	N/A (63)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

## Ethnic background of pupils

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

## Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
104	0	0
2	0	0
3	0	0
2	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0
2	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)	4.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.5
Average class size	29

### Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	80

### Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

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

## Financial information

These figures need to be checked

Financial year	2001/02
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	£
Total income	351168
Total expenditure	346863
Expenditure per pupil	2787
Balance brought forward from previous year	15419
Balance carried forward to next year	19724

Number of pupils per FTE adult	8
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4

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	126
Number of questionnaires returned	56

### Percentage of responses in each category 44%

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	75	25	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	56	38	4	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	71	24	2	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	45	40	5	0	9
The teaching is good.	69	27	0	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	45	45	10	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	84	16	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	79	21	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	62	34	4	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	89	11	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	64	32	2	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	46	32	9	4	9



## **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**

59. Children's attainment on entry to the Nursery fluctuates from year to year but is average overall. Each group of children is usually smaller than is found nationally and the proportions of children with below average attainment can fluctuate noticeably. Children transfer to the Reception class in the term after their fourth birthday. Not all the children joining the class have been to a Nursery or pre-school playgroup. This has an impact on the overall attainment of the group. On entry to compulsory education in the Reception class, standards of attainment are also very variable, but usually they are mostly below average. The current Reception class has a very high proportion of children with special educational needs, making their overall attainment on entry to the class well below that found nationally. The class also has a small number of children in the early stages of learning English as an additional language. By the end of Reception, only a small proportion of children this year are likely to be attaining the expected standards in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. Most will be attaining the expected standards in knowledge and understanding of the world and in creative and physical development. Children make good progress overall in the personal and social development and most will attain the expected standard.

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

60. Teaching staff in the Nursery and in Reception put a strong emphasis on developing children's social skills. Teaching is good in this aspect and most children attain the expected standards by the time they enter Year 1. Teachers give them good opportunities to work individually and in groups. Consequently most children work and play alongside each other happily and share toys and equipment without fuss. There are a few children in the Reception class who find this difficult and the teachers and learning support staff give them much encouragement and support, recognising their specific learning needs. Children in the Nursery respond well to both adults in the class and many confidently approached the inspectors to talk about what they were doing. All organise themselves satisfactorily, making their own choices and selecting the resources they need to complete an activity. Many will ask for help when it is required. The children continue to make good progress in their personal and social development in the Reception class but there are fewer opportunities for them to participate in self-directed play because of the demands of providing an appropriate curriculum for the pupils in Year 1 who are also in the class. Many of the children in both age groups have special educational needs and the teachers plan play activities that are a very appropriate way to support their learning. However, even the higher-attaining children in Reception would benefit from more opportunities to plan their own tasks so that they could develop the ability to organise their time when given a range of targets and tasks to complete during the week.

#### **Communication, language and literacy.**

61. Teaching in this aspect is satisfactory overall. Good opportunities are made in both the Nursery and in Reception for children to develop their speaking skills. This is often the strongest aspect of children's attainment when they enter the Nursery and many children attain the expected standard by the time they transfer into Year 1. Children's listening skills are also well promoted through listening to stories and participating in songs and rhymes, which effectively supports their recall and ability to listen carefully. Satisfactory opportunities are made for children to talk in front of the class and most children listen to each other with good levels of attention and interest.
62. Children in the early stages of learning English as an additional language are well supported and teaching staff regularly work alongside them to ensure they understand what is being asked of them. Appropriate time is given to developing their vocabulary and activities provided satisfactorily support their learning. Good focus is given to enabling them to participate in all lessons and to find success.

63. Satisfactory opportunities are made for children to develop their early reading and writing skills. Play writing is encouraged in the Nursery and many children recognise their name and make a recognisable attempt at writing it by the time they enter Reception. Children in both the Nursery and Reception class show interest in books and hold them appropriately. The youngest are beginning to comment on the pictures and the higher-attaining children in the Nursery will talk about the characters. By Reception class, many retell the story using the pictures and make connections between the story and their own experiences. One girl said she chose her book, "because I like red. Father Christmas wears red." Higher-attaining children in Reception are well launched into the early stages of reading. They are already attaining the expected standards for their age and are working towards the National Curriculum levels expected by the end of Year 1. Good focus is given to supporting children's learning of letter sounds and developing their co-ordination when writing letters. Higher-attaining children recognise an increasing number of words and use their knowledge of letter sounds well to help them read new words. Satisfactory opportunities are provided in Reception for children to write their ideas, but insufficient strategies are being used at present to develop children's confidence in writing. Only a small minority of children in the current Reception class will attain the expected standards in reading or writing by the end of the year.

### **Mathematical development**

64. The teaching in this aspect is often good and most children make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes in developing their understanding of numbers and mathematical language. This is often the weakest area of children's attainment when they enter the Nursery, and by the time they transfer into Year 1 many have made good progress, even though in the current Reception only a minority will attain the expected standard. In the Nursery, children make good progress in counting and in the recognition of numbers and simple shapes. Some children are able to count on one more, which is an above average skill for children of this age. Good opportunities are used to further develop children's knowledge and skills in a variety of ways. For example, during the inspection, the teacher successfully used a small computerised toy to encourage children to count how many spaces they wanted it to move to reach a certain place. The counting was then effectively repeated as the children programmed the toy with its correct number of moves. Most days, the children in the Foundation Stage participate in counting games, which increases their ability to recite numbers. In the Reception class, many children count up to 30 and older and higher-attaining children order numbers correctly. Lessons in Reception tend to follow the National Numeracy Strategy and are more formal than in the Nursery. Children complete a lot of worksheets and workbooks. This is not always appropriate for the youngest children. Practical work is, however, effectively promoted, as was seen when children were learning about shapes and symmetry. Children develop satisfactory understanding of mathematical language. Children in the Nursery group are not yet able to order toys according to their size, but this is well understood by most children in the Reception group. They correctly use terms such as larger, smaller, taller and shorter. By the end of the Reception year, most children understand the concept of 'how many altogether' when counting.

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

65. This aspect is satisfactorily taught and children make steady progress through the Foundation Stage. In the Nursery, the teaching staff use a good range of questions to help children observe things happening around them. When playing with bubbles outside in the playground, for example, children saw how the wind tended to blow the bubbles in the same direction. They delighted in their shapes and colours. In the Nursery, the story of the Hungry Caterpillar was used well to extend children's knowledge of the days of the week as well exploring the names of fruit. Children named a good number of fruits and vegetables whilst exploring the beats of their names in music. In the Reception class, this learning is effectively extended as children learn to understand that some foods keep us healthy and too much of other foods can make us ill. Children's computer skills are developed well in both the Nursery and in Reception. Children use the mouse successfully to move pictures on the screen and to select the right answers in simple mathematical programs. The remote controlled cars are a particular favourite. The computer activities provided in the Reception class help the children to develop specific skills as well as giving them the freedom to use their imagination to make their own pictures. Children develop a

satisfactory awareness of the world around them and, in the Reception class, the beginnings of an understanding of how things change over time. The children enjoyed looking

at photos of themselves at different ages: as babies, then as toddlers and as they are now, thinking about how they have developed and changed. Most children will attain the expected standards on entry to Year 1.

### **Physical development**

66. The teaching in this aspect is satisfactory overall and children make sound progress through the Foundation Stage. When the children start Nursery, they run and jump with satisfactory levels of control and move safely when outside at play. They continue to make satisfactory progress in this area of learning and attain the expected levels by the end of the Reception year. There is a suitable range of wheeled toys to help them improve and practise their skills, and regularly planned opportunities to throw, kick and catch a range of balls and beanbags in small groups. This helps them to develop satisfactory hand and eye co-ordination. Children in the Nursery have the use of their own secure play area with large apparatus to climb and explore. Children in the Reception class use the school hall and work with growing confidence and agility on the large gymnastics equipment. At present more use could be made of the Nursery play area by the Reception children in the afternoon.
67. Suitable emphasis is given to developing the children's physical skills and by Reception, most children hold scissors correctly and use them to cut around shapes. Because adults expect the children to do things for themselves, they develop satisfactory skills of cutting and drawing. Most colour their drawings carefully showing good control when using pencils and paint. The children regularly take part in making, drawing and painting activities and these help to develop their skills to a satisfactory level. The higher-attaining children in Reception use the mouse control effectively to create symmetrical patterns on the computer and to write numbers and letters of regular size and shape. Most children attain the expected standards on entry to Year 1.

### **Creative development**

68. Children start school with average standards in their creative development. Teaching is satisfactory overall and children make steady progress so by the end of the Reception year most are attaining the expected levels. Opportunities to develop children's creative ideas through role-play are satisfactory, but the stimulus provided is sometimes rather limited. The hat shop in the Nursery gave opportunities for children to explore a satisfactory number of roles but too little was done to extend their experiences and to develop their own creative ideas about the people who wear the hats. There is very little space in the Reception classroom for exciting places to be built, such as a fairy story castle or a space ship. Consequently opportunities to extend children's experiences and stimulate their ideas are restricted. Children are not given enough opportunity to use their imagination in art and role-play activities, or to respond to pieces of music. In the Nursery, children were given satisfactory opportunities to explore what happens when colours are mixed together and use it to paint their own pictures. In both the Nursery and Reception, children use a satisfactory range of different materials to make their own pictures. They also learn to look carefully and try to draw what they see. In music activities, children in the Nursery are given good opportunities to explore the sounds different instruments make. The teacher and Nursery nurse lead them in the joyous activity of making musical sounds and rhythms. Music time in the Reception class is a little more controlled and fewer opportunities are provided for children to make their own musical compositions. They do not have enough opportunity to explore how sounds can be changed and used to create different effects.

### **ENGLISH**

69. The standard of pupils' work in English is above average in Year 2 and Year 6. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs and those capable of higher-attainment, make good progress because work is well matched to their needs and teachers have high expectations

of the standards they are capable of attaining. The small number of pupils who have English as an additional language in Reception and Year 1 are making satisfactory progress.

70. Pupils' results in the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2002 were above average both in comparison with national results and with those of similar schools. Standards are steadily rising and are higher than they were at the time of the last inspection. In 2002, the results of national tests for Year 2 pupils in reading were close to average both compared with results nationally and with those of similar schools. Pupils performed better in writing where results were above average in both cases. Although girls did better than boys in both Year 2 and Year 6 in the national tests in 2002, there is no significant evidence that girls make better progress than boys in their schoolwork.
71. Standards of speaking and listening are above average in Years 2 and 6. Year 2 pupils speak clearly and confidently in one-to-one situations, for example, as they talk about the books they like to read. In class question and answer sessions they listen very carefully to the teacher or to their classmates. Most Year 6 pupils can participate in a lively conversation about the books they read or express their opinions about the school. They have very good listening skills and remain attentive when listening to the teacher for an extended length of time. A few higher-attaining pupils speak very confidently and show a mature and thoughtful response during conversations and in discussions.
72. Pupils achieve well in reading. Standards are above average in Year 6. Most pupils read with expression and understanding of the narrative and characters. Almost all pupils enjoy books and have favourite authors. Higher-attaining pupils choose challenging books, for example 'The Lord of the Rings' by J R R Tolkien. Many pupils read fluently, accurately and confidently, successfully correcting their errors. They read between the lines to draw meaning from a text. When comparing two extracts from Roald Dahl, they deduced that authors sometimes draw on their own experiences as inspiration for their work. Pupils' knowledge of library classification systems is satisfactory. Pupils successfully make use of non-fiction books and the Internet to research work in other subjects such as history and geography. Pupils with special educational needs make good attempts to read unfamiliar words, successfully using their knowledge of letter sounds and breaking words down into small parts.
73. Reading standards in Year 2 are well above average. Pupils achieve very well in this aspect of English. All but a very small number of pupils in Year 2 read with the fluency and accuracy expected for their age. In addition, a higher than average percentage of pupils are reading at a level above that normally found at the age of seven. Pupils explain the main events in the stories they read and talk about the characters. They use letter sounds and pictures to read unfamiliar words. They recognise when they have made errors and correct themselves. Most make use of punctuation as they read familiar texts with good expression. Even the least able pupils are familiar with contents and index pages in non-fiction books and use them to find information.
74. Writing skills are above average in Year 2 and in Year 6. In Year 6, most pupils have developed a neat and fluent style of handwriting using a joined script. Their writing, which is of a good length, is developed in a variety of forms for different purposes and readers. Most pupils extend their ideas logically, structuring them into paragraphs. A good number of higher attaining pupils use connectives such as "firstly," "furthermore" and "on the other hand" to reinforce their arguments when writing a persuasive letter. They use language descriptively, choosing alliteration and phrases, such as similes, for effect. In an imaginary story about landing on a distant planet, one pupil wrote about an alien, "He moved like a snail sliding along the ground." Another described the planet's surface as being, "like a bouncy castle." Most pupils use punctuation accurately, including commas and speech marks. Spelling is generally accurate and is of the standard expected by age eleven.
75. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good and is better than at the time of the last inspection. None of the lessons seen during the inspection was less than satisfactory and most were good. Teachers have high expectations of the standards that all pupils are capable of attaining. They regularly check how well pupils are doing and keep good track of progress. This enables them to match work well to pupils' differing needs. They set challenging tasks for the higher-attaining pupils as well as providing good support for the lower-attaining pupils and those with learning difficulties. This is particularly important in mixed-age classes.

76. Teachers have high expectations of good behaviour and establish good working routines. As a result, pupils are attentive and well behaved. They settle to tasks quickly and sensibly and demonstrate good levels of concentration. They work hard with a good deal of intellectual and creative effort. Marking is consistently good throughout Year 1 to 6. Teachers provide pupils with good feedback on their work. This means that pupils know what they need to do to improve.
77. The school's strategy for teaching literacy is good. The three-part lesson structure, based on the National Literacy Strategy, is used effectively to engage and motivate pupils and good use is made of teaching assistants to support pupils in small groups. The strategy is supplemented by extra lessons in handwriting and guided reading as well as additional 'booster lessons' for lower-attaining pupils in Years 1, 3 and 4. All of these initiatives contribute well to pupils' above average standards. There are good opportunities for the development of literacy skills in other subjects in Years 3 to 6, particularly in science and history. Pupils develop reading skills as they undertake research for topics and write at length about their findings. However, in Years 1 and 2, the development of writing skills in other subjects and the use of computers is weak. Good use is made of computers in Years 3 to 6 to consolidate knowledge and understanding of grammar and punctuation as well as for drafting and presenting work.
78. There are some opportunities for discussion of issues during personal health and social education lessons. However, not enough attention is given, especially to pupils in Years 5 and 6, to developing more advanced skills in speaking and listening, which could be achieved through debate or class and school presentations. Opportunities for expressing ideas through drama or for writing short play scripts are too few.
79. The leadership and management of English are good. The co-ordinator is aware of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and is taking appropriate action to rectify them. He checks teachers' planning regularly and has been able to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning through observation of lessons. There are good procedures in place for the school to keep track of pupils' progress and attainment. Data from national and other tests is used well to identify where extra support may be needed and to ensure that higher-attaining pupils are well challenged to meet individual and school targets. The new library provides a stimulating and attractive reading environment. However, the younger pupils in Year 1 and 2 are not yet using the facility as effectively as they might for borrowing books and for independent research.

## **MATHEMATICS**

80. Standards in mathematics have improved since the last inspection. In the 2002 National Curriculum tests, Year 6 pupils achieved standards that were well above average when compared to all schools and with schools in a similar context. All pupils achieved the expected standards for 11-year-olds and an above average proportion achieved the higher levels. The results also showed that pupils had made very good progress since they had taken their National Curriculum tests in Year 2. Although over the last three years there has been some variation in standards, the overall trend has been above the national average. In the 2002 National Curriculum tests, pupils in Year 2 achieved well below average standards, with the proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels also well below average. Over the last three years, there has been no marked difference between the attainment of boys and girls at the end of Year 2 but boys have consistently outperformed girls at the end of Year 6.
81. Evidence from the inspection indicates that pupils in both Year 2 and Year 6 are on course to achieve standards that are above the national average. All pupils are being given equal access to all areas of the curriculum and are achieving to their full potential. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs are well supported in all classroom activities, and this is enabling them to make good progress in their studies. Pupils with English as an additional language are all in the Reception/Year 1 class and are making satisfactory progress with the good support they receive. Teachers consistently challenge the higher-achieving pupils and pupils in both Year 2 and Year 6 are in line to achieve high standards. As in previous years, there is no difference in attainment between boys and girls at the end of Year 2, but, at the end of Year 6, the greater proportion of higher-achieving pupils is boys.

82. Across the school, standards are improving because of the effective way in which the National Numeracy Strategy has been introduced. It has led to significant improvements in the way that teachers plan, the monitoring of pupils' progress and the quality of teaching and learning. Teachers are making better use of assessment data in setting targets for individual pupils and there are also good procedures in place to track pupils' progress through each school year. National Curriculum test results and end of year assessments are carefully analysed to identify strengths and weaknesses. This information is used effectively by teachers to build on the strengths and address the weaknesses in their future planning. In this way the curriculum is 'tuned' to be entirely appropriate for each individual year group of pupils. For example, in the evaluation of last year's Year 2 National Curriculum test results, weaknesses in pupils' mental operations was highlighted as an area for development. The result has been a big improvement in this area, with pupils now having above average skills in this aspect.
83. Year 1 pupils in the Reception/Year 1 class have made satisfactory progress during the year, although their attainment is below average in all areas of the subject. The principal reason for this is the very high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in this group and the disrupted year that these pupils have experienced through the long-term absence of their teacher. However, indications are that the teachers who will be sharing the teaching of the class until the end of term are developing a good range of teaching strategies to accelerate these pupils' learning. The Year 1 pupils in the Year 1/2 class have benefited from working alongside the older pupils. Their work is carefully planned for their age group and both the teacher and the teaching assistant give them good support. These pupils have worked particularly hard this year, have produced a large amount of work and have consolidated their mathematics skills well in all areas of learning. Pupils have strengths in using and applying their mathematical knowledge because the teacher ensures that this is an integral part of their learning.
84. By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment is above average. They have particularly strong skills in their number work, which they record regularly in their own exercise books. They understand how to use Venn diagrams, such as in their work on recording the number of pupils with blond hair and brown eyes in the class. They measure accurately, using standard and non-standard measures, recognise and name the more common two dimensional and three dimensional shapes, with higher-achieving pupils having a good understanding of some of their properties. There are some comparative weaknesses in the way that pupils convert digital time to analogue time and in their understanding of different scales. Pupils benefit from regular and careful marking, which generally indicates to pupils what they need to do to improve their work. Pupils would derive even more benefit from this marking, if there were a clear policy for correcting their mistakes.
85. Pupils in the Year 3/4 class have made good overall progress this year, with Year 3 pupils showing distinct improvements since taking their National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2. The reason for pupils' good and often very good progress is the high expectation that the teacher has of work output and presentation. The teacher plans very carefully, usually setting work for five different groups, to ensure appropriate challenge. Pupils are making good progress in all areas of the subject and are developing a good range of strategies to solve mathematical problems. Because there is a strong emphasis on number work, pupils are developing a good understanding of place value. The teacher's marking is of a very high standard, relating closely to the learning objectives of the lesson and also to pupils' individual targets. In this way, pupils gain a clear understanding of the progress they are making and what they need to do to improve further.
86. Pupils in the Year 5/6 class are making good progress because the work that is planned for them is challenging for all abilities. By the end of Year 6, higher-achieving pupils are making particularly good progress and there has been a significant improvement in the proportion of higher-achieving pupils since they took their National Curriculum tests in Year 2. The teacher plans regularly for pupils to use and apply their mathematical knowledge to solve problems. This was clearly evident in the work that pupils did on perimeters and areas of rectangles. Pupils are confident in the way that they use addition, subtraction and multiplication, but there are some weaknesses in division. Pupils make good use of their ICT skills to develop their understanding of data handling. Pupils have a good understanding of the relationship between fractions, percentages and decimals. Higher-achieving pupils work comfortably to three places

of decimals. Pupils have obviously enjoyed their work on co-ordinates, with the great majority working confidently in the four quadrants. Whilst the teacher's marking is supportive, it does not consistently outline to pupils where they need to improve their work.

87. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. All teachers have good subject knowledge and this enables them to explain new concepts in simple language that is fully understood by the pupils. In addition, they give clear and simple explanations to pupils' questions and encourage them to ask if they do not understand. All lessons are carefully planned and the clear learning objectives are shared with the pupils so that they have a good understanding of what they are going to learn during each lesson. Tasks are carefully adapted to meet the needs of groups and, where necessary, individuals. Care is taken to plan tasks that enable all pupils to build upon their previous experiences and knowledge. Throughout the school, the educational needs of all pupils are being successfully met. Teachers and their teaching assistants are good teams and are fully aware of their individual roles during the lesson. This results in all pupils being given appropriate support and being able to make good progress in their studies. Scrutiny of pupils' previous work shows that there is a good emphasis on a practical approach to the subject and pupils are given some opportunities to plan their own investigations. The teaching of basic numeracy skills is good and pupils are given frequent opportunities to use their skills to support their learning in other subjects, for example, measuring ingredients to make biscuits in food technology and interpreting graphs and data in science.
88. During lessons, pupils' attitudes and their relationships are good. Teachers regularly make use of pupils' good collaborative skills in small group and paired work, clearly seen in a lesson when the older pupils estimated the products of two numbers. Pupils are keen to try hard and complete their set tasks. Because of this, all pupils produce a large amount of carefully presented work. The school has invested in a good range of relevant ICT programs. Pupils regularly use these to consolidate and develop their skills in areas that relate to their class work. Because of the good relationships in the school, pupils are keen to share their ideas and willingly explain the methods they use to calculate answers to problems.
89. The new co-ordinator is building on the good work of the last headteacher and has a clear vision for its future development. She monitors the teachers' planning and regularly works alongside them to give her an accurate understanding of the quality of teaching and learning through the school. The planned joint observations with the numeracy governor is a good initiative and will further develop the understanding of how the subject is developing and what needs to be done to improve it further.

## **SCIENCE**

90. Standards in science in Years 2 and 6 have fluctuated over the last four years due to the changing proportion of pupils with special educational needs in each group of pupils. At the previous inspection standards were broadly average in Year 2 and in Year 6. In the 2002 National Curriculum tests and assessments standards in Year 2 were below average, whereas in Year 6 pupils attained standards that were well above average. This represented very good achievement by the pupils in Year 6. This year, standards are yet again changing. In Year 2 most pupils are attaining the expected standards with an average proportion attaining the higher standard of Level 3. In Year 6, most pupils are attaining the expected standards, but fewer pupils this year are attaining the higher standard of Level 5.
91. By Year 2 pupils have a good understanding of the fact that we need food and water to survive. They know that some foods are good for us while others are not. Many know that fruit is good for them and have a satisfactory awareness that foods that contain fat are not as good. They use this knowledge satisfactorily and are beginning to understand how foods can be categorised into different groups. Through their tests and investigations, pupils are recognising the properties of different materials and, when learning about physical processes, complete a simple circuit so a bulb will light up.



92. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 continue to make good progress and build successfully on the work completed in the younger classes, so that by Year 6 pupils have a good understanding of materials. For example, they know how materials can be separated using filtering, evaporation and by the use of magnets, and understand that some materials are used as conductors and insulators in the equipment they use at home. Pupils' understanding of the conditions for life is developed through simple experiments which isolate and control various elements to make their tests fair.
93. The quality of teaching is usually good and this stimulates pupils' interest and desire to find out more. Throughout the school, there is strong focus on developing pupils' scientific knowledge and skills through investigation. This is having a positive impact on their learning and most pupils are making good progress in this area. In Year 2, pupils observe their tests carefully and make simple predictions about what will happen. They are developing a satisfactory understanding of the need for their test to be fair. Pupils' understanding of the stages required in an investigation is effectively developed through Years 3 to 6 so that by Year 6, pupils are able to explain why factors need to be controlled and how this can be done. They are developing satisfactory skills for planning and carrying out their own investigations to answer questions. In the most recent tests, girls in Year 6 did not achieve as well as the boys. This looks to be a similar situation this year and the school has not as yet identified the reason for the imbalance. It was not possible to see a lesson in the Year 5-6 class as none took place during the inspection. In discussion, some of the girls feel that they are not given as many opportunities to answer questions in whole class. However, in other lessons observed, there were equal opportunities for pupils of both genders to take a full part in the discussions and other aspects of learning.
94. In the most effective lessons teachers use probing questions that help pupils consider their own ideas and develop their thinking. Relationships in every class are good and teachers are generally sensitive to the capabilities and learning needs of the pupils. In one lesson observed, the teacher showed great patience as a pupil struggle to explain his answer. She made time for all pupils to participate, whatever their ability, and so all felt confident in responding to her questions. The other pupils consequently followed her example and listened to other's ideas with respect. The few pupils with English as an additional language are satisfactorily supported. They are all in one class at the present time and benefit from the additional support provided in the class. In whole class sessions, teachers ensure that pupils have understood their questions and give appropriate opportunities for them to find success.
95. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to use and further develop their literacy skills through carrying out research. A variety of suitable methods is used for recording investigations ensuring that pupils' good understanding has been consolidated in their writing. Similarly, pupils' numeracy skills are well promoted as pupils make their own measurements of distance, time and angles. Data is recorded using diagrams, tables, graphs and computer generated text. The curriculum is suitably broad and, over the two-year plan, it is satisfactorily balanced, but there are some weaknesses. Pupils in Year 1 who are taught with Reception children have not consistently received the same curriculum as those pupils in Year 1 who are taught with Year 2 pupils. The teachers' lower expectations for the youngest pupils' quantity of written recording is appropriate, but aspects of work covered are also different. The school is aware of the discrepancy but at present there are insufficient plans to ensure that this imbalance is corrected and all pupils have the same opportunity for learning.
96. The co-ordinator provides good leadership of the subject and supports teachers in their investigative approach to teaching science. She has a good awareness of standards as she has taught several classes through the school and has observed some of the teaching. Her support of pupils in Years 5 and 6 has promoted their ability to plan their own tests. There are effective assessment procedures and data from tests are used to monitor pupils' progress and to improve the quality of teaching. Although standards fluctuate, there have been many improvements since the previous inspection.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

97. Standards of pupils' work in art and design are broadly as expected nationally in Years 2 and 6. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve some good results in their Maori patterns and in papier-mâché facemasks. They develop satisfactory skills in observation and make careful predictions before completing sections of illustrations from well-known stories. They competently use a variety of materials with the skill expected for their age, such as pencil and crayon for drawing, paint for portraits and watercolours for more detailed work. They successfully use materials such as wool and card for weaving and practise skills in colour mixing to create a rainbow effect. By Year 6, pupils have the expected awareness for their age of the visual impact of their work. This is seen, for example, in their work using fabric collage to create an image from the Beowulf legend. Pupils have developed satisfactory skills in using materials such as oil pastels, charcoal and paint. They study the work of artists such as Rene Magritte and use some of their techniques to produce images in a similar style. Pupils throughout the school, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language, make the same satisfactory progress in art and design as their peers. This is seen in the development of illustrations and diagrams in the pupils' books and in the displayed work in classrooms, corridors and the hall.
98. Only one lesson, in the mixed Reception and Year 1 class, was observed during the inspection. Teaching was good. This was because teachers demonstrated new techniques effectively and gave clear instructions and explanations. Pupils received a good level of individual attention from the staff in small groups and the work was well matched to the ability of different groups of pupils so providing challenge for all. Pupils with special educational needs were well supported and this enabled them to do the same work as other pupils in the class, with good results. The pupils worked with enthusiasm and responded with good levels of concentration, sharing materials and resources sensibly.
99. The wider evidence from an examination of pupils' past and present work indicates that the overall quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory. Teachers provide a range of suitably challenging activities in art and design and encourage pupils to produce their own illustrations in work across the curriculum. Teachers provide pupils with appropriate experiences in using a range of materials. In Year 3, for example, pupils are helped to develop skills in using charcoal to produce tone and shading in work on portraits. Sketchbooks are used satisfactorily to practise drawing eyes and noses. Teachers in Years 3 to 6 plan well to help pupils develop skills in using a wide range of materials to produce different effects. In Year 3 and 4 there is effective use of gold and silver foil to enhance the designs in work about Ancient Egypt.
100. There is no consistent approach as to how or when sketchbooks are used and there are few opportunities for three dimensional work such as with clay. These are areas requiring improvement. There is satisfactory use of computers such as to access the Internet, and for younger pupils to use paint or draw programs. Art and design work makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' cultural development, for instance through linking with history work on the Ancient Egyptians or the Tudors. Although some work has a focus on other cultures, such as the Maori drawings in Year 2, the role of art and design in developing pupils' awareness of other cultures is less well established.
101. The co-ordinator for art and design has been in post for a number of years but has recently become a part-time teacher. She is satisfactorily leading and managing the subject. She gives strong emphasis to displaying pupils' work attractively and with good results. She has undertaken some monitoring to check on the quality of teaching through observation in classrooms. However, she is only in school for one day each week and this limits the opportunities she has for improving provision and raising standards. There are some satisfactory procedures in place for checking standards in art and design and these are used well so teachers can adapt learning to meet pupils' differing needs. There is a comprehensive photographic record of work, which provides good examples of art and design from pupils of different ages.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

102. Standards of attainment have been maintained since the last inspection and pupils' attainment remains in line with national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6. The quality of teaching is

satisfactory and, as a result, the great majority of pupils are making appropriate progress as they move through the school.

103. In Years 1 and 2 pupils have a number of opportunities to develop their design and technology skills. The school has adopted the national scheme of work and this is enabling teachers to focus more directly on the development of pupils' knowledge and understanding in the subject. Pupils select and use materials appropriate for their activities and are beginning to understand the importance of designing as part of the making process. For example, before pupils made moving vehicles as part of their project on transport, they experimented with construction kits to develop their ideas. Focused tasks, carefully planned by the teacher, enabled pupils to investigate the different types of axles and the respective merits of each. As a result, pupils were able to design their vehicles in detail, with higher-achieving pupils clearly identifying the materials they needed. The school has an unsatisfactory range of resources for the subject but this was partially overcome by the Year 1/2 pupils who brought in resources from home to help them complete their tasks. For example, chopsticks were used as axles and circular boxes were turned into wheels. Higher-achieving pupils showed good skills in joining the materials, with one pupil introducing a swivel axle to enable steering. Pupils are beginning to develop good evaluation skills, with several making pertinent comments on how their finished vehicle could be improved if the task were to be repeated.
104. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 show a satisfactory understanding of pneumatics, which they integrated, into their project of 'moving monsters'. They benefited from planning together and their design showed good originality and a clear idea of the importance of the appearance of the finished product. Pupils made some very good links with literacy in this work, using a 'storyboard' technique to describe how their model had been made. Although there was no formal evaluation of the finished product, pupils talked about their models to the rest of the class, explaining the strengths and weaknesses of their construction. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are enthusiastic about the subject because they enjoy the practical nature of the tasks. Before making their own biscuits, pupils tested recipes, deliberately altering the amount of one of the ingredients to see what impact this would have on the final product. The results were carefully evaluated and pupils then used this information to draw up their own recipes. These pupils also understand the principle of levers and used this knowledge appropriately when designing and making their Christmas cards. Higher-achieving pupils were particularly innovative, with one pupil showing good sophistication in his card, with Father Christmas riding in a sleigh.
105. The quality of teaching in the subject is satisfactory but development is restricted by the poor quality of the resources, which had been run down during the long-term absence of the co-ordinator. At present, there are not enough essential tools, such as saws and bench hooks and pupils' designs are restricted by the narrow range of resources available. Teachers work hard to make the subject interesting, such as in the Year 1/2 class where pupils were able to taste a wide variety of fruits and vegetables before creating a salad of their choice. Teachers are developing good links with other subjects and this will be enhanced during the last part of the summer term when the older pupils will use computers to control their moving vehicles.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

106. Standards are generally in line with those expected in Years 2 and 6. They have been satisfactorily maintained since the previous inspection and pupils of all capabilities and ethnicity make steady progress through the school. By Year 2, pupils have a good awareness of the locality around the school. They are developing a clear understanding of land use such as when they study the different types of buildings they pass on their way to school and the range of different homes in the area. In their study of life in New Zealand, and in their discussions about places around the world that children and their families have visited, pupils have gained a good awareness of places a long distance from their own locality. They understand how transport is important in these journeys and how essential it is to people who live on small islands, such as Struay.
107. By Year 4, pupils have developed a good understanding of the different features of their own locality. They recognise those features that are the result of human development but find difficulty in identifying some of the physical features. They understand the terms hills, mountains, rivers and streams but do not yet fully recognise them as features of their own area. Pupils, especially

those in Years 3 to 6, develop effective skills of using primary and secondary sources of information in their research. In the Year 3/4 class, pupils frequently use the Internet to find information. This is well extended in the Year 5/6 class, for example, when pupils researched mountainous environments looking at habitation, transport and climate. ICT is used well to promote pupils' learning and greater understanding. Groups of pupils, for example, created their own multi-media presentation about mountains, which was then shared with the class.

108. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and sometimes it is good. Teachers use maps, photos and first hand experiences to promote pupils' good levels of interest and positive attitudes to work. One teacher comes from New Zealand and has used her wide knowledge of the country and its people to stimulate pupils' knowledge and desire to learn about other places. Relationships in all classes are positive. Teachers and their teaching assistants encourage and support pupils of all capabilities so they achieve success. Whilst the teachers' own subject knowledge is secure, sometimes sufficient time is not given to ensure pupils' own understanding of their new learning. Suitable emphasis is given to using geographical terms and vocabulary. However, with the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and the increasing number of pupils in the school with English as an additional language, insufficient focus is given to consolidate this vocabulary by showing the written word, discussing it and ensuring pupils' understanding.
109. The curriculum is suitably broad and, over the two-year plan, it is satisfactorily balanced, but there are some weaknesses. Pupils in Year 1 who are taught with Reception children do not receive the same curriculum as those pupils in Year 1 who are taught with Year 2 pupils. There are insufficient plans as yet to ensure that this imbalance is corrected and all pupils have the same opportunity for learning. Pupils in the Year 5/6 class who take part in the residential trip have good opportunities for extending their learning of maps and co-ordinates, about other localities in England and in planning routes to them as part of their field trip. Not all pupils attend, however, and so not all pupils have similar opportunities for effective learning. Geography satisfactorily supports pupils' social and cultural development through the opportunities to learn about how people live in other countries, but only limited time is given to a study of the cultural similarities and differences of people who live in England. Opportunities to experience the different types of foods eaten and the costumes worn, as part of festivals and celebrations in other countries and within England, have improved since the previous inspection, but are still limited.
110. The co-ordinator of geography has only just taken up her post and has had very little opportunity as yet to influence the teaching or to assess standards through the school. Her own strong interest in the subject gives her the enthusiasm to develop these aspects of management. Satisfactory procedures for assessing pupils' attainment are used through the school, but only limited focus is given at present to ensuring this information is effectively used to monitor the effectiveness of the curriculum and the development of pupils' skills from one class to the next.

## **HISTORY**

111. It was only possible to observe one lesson in history during the inspection. The wider evidence from talking to pupils and from an examination of pupils' work shows that standards are broadly in line with that expected nationally in Year 2 and Year 6. All groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, the small number of pupils with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress over time.
112. Pupils have the expected knowledge and understanding of significant events and of famous people from the past. For example, pupils in Year 1 are familiar with some of the main facts in the history of Florence Nightingale and are aware of the influences her work had on nursing and hospitals. By sequencing a set of pictures of events in her life, pupils show an increasing sense of chronology. Pupils in Year 2 demonstrate satisfactory knowledge and understanding of The Great Fire of London. They talk about where and how it started and give reasons for why it spread so quickly. As they do so, pupils are animated and demonstrate positive attitudes to the subject. Pupils use books, artefacts and other sources to ask and answer questions about the past.

113. By the end of Year 6, pupils have the expected factual knowledge of different periods in history and of changes that took place during specific periods and the reasons for them. In Years 3 and 4, pupils identify some of the changes that took place in Sandridge between 1924 and 1931. They gain an understanding of Tudor times by researching the question, "Why did Henry VIII marry six times?" In Year 6, all groups of pupils recognise some of the changes that took place in Great Britain between 1948 and 1980. They know, for example, about the introduction of plastic in the 1950s and the television "storm". They describe changes in fashion and politics and the "birth" of the Mini skirt. Pupils have a basic understanding about nationalisation and the National Health Service. Pupils make good use of the Internet to follow their own lines of enquiry and to pose their own historical questions. However, their understanding of the way that information, gathered from a variety of sources, may be presented differently is less secure.
114. In the one lesson observed in the Year 5/6 class, the teaching was good. Effective use was made of sources such as photographs and first hand evidence. Amongst these were passenger lists and personal accounts of migrants. These enabled pupils to understand the experience of some of the Caribbean people who came to Britain as part of the "Windrush" generation in the late 1940s.
115. The wider evidence from an examination of pupils' work indicates that teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop writing skills through longer pieces of writing in Years 3 to 6. Literacy skills are developed well through pieces of imaginative writing. In Year 3 and 4, pupils write a job description for King Henry VIII or write a letter to Jane Seymour, warning her of possible consequences of becoming King Henry's wife. However, not enough opportunities are provided in Years 1 and 2 for pupils to record their knowledge and understanding in a variety of ways. There is some good use of computers, especially for research, in Years 3 to 6 to support pupils' learning in history. There is scope for this to be further developed in Years 1 and 2.
116. The overall leadership and management of history are satisfactory as they were at the time of the last inspection. Since her appointment, the co-ordinator has rightly concentrated on raising standards in the core subjects in her own class. However, she checks that the curriculum is being covered appropriately and that relevant resources are available. She has not had the opportunity to monitor standards of work in history across the school or to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning by observing lessons. She is now in a position to develop this aspect of her role. There are suitable systems in place for teachers to check pupils' attainment and progress in history and these are used satisfactorily to plan their next steps in learning.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY(ICT)**

117. By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations and all pupils of different abilities and ethnic backgrounds are making satisfactory progress. Attainment at the end of Year 6 is also in line with national expectations but pupils are making good progress in many areas of the subject. Although standards have been maintained since the last inspection, there has been a good improvement in the way that teachers use ICT to develop pupils' learning in other subjects.
118. By the end of Year 2, pupils have developed satisfactory word processing skills. They know how to change the size, colour and font of texts, with higher-achieving pupils understanding how to use a spelling check. Pupils have had experience of using the Internet to find information about rabbits. They have also visited the New Zealand website to find out more information about kiwis and the America's Cup. The class teacher has been familiarising herself with the wide range of programs. She has been given good support by the ICT co-ordinator and now has the confidence to develop pupils' skills in data handling and control. In this work she will be team teaching with the co-ordinator.
119. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have made good progress this year because the use of ICT has been very well integrated into many of their lessons. This is particularly so in literacy and numeracy where pupils have made good use of a range of programs to develop their learning whilst consolidating

their ICT skills. Pupils have good word processing skills and use these well, for example in their geography work, when they import relevant information and pictures on countries such as Kenya and Cuba. Pupils are developing above average data handling skills and make good use of an information sorting program to separate vertebrates and invertebrates as part of their science work. As well as making good use of the Internet, pupils are also proficient at extracting information from CD ROMs, such as in their work on Ancient Egypt.

120. By the end of Year 6, pupils are attaining standards in communication that are higher than national expectations. Many of the pupils are confident to use a presentation program, such as Powerpoint, and include both animation effects and hyperlinks in this work. Pupils show very good skills in their graphical modelling work, which was most evident in the design of their book cover for their project on 'Religion in Art and Mountains'. Pupils have a good knowledge of the Internet and regularly use it to support their research work in other subjects. Pupils make a good contribution to the school's website, regularly contributing reports on school events. At present, pupils' attainment in control (making things happen) and using the computer to monitor events are less well developed, but these are being taught later in the term.
121. All pupils enjoy using computers and work well collaboratively when given the opportunity. As they move through the school, pupils make increasing use of computers as part of their everyday learning. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. Although no direct teaching of ICT was seen during the inspection, pupils regularly made use of computers as an aid to their learning. Limited space in the classroom restricts the number of pupils who can be taught at any one time. However, pupils regularly pass on their newly learnt skills to each other and this helps to overcome a major difficulty of small group teaching. A group of pupils from Years 3 to 6 benefit from an after school club that is run by a local secondary school. In this, pupils work together in the secondary school's large ICT suite and have access to the teaching expertise of the staff.
122. The school has developed an effective system for tracking pupils' progress through the school. At the end of each year, records of the teachers' assessments in the areas of learning are sent up to the pupils' new teacher so that planned work is matched to their abilities. A good initiative is the portfolio of pupils' work, which is graded to indicate the standards achieved. This enables teachers to make accurate assessments at the end of each unit of work. Although there has been ongoing teacher training since the last inspection, the turnover of staff has meant that much of the expertise has been lost. However, the school is fortunate to have gained new teachers who are confident to teach most aspects of the subject. The co-ordinator has worked very hard in his short time in the school to develop the subject. Due to his other co-ordinator roles, he has not had an opportunity to monitor the teaching and learning in all the classes and, as a result, the school is not able to identify and share all the good practice that exists. There has been a big determination of the staff to incorporate ICT into much of the pupils' learning and, in this way, it makes a good contribution towards pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

## **MUSIC**

123. The curriculum for music is suitably broad and balanced and pupils' learning is enhanced by lessons with a music specialist who teaches each class except the children in the Foundation Stage. Her very good subject knowledge and effective teaching methods give pupils a sound basis of knowledge and skills. Since the previous inspection, however, the length of her lessons has been reduced, and this has had an impact on reducing pupils' overall standards and rate of learning. Teachers throughout the school provide additional lessons, often based on taped programmes, which ensure a balance to the teaching time. The school recognises, however, that this is not enabling pupils to attain the high standards observed at the previous inspection. Standards in music are overall in line with those expected in Year 2 and Year 6, and pupils of all abilities and backgrounds achieve appropriately throughout the school.
124. In Year 1 and 2, pupils are developing a satisfactory sense of rhythm and keep a steady beat on untuned instruments when accompanying the teacher's playing. They know the names of most of the instruments, treat them with respect and play them correctly. Pupils are gaining a good awareness of the use of notation, and in Year 2 have created their own pictorial notation for their

sea music. Pupils in Year 1 follow the conductor carefully, knowing when to play their instruments and when to be still. This learning is further developed in the older classes so that by Year 6, pupils create their own simple rhythms, recorded as notation, that builds into cyclic patterns similar to that of the African drummers who visited the school.

125. Standards in singing are good throughout the school. Pupils benefit from additional teaching of a visiting instrumental teacher who leads the whole school music assembly each week. He shares his enthusiasm with the pupils well and they respond to his cheerful encouraging comments and the good pace of his teaching. He has high expectations for pupils' participation and attention. Consequently most pupils sing tunefully with a clear tone and diction. They listen carefully to the music and change speed and volume in response to the changes of his playing. The majority obviously enjoy singing in these sessions, although the same standard was not as evident in other school assemblies. Pupils' singing skills are also promoted in general music lessons. Pupils in Year 6 spoke of their opportunities to sing a variety of songs including rounds and two part songs.
126. The quality of teaching by the music specialists is never less than good. Their sessions are well structured and have a good focus on developing pupils' knowledge and skills. Both teachers have high expectations for pupils' participation. In the class lessons, pupils are well managed and an excellent range of untuned instruments in the lessons observed enabled all pupils to have an instrument of their choice. Learning in the lessons is well promoted, but as each session is only for 20 minutes, it is very difficult to finish the activities planned and for pupils to have sufficient opportunity to improve their standards and evaluate their performances. Class teachers have recently had a day's training in the teaching of music, but most do not have the same level of expertise as the specialist teacher. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory.
127. Pupils have the opportunity to learn the recorder and the flute, and these experiences enhance their skills and support their peers' performances in class. The subject gives good support to the pupils' social and cultural education as pupils play in a variety of groups, developing their skills of collaboration and negotiation. They also have opportunities to play instruments from around the world and to listen to a variety of music. Pupils in Year 6 enjoyed listening to the cyclic drumming patterns in 'We will rock you' by the group Queen in their lesson. They are given good opportunities to listen a range of music in assemblies, including opera. Pupils in Year 6, however, have a limited knowledge of the names of well-known composers and the pieces of music for which they are famous.
128. The co-ordinator gives good leadership in developing the subject. She gives good levels of support and guidance to teachers, providing training and ideas. She is only in school for one afternoon a week and this limits her opportunities to observe other teachers at work. Resources in the school are satisfactory but enhanced by the use of instruments shared by some local primary schools. The use of ICT to support the pupils' learning in the subject is under-developed at present.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

129. Pupils' attainment at the end of Years 2 and 6 has improved since the last inspection and is now above average. Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds make good progress in developing their skills because the school has very successfully developed the curriculum, which is well enhanced by a good range of out of school clubs. Teachers have a strong commitment to ensuring that lessons are challenging and that activities develop pupils' skills as well as their stamina. As a result, pupils enjoy the subject, work hard during lessons and achieve high standards. These are clearly reflected in the school's recent successes in area swimming, football, netball and athletics competitions.
130. Pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2. They are developing good co-ordination, use space well and use the apparatus and resources confidently. Very good relationships between the teachers and the pupils encourage pupils to work hard and try their best to improve the quality of their work. Games lessons are carefully planned to ensure that skills learnt are then transferred to a team situation. Pupils' improve their performance, such as in a Year 2 lesson on passing



and catching, because of the high expectations of the teacher and the good coaching that she and the teaching assistant give to individuals and groups. Similarly Year 1 pupils in the Reception/Year 1 class are successfully developing their balancing skills because teachers carefully plan for these to be integrated into their apparatus work.

131. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 make above average progress in swimming because the school places a high emphasis on this aspect of the curriculum. All pupils swim regularly throughout the year at a local pool, where they are taught by experienced coaches. Higher-achieving pupils are encouraged to join local swimming clubs where they achieve very high standards. By the end of Year 6, pupils have achieved good standards in dance. They work particularly well together, are motivated by the music and benefit from the expertise of the teacher who gives good support to individuals and groups. Pupils also benefit from a good range of extra-curricular activities, which are used for the advancement of pupils' skills and also in preparation for local competitions. During the inspection, there was a range of clubs in operation: football and gymnastics for pupils in Years 1 and 2 and athletics for pupils in Years 3 to 6. In all these clubs, pupils benefited from good quality teaching, some of which was provided by outside agencies.
132. The subject is very enthusiastically led by a committed and hard working co-ordinator. It is due to the enthusiasm and expertise of both the co-ordinator and the previous headteacher that standards have improved since the last inspection and that physical education is one of the most popular subjects on the curriculum. The school has worked hard and successfully to encourage pupils of all ages and abilities to join in the wide range of extra-curricular activities. The subject makes a significant contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school is fortunate to have good sized playgrounds and playing fields. Resources for the subject are satisfactory but are used well by the teachers to develop pupils' skills.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

133. Standards have been satisfactorily maintained since the previous inspection and are generally in line with those expected in the locally Agreed Syllabus at the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are introduced to the knowledge of other religions. Their learning is well promoted through discussion of their own experiences, such as the celebration of birthdays. They learn about Christmas being the time when we remember Jesus' birthday, how Muslims celebrate the birthday of Mohammed and Buddhists the birthday of Buddha. There is very little recorded work in Years 1 and 2 as pupils' learning is appropriately promoted through stories and discussion. Pupils are satisfactorily introduced to the awareness of special places and the use of symbolism. This is well promoted through Years 3 and 4, where pupils make good progress in understanding how people use signs and artefacts to help them remember important events. By Year 6, pupils have a satisfactory understanding that there are similarities between the major world religions as well as differences. They recall satisfactorily the names of different houses of worship and the names of the holy books. Year 6 pupils have a good understanding of the place of symbolism in religion and how people's beliefs impact on the way they live, such as the importance of prayer. However, some are confused about which festivals and sacred texts belong to which religion.
134. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and it is sometimes good. Teachers develop secure subject knowledge so they are able to answer pupils' questions correctly. They give explanations clearly and use a good range of questions to prompt pupils' greater understanding and challenge their thinking. For example in a discussion about God in a Year 5/6 lesson, pupils were challenged to consider what they thought God looked like. Was he male or female, human or not human? This linked well with pupils' learning in the past about the gods of other religions and successfully promoted the need for pupils to consider their own ideas. In the most effective lessons, teachers support pupils well in their efforts to explain their ideas orally and in the written form. Pupils of all abilities and ethnicity are well involved in the lessons and make satisfactory progress in the subject. Teachers are sensitive to the views of pupils of different backgrounds.
135. The curriculum is appropriately based on the locally Agreed Syllabus and makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Throughout the school pupils learn about the important festivals in the major world religions. They participate in the

major Christian festivals such as Christmas and Easter, and celebrate harvest time at the local church. They learn about important festivals of other religions such as Ramadan and Divali and explore ideas of costume, ritual and importance of artefacts at these times. Opportunities to enhance pupils' learning through first hand experiences, such as through visits to different places of worship, and opportunities to talk to peoples of other religions are, however, missed. The school has an increasing number of pupils from different ethnic groups and religious backgrounds and the school is developing links with these families to help broaden all pupils' multi-cultural awareness. In Years 3 to 6, pupils' literacy skills are satisfactorily used and further developed. Pupils are encouraged to write in different ways about what they know and how they feel. Computers are also satisfactorily used to present pupils' ideas and to research for information. In Years 5/6, for example, pupils looked for evidence of art in different religions.

136. The subject is satisfactorily led and managed. The co-ordinator has gained a satisfactory awareness of standards through her work and discussions with pupils in other classes. There is a satisfactory range of artefacts and resources to support pupils' learning but they are not always sufficiently used to promote the pupils' greater knowledge and awareness.