

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **BARLEY HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Thame

LEA area: Oxfordshire

Unique reference number: 123034

Headteacher: Mr J Hulett

Reporting inspector: Mr S Dobson  
18074

Dates of inspection: 19<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2001

Inspection number: 187206

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 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Ludsden Grove Thame Oxfordshire
Postcode:	OX9 3DH
Telephone number:	01844 213100
Fax number:	01844 260402
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Reverend Canon Chris Neal
Date of previous inspection:	4 <sup>th</sup> March 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
18074	Mr S Dobson	Registered inspector	Religious education	What sort of a school is it? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
13874	Ms J Chesterfield	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development; How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
12112	Ms G Carter	Team inspector	English History Special education needs Equality of opportunity	
29959	Ms K Fleming	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design	How good are the curricular opportunities offered to pupils?
17352	Ms L Flowers	Team inspector	Geography Music Physical education	The school's results and pupils' achievements
16492	Mr R Lever	Team inspector	English as an additional language Science Information and communication technology Design and technology	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Barley Hill Primary is a large school with 505 pupils on roll aged four to eleven years. The school serves the town of Thame in Oxfordshire. The pupils are in classes based on single year groups except for one class which has Year 1 and Year 2 pupils. Pupils are from a range of backgrounds but are mostly from advantaged homes and the proportion eligible for free school meals is one per cent, which is well below average. Nineteen per cent of pupils are on the register of special educational needs, which is about average. Two of these pupils have statements of special need, which is below average. Most of the pupils with special needs have general learning difficulties but a significant proportion has specific learning difficulties, in particular, dyslexia. Approximately four per cent of pupils speak English as an additional language but only one of them is at an early stage of English language acquisition.

On entry to school, pupils' attainment in speaking and listening, literacy and numeracy are above average. Almost all children have pre-school experience in nurseries or playgroups. The admissions procedures mean that only some of the pupils have full-time places in the early years' unit before they start Year 1.

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

The school is effective overall. Standards in tests have not been as high as they should have been in English, mathematics and science but the school has recognised this and has taken many effective steps to make improvements. Inspection evidence indicates that standards have risen, especially in Key Stage 2. Teaching is good overall. The headteacher provides good leadership and the key staff take a strong lead in school improvement. The school provides good value for money.

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

- The school is well led and managed and there is very good management of resources.
- Relationships are very good and this supports the very good personal development of pupils.
- The quality of teaching, particularly in Key Stage 2, is raising standards very rapidly.
- The school provides a rich and well-balanced curriculum.
- Provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural development is very good.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is consistently good.
- The school has a very effective partnership with parents.

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

- The results of the pupils in the national tests at the end of both key stages because they do not reflect the standards which the pupils are currently achieving.
- The quality of teaching in a minority of classes.
- The curriculum links between the foundation stage and Key Stage 1.

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

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

There has been good improvement overall since the last inspection in March 1996. Since then, the school has undergone a number of potentially disruptive changes, in particular a large number of staff have left and arrived at the school. This has been well managed and the staff are a very cohesive team. This remains a good school. Standards in most subjects have been maintained, though results in national tests have been disappointing and are of great concern to the staff. Changes in the last year to the ways in which pupils are taught and the introduction of rigorous target setting have addressed this issue and results should now improve rapidly as pupils' performance in tests reflects the work that they do in classes. The school has developed a sound curriculum plan for both key stages which helps to ensure that pupils make good progress. There is a need to forge better links between planning for the

foundation stage and that within the remainder of the school. Subject co-ordinators are now very effective in their roles. The quality of teaching has improved especially in Key Stage 2. Good management systems involve all the staff and the school is very well placed to improve further.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	All schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	C	B	C	D	well above average A
mathematics	D	C	C	E	above average B
science	C	C	D	E	Average C
					below average D
					well below average E

The above table indicates that whilst the achievement of eleven year olds in English and mathematics is similar to schools nationally, achievement is below that of similar schools in English and well below in mathematics. Similarly, achievement in science is lower than that of similar schools.

Over the last three years, test results have not improved significantly. In the last year though, the school has taken strong action to deal with this situation and inspection evidence indicates that standards have already risen. This year, for the first time, the school has set itself very challenging targets in English, mathematics and science and these are likely to be achieved.

A similar picture exists for seven-year-olds in reading, writing and mathematics. Results in all three areas were below those in similar schools. The same strong action has now been taken to rectify this. By the age of eleven, pupils have a good range of skills and knowledge in literacy and numeracy. They read and write well and with confidence. They have good mental arithmetic skills.

Standards attained in information and communication technology, design and technology, music and physical education are satisfactory at both key stages. Standards in history, geography and art and design are good throughout the school. Standards in religious education are satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Attitudes to school for most pupils are good. The majority works very hard and cares about their school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good overall. Outside at playtimes behaviour is very good. It is good throughout Key Stage 2 but a few pupils in Key Stage 1 do not behave appropriately in some lessons.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils' show initiative and many of the older ones take responsibility for their own actions. They persevere once they are involved in work. Many are involved in fund raising activities.
Attendance	Very good. Attendance levels are well above the national average.

Generally, pupils' attitudes, good behaviour and positive relationships make a significant contribution to their learning. There is an orderly and businesslike atmosphere in the school. In a small minority of



situations, behaviour is not appropriate and pupils fail to concentrate or make progress. This happens in Key Stage 1 when the tasks given to them do not challenge their thinking and the pace of the lessons is too slow.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching is good overall and in nearly a quarter of lessons it is very good. In ninety-seven per cent of lessons teaching is at least satisfactory. Forty-eight per cent of the lessons are good, twenty-two per cent are very good and two per cent are excellent. Three per cent of lessons are unsatisfactory or poor. Teaching by some teachers is consistently good and most often very good and in these situations pupils learn at a rapid pace. They are well managed and challenged to work hard; the teachers have very high expectations of both effort and behaviour. However, there is considerable variation in the quality of teaching, particularly in Key Stage 1 and this uneven quality is an issue for improvement in a small minority of classes. The quality of teaching in the foundation stage is variable but is good overall.

Teaching of basic skills in literacy and numeracy is effective and often good. All lessons are carefully planned. Teachers base their planning on the national literacy and numeracy frameworks and this is effective. In almost all lessons, the pupils have literacy and numeracy targets and these challenge all pupils including the higher attaining ones and those with special educational needs.

Occasionally, the pace of some lessons is too slow. Too much time is wasted getting the lesson started and the methods employed to teach pupils and manage their behaviour are unsuccessful.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school has a good structure for the teaching of all subjects and offers a broad and balanced curriculum. The curriculum is particularly enriched for older pupils by the provision of extra-curricular activities and themed teaching, such as the current Italy project. Links between foundation stage and Key Stage 1 could be better.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	There is good provision throughout the school and pupils make good progress. The learning support assistants give very good support.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Only one pupil has support for English as an additional language and is supported well and is making good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	There is very good provision for pupils' social and moral development, in particular through designated personal, social and health education lessons. Pupils' cultural development is similarly very well supported. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is only just satisfactory. Pupils are given some chance to reflect and consider, but even in collective worship, these opportunities are very brief and are sometimes not particularly meaningful.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There are good procedures for promoting all aspects of pupils' welfare and the procedures for assessing pupils' academic and personal

	progress are good.
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The school currently gives emphasis to the teaching of English, mathematics and science as a part of the attempt to raise standards at the end of the key stages. However, in line with the school's mission, 'Educating the Whole Child', a broad curriculum has been maintained. The National Curriculum is delivered in full. The school's partnership with parents is strong and effective.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher gives good leadership to the staff, many of whom are new to the school. He has set up very good systems which involve a broad range of staff in management of the curriculum and the school. The deputy headteacher, year group managers and curriculum co-ordinators are effective in their roles.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are led very well by the chair and they fulfil their responsibilities well. They are very supportive of the school and are developing their monitoring role well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	There is good use of information from standardised and other tests to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of the school's provision. Targets for improvement are based on the information gained. Systematic monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning has developed in the last year and is now ready to be more closely targeted on areas where the school has weaknesses.
The strategic use of resources	Very good use is made of the school's financial and other resources. Finances are very well managed. All areas of the school are used to good advantage, for example a computer suite has been provided for the use of all classes.

The accommodation is used well but the lack of a hall of suitable size has an adverse effect on aspects of pupils' learning. The other spaces and the school's extensive book and other learning resources are used well.

A major strength of the management is the sharing of responsibility within the whole staff team, not just amongst the teachers. All of the staff are committed to making this a good school and this shows in the ways in which they help all pupils to learn, whatever their level of ability. The school understands and applies best value principles, applying these to the many areas of school development.

## 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>• Their children like school</li> <li>• Pupils make good progress</li> <li>• The pupils' behaviour</li> <li>• The quality of teaching</li> <li>• The leadership and management of the school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The information on how their child is getting on at school.</li> </ul>

The inspection team agrees with parents positive views of the school. Reports to parents are of a good standard but there is scope to report more fully on some of the subjects.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Results of the national standardised tests and tasks in reading and writing taken by seven-year-olds have generally been in line with the national averages over the last four years. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher levels in reading were above the national average and well above in writing. The results in the mathematics tests have fluctuated over the last four years and in 2000 were below the national average. Attainment at the higher levels in mathematics was below the national average. There are no marked differences between the attainment of boys and girls. Compared to similar schools, performance in both reading and writing is below the average and well below average in mathematics.
2. Results of tests taken by eleven-year-olds in 2000 in English were above the national average and in line with the national average in mathematics. Performance over the last four years in these subjects shows some limited improvement. There are no marked differences between the attainment of boys and girls. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher levels in English were in line with the national average but below in mathematics. In comparison with similar schools attainment in English is close to the average but below average in mathematics.
3. Attainment in science in Key Stage 1 in 2000 is close to the national average, but below the average for similar schools. In Key Stage 2, performance was below the national average. In comparison with similar schools attainment in science is well below the average. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher levels is well below both the national average and the average for similar schools.
4. The school has recognised that standards have been too low. A detailed analysis of results has been conducted and strategies to promote progress have been identified for pupils in both key stages. These include the development of a system for tracking pupil progress, measured by both teacher assessment and the results of standardised tests. Further analysis of the pupils' performance in the tests has been used to ensure that teaching is matched to the learning needs of the pupils. The impact of this strategy was evident during the inspection. Pupils who are working at lower levels receive targeted teaching, aimed at accelerating their progress so that they reach the expected level by the end of Key Stage 2. The analysis of the pupils' attainment has been used to help teachers to set individual learning targets. These targets directly address the learning needs of each pupil and their progress against them is regularly monitored, both by the teachers and the pupils.
5. The inspection found that standards are at least satisfactory in English, mathematics and science in Key Stage 1. Standards are satisfactory but could be better if there were better links between the reception classes and Year 1 and the provision in Year 1 was more consistently good. In Key Stage 2 standards in all three subjects are good. Pupils present their work carefully and marking is used well to promote learning. They respond confidently in their lessons and demonstrate well developed skills in speaking and listening. This contrasts very sharply with the test results and reflects the schools more recent initiatives to raise standards.
6. By the age of eleven, pupils have acquired a good range of skills and knowledge in literacy and numeracy. They read with confidence, understanding and enjoyment.

They have a good knowledge of literature, including appropriate classic works, which they discuss articulately, making well reasoned comments. The majority writes well in a variety of forms, including stories, letters, instructions and persuasive argument. The use of spelling and punctuation is generally accurate. The standards in writing are well reflected in other subjects of the curriculum. For example, in a study of Victorian life, pupils were able to formulate text expressing two sides to a situation. Pupils have a good understanding of the four operations in number and can apply them to a variety of different situations, both in mathematics lessons and in other subjects. Pupils have a sound understanding of fractions, including equivalence.

7. Standards attained in information and communication technology (ICT), design and technology, music and physical education are in line with the expectations for seven and eleven-year-olds. Standards in art and design, geography and history are above levels expected for seven and eleven-year-olds. In religious education standards are as expected for seven-year-olds but are above expectations for eleven-year-olds.
8. Although pupils with special educational needs often achieve lower standards than their peers they make good progress because their learning needs are assessed carefully, specific targets are set for them and staff work together to help pupils to achieve these. Their progress towards achieving targets is monitored carefully. Valuable help is given by educational support assistants and specialist teachers who support the class teachers in ensuring that pupils gain confidence from working from what they already know and achieve success in their short term goals.
9. Pupils enter the school with levels of skills in literacy and numeracy that are above average. This year, by the end of the foundation stage, children are likely to have reached the early learning goals in all six areas of learning. This was clearly not the case in previous years when pupils had far less experience of the foundation stage and there is evidence that some of the pupils currently in Year 1 have not yet reached the early learning goals in their personal and social development.

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

10. Since the last inspection, the school has been successful in maintaining high standards in this area of its work. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour, and particularly their relationships and personal development, are strengths of the school.
11. Attitudes and behaviour are good overall, especially in the foundation stage and Key Stage 2. Most of the children in the reception classes are settled, confident and well behaved, and are ready to learn. They concentrate well and try hard for their teachers. In a lesson on words beginning with 'sh', for example, the children did their best to think of words and define them and were able to explain words like 'shield' by listening carefully and helping one another. Pupils in Key Stage 2 are also keen and well motivated. They are very enthusiastic about the school and all it has to offer them, and they are very well focused on their learning. They want to make a contribution in class discussion and to produce good quality work in their individual tasks. Some pupils have less positive attitudes in Year 1. Many of the Year 1 pupils spent little time in reception and did not have the chance to develop the maturity necessary to cope with the full-time subject based curriculum. In addition, some of the teachers in Year 1 have not recognised and planned to meet the needs of these children, so they are sometimes not well involved and are naughty in class. Pupils in Year 2 comply with the wishes of the teacher and generally behave well but they are sometimes noticeably lacking in enthusiasm.

12. Behaviour at breaktimes and lunchtimes is good across the school. Pupils show respect for the lunchtime supervisors in their classrooms; those who eat in the dining hall queue patiently and display good manners at their tables. Outside, pupils play well together in the playgrounds and show an awareness of and consideration for others. Their ability to mix and to include others in their games is particularly striking. Boys will join in with girls who are skipping, for example, while girls play basketball with groups of boys. Older children will set up games for younger ones and help them to play, for example turning the rope for skippers. Any instances of bullying or other threatening behaviour are taken seriously and handled firmly. Pupils feel confident about telling their teachers of any problems they are experiencing. There have been no exclusions in the last five years.
13. Relationships and personal development are very good. Pupils get on very well with staff and with one another, especially in Key Stage 2, and are very willing to use their initiative and take on responsibility. Pupils from Year 6 who were interviewed spoke with great warmth of their teachers and with great enthusiasm about the clubs they could take part in and the chances they had to help around the school. They are very proud to represent the school in sports teams, and feel a real sense of responsibility when they help look after younger children at lunchtime and in the playground, or when they run the school shop. Pupils know that teachers trust them, and they do their best to live up to that trust. They are capable of using the computer suite without supervision, setting and clearing away equipment without fuss, and sorting out playground toys and games. Pupils respond sensibly to situations in which they find themselves, for example by spontaneously tidying the library shelves when books are on the floor and organising themselves into groups in class. The youngest children become independent and self-reliant. They change their own reading books and arrange their tables and chairs for lunchtime.
14. Pupils' attendance is also very good. It has remained at a high level since the last inspection. Pupils enjoy coming to school and rarely miss a session unless they are ill. There is no absence for unacceptable reasons. Punctuality is good. Most pupils arrive promptly each morning so that the school day can begin on time.

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

15. Teaching is a strength of the school and it is the main reason for the good progress being made by the pupils in many of the classes and throughout Key Stage 2. Teaching is satisfactory in 25 per cent of lessons, good in 48 per cent, very good in 22 per cent and excellent in 2 per cent. It is unsatisfactory or poor in 3 per cent, though these are isolated lessons. This means that for the majority of their time in the school, pupils are taught well and their learning is therefore good or better for the vast majority of the time.
16. Teaching of the children in the foundation stage (the early years' unit) is predominantly good and sometimes very good. Like their colleagues in the remainder of school, the early years' teachers plan together and each group gets similar provision. However, there is unevenness in the quality of education provided. For example, in one classroom sessions always get off to a prompt start, children are excited and motivated by the teacher's approach and learning moves along rapidly. In another class the teacher's approach is less well targeted to the needs of the children. The quality of planning is however, good overall; targets for learning are clearly defined and the range of activities provided gives most children very good opportunities to reinforce and extend their learning. The teachers generally make good assessments of what the children can do and activities are planned to meet their needs. In the one lesson that

was less than satisfactory, the teacher failed to understand the need for clear instructions.

17. In over half the lessons in Key Stage 1, teaching is good and most of the remainder is satisfactory. However, there is variation between the classes and year groups; some of the teaching and learning is consistently good whilst in other classes it is mostly satisfactory and occasionally unsatisfactory. Mostly, the teachers have high expectations of their pupils both in terms of their behaviour and in the amount of effort expected in lessons. The quality of teachers' planning is good; learning targets are clear and pupils know the purpose of the lesson. They focus well on their own learning targets when they are reminded and they stay focused on the subject of the lesson, for example when working independently in information and communication technology. The range of teaching methods used is generally good. Pupils are supported in most lessons in making good use of their developing literacy and numeracy skills.
18. The most significant weaknesses in teaching are in some lessons in Year 1. Most of the pupils had very little experience of the foundation stage due to the local admissions policy. Many of these pupils have limited personal and social skills, and in particular, they are not able to concentrate for very long periods and their recording and presentation skills, especially in mathematics, are poor. This is recognised by the teachers but in only one class have the necessary adjustments to teaching methods been made. This teacher has found many ways of involving the pupils and re-engaging their interest when it wanes. In the other classes, pupils fail to focus on the topic in hand after a brief introduction and they do not engage well with other aspects of the lesson. Often their behaviour deteriorates especially if they become bored with repetitive tasks. In these situations, they are not challenged sufficiently in their thinking and the teachers have unrealistic expectations for the recording of their work. Progress in these lessons is therefore restricted.
19. In Key Stage 2, all of the teaching is at least satisfactory and eighty per cent of the teaching is good or very good. Lessons are very well planned, brisk and purposeful. Activities are varied and interesting and the teachers have good knowledge of the subjects that they teach. In a Year 4 lesson on religious education for example, a detailed discussion with the pupils was followed with rapid note taking to record the main points of the lesson. In Year 5 work on Italy, pupils were able to extend their learning through their questioning of the teachers, through the opportunities given for research both from books and from ICT. In these sessions pupils take a lot of responsibility for their own learning and their progress is rapid.
20. Good and very good teaching is seen in both mathematics and English. Teachers show considerable skill in involving all of their pupils in activities such as mental mathematics games where pupils use whiteboards to record their answers and demonstrate their ability. Many of the teachers regularly remind the pupils of their personal and group targets and this helps them to focus on what they need to do to improve. In most of the classes, pupils work hard, for example in a geography lesson where pupils were busy locating Italy and considering its physical features. Many of the pupils work independently but they maintain a good pace throughout the lesson. The learning of all pupils is supported through their positive attitude to school and to learning.
21. When teaching is satisfactory, many features are good but areas for improvement include ensuring appropriate challenge for some of the pupils. This is occasionally seen in mathematics where pupils' presentation is poor and inaccurate and this is ignored. Sometimes, the introductory sessions led by the teacher are too long and

some pupils' attention wanes.

22. The work for pupils with special educational needs is generally well targeted for their requirements and they make good gains in their lessons. Teachers are careful to provide work at levels appropriate to all learners. Where extra adult support is given during lessons by support staff, the pupils respond well and it has a positive impact upon their learning because the skilled and well-trained support assistants make good relationships with their pupils and focus very specifically on helping them to overcome their difficulties. Those pupils with English as an additional language are supported well and they make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. The needs of higher attaining pupils are recognised and the teachers are beginning to plan for their needs. Teachers make appropriate use of homework to reinforce and extend pupils' learning in a range of subjects.

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

23. The quality of the curriculum has improved since the last inspection. The school provides a rich, broad and balanced curriculum and all pupils have equal access. A whole school curriculum plan ensures good coverage of all aspects of the National Curriculum and religious education. The school promotes good cross-curricular links which enrich the learning experiences of the pupils. The day to day planning of the curriculum has improved since the previous inspection; this now has clear learning targets and reflects the termly planning and the schemes of work which are in place for all subjects. The foundation stage curriculum promotes the six areas of learning and is being implemented well in the early years' unit. At present the outside play area is underdeveloped and it does not support all areas of children's learning; the school will address this once the play space is complete. The curriculum for the under fives is good, but some experience so little of it that they are not ready for the teaching methods employed in some classes in Year 1.
24. The implementation of the national literacy and numeracy strategies have been effective throughout the school. Planning for these areas of work is thorough and the skills acquired, for example in note taking, are used well in other subjects such as religious education. Pupils' learning is enhanced by excellent extra-curricular activities which are numerous and varied covering sports, creative subjects, science and European languages. The school enriches the curriculum with a variety of visits and makes good use of the opportunities available, for example, pupils visit the Ashmolean Museum whilst studying Ancient Egypt and experience a working Victorian farm to enhance a history topic. Year 6 pupils have the opportunity of a residential visit to an outdoor pursuits centre. Good use is made of outside experts; for example football tuition given by members of Oxford United and during the highly successful science week, a physiotherapist and nutritionist gave talks to pupils. There are well-developed links with the community. For example, there are joint ventures with Thame Rotary for fund raising and the supermarket Waitrose contributes items for special events in the school. These add to the pupils' awareness of the importance of the community
25. Pupils with special educational needs participate in the full school curriculum along with their peers. Extra support for these pupils is integrated well into the school day so that withdrawal work occurs at appropriate times and is closely linked to class work or to targets on individual education programmes. Close monitoring and review ensure that work set is relevant and helps pupils to make good progress.

26. The school has well developed links with partner institutions with joint in-service training with other local primary schools and a successful programme of induction for pupils into the local secondary school. Sixth formers from the secondary schools act as mentors to the Year 6 pupils and recently ran a computer club to help pupils to develop their skills. At present the school does not have effective links with pre-school providers in the area and this needs to be addressed to ensure a smooth transfer into school and to ensure that the staff in the early years unit have the best possible information on which to base their planning.
27. The personal and social development of the pupils is an area that has been targeted for development. At present the school is piloting the local authority scheme for personal, social and health education. This helps to ensure that sex and drug education is taught effectively in all year groups. At present the School Nurse supports the teaching programme in Years 5 and 6 to provide a basic level of sex education and in the past the school has liaised with the police force to provide a suitable drugs awareness programme. Pupils participate in 'circle time' when they are given the opportunity to raise difficult issues and listen to individual's thoughts and feelings.
28. Overall the provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good. However the spiritual development is only just satisfactory. Pupils enjoy school assemblies and listen attentively during them for example when choral music is played, but the policy for collective worship is not consistently applied. During the inspection week not all year groups had a daily act of worship and in some, there was inadequate time for reflection. There is a need to develop the curriculum to enhance pupils' spiritual development. This has been recognised by the management team who have convened a working party to develop this aspect of the school.
29. Provision for moral development is very good with staff providing consistently good role models. Each year the pupils are involved in agreeing the ground rules which govern the behaviour around the school. An awards system rewards special effort, improvement in work or behaviour and consideration for others. The school has a caring ethos built upon mutual respect and support for one another.
30. The school provides a good environment for the social development of its pupils. They are given many opportunities to be responsible around the school, pupils undertake tasks such as taking the register and helping to keep the room tidy. The older pupils are given numerous opportunities to take responsibility. They help the younger pupils at lunchtime, organise the school games cupboard and run the school shop. Pupils take on wider social responsibilities by taking part in a variety of fund raising events, for example on the recent Red Nose Day the school raised £1600.
31. Many opportunities are provided for pupils' cultural development and provision is very good. They learn about the richness and diversity of their own and other cultures in many areas of the curriculum. Work on Kenya, Egypt and India was enhanced by exciting displays of artefacts. Art is a particular strength and is used well to promote the pupils' own cultural heritage. The school is involved in a project Eurolink to encourage partnership between schools; one in Germany and one in Italy. The schools exchange ideas, cards, videos and artwork and the pupils are learning the basics of each language.

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

32. The school has continued to provide effective pastoral care for its pupils since the last inspection. It has also greatly improved its systems for, and use of, assessment as a result of the recommendations in the last report.



33. Staff give pupils good personal support. Daily routines in the school, such as breaks and lunchtimes, are well organised and run smoothly, so that pupils can feel happy and confident throughout the school day.
34. Arrangements for child protection are satisfactory. The headteacher is responsible for child protection, and the school follows local area guidelines. Children are taught about keeping safe through their programme of personal, social and health education. Health and safety is also managed satisfactorily. There are clear systems for monitoring, reporting on and acting on any concerns. First aid procedures are good, and work well in an emergency as observed during the inspection when a pupil accidentally broke his arm.
35. The school has few problems with attendance and there are effective systems for monitoring and following up absences. Procedures for promoting good behaviour are effective although the school's policy is in need of review. Nonetheless, the established system for rewards and sanctions in Key Stage 2 is clear to pupils and consistently applied by teachers, who manage behaviour well. In Key Stage 1, however, rewards and sanctions are left to the discretion of the teacher. This means that if teachers do not have secure behaviour management skills, they are unable to control behaviour successfully because they have no guidance or systems to fall back on.
36. Pupils' academic progress is well supported and monitored. Particularly significant initiatives include the recent introduction of tracking and target-setting, used both for individual pupils, for groups of pupils and for whole cohorts. This means that teachers can predict what levels pupils are capable of reaching and what they need to do to get there. The school is starting to use this information to decide the balance of the curriculum and to plan the content of lessons. Further development of these strategies to sharpen the focus on improving attainment and progress is planned.
37. The five stage assessment procedure recommended by the Code of Practice for special educational needs is well established in the school and reviews are carried out on a regular basis so that pupils are always working very precisely towards their next target. In addition to the standard range of tests used in the school, some specific assessments are made to gain more diagnostic information about how to move pupils on in their learning. Information is kept on these pupils to monitor their performance over time. Where pupils experience difficulties which are more complex and require specialist advice, the school uses the services of other professionals such as the educational psychologist to get ideas for planning programmes of support. The requirements of statements of need are met fully.

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

38. The quality of the school's partnership with its parent community is one of its strengths. Since the last inspection, the school has worked hard to consult and involve parents, and they appreciate this. Most have very positive views of the school. Through its emphasis on consultation and involvement, the school works very closely with parents.
39. Links between the school and parents are very good. The school takes parents' opinions very seriously and is always open to their suggestions. Parents have been consulted on a variety of issues relating to school improvement; such as the school development plan, the playground development, the recently opened parents' centre and the proposed after-school care club. The setting up of the parents' centre and the after-school care club shows the school's commitment to involving and supporting parents and responding to their needs. Parents are also fully encouraged to be involved in their children's education, through curriculum initiatives such as the very popular science week.
40. Information for parents is also very good. Regular, well-presented newsletters keep parents up to date on the school's events and successes, while news sheets provide full and detailed curriculum information for each year group. This means that parents are more easily able to support their children's learning at home. The prospectus and the governors' annual report are interesting and easy to use for reference, although there are some minor omissions from both of these. They are supplemented by clear, useful guides on various school policies, such as behaviour and homework. The school takes care to make sure parents know what is going on and keep them informed about changes in organisation, either through letters or meetings.
41. Reports to parents on their children's progress are good overall. They have been improved since the last inspection when they contained too little evaluative comment on pupils' achievement. Now, attainment compared with national standards is clear, but information on how well pupils are doing, particularly in the foundation subjects, is limited and impersonal.
42. Parents make a very significant contribution to the work of the school and to their children's learning. Almost all attend parent-teacher consultations to discuss their children's progress, hear their children read at home, and ensure that homework is completed on time. Reading records and home-school notebooks are used extensively as a means of communication between parents and teachers. Parents are very willing to devote their time and energies to the school in a variety of ways. Many help in class or through the parent-teacher group, which raises considerable sums of money for the school each year. Some support the school as parent governors or on consultative groups. The school's very impressive website was created by parents. Their involvement and enthusiasm is greatly valued by the school and harnessed well for the benefit of the children.

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

43. The quality of leadership and management has improved since the last inspection. Good leadership and management are now a strength of the school. The headteacher has successfully led the school through considerable staff changes in recent years and has managed to maintain and enhance the team approach. One of the most important features of the management style and the strategies adopted, is the inclusive nature of the actions taken. The headteacher has created posts of

responsibility and working teams and this means that all of the staff have a voice in the decision making process. The views of the governors and the parents are regularly canvassed so that the sense of direction for the school is shared with the whole community.

44. The setting up of the management systems has taken some time and in the meantime results have not improved sufficiently. However, the school is now beginning to raise standards and there is evidence of good progress. The headteacher and the subject co-ordinators have made good analysis of trends in performance as indicated by test and other assessment information. This analysis has revealed shortcomings in the preparation of pupils for the ends of the key stage testing as well as areas for development within English, mathematics and science. Target setting has been introduced across the school to assist in the raising of standards and there is a lot of evidence of the success of this approach. The school has managed to maintain its inclusive nature for all of the pupils. There is a good focus on all pupils including those with special educational needs and the higher attaining pupils.
45. The headteacher leads the staff and the school well. He has a clear vision for the school and, supported well by the deputy headteacher, the staff and the governors, keeps the school aim of 'Educating the Whole Child' at the centre of development. This has led to the school taking steps to maintain a very broad and balanced curriculum. Whilst standards as measured in tests of English, mathematics and science have not been high enough, in most other subjects, standards have been maintained as good, or have improved over the last four years. The headteacher leads a programme of continuous development and improvement.
46. There is useful monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning, particularly in English, mathematics and science and the school is able to identify strengths and weaknesses in these subjects. This has not yet been applied equally to all subjects and the co-ordinators of some subjects have not been involved in monitoring standards sufficiently closely to be able to identify specific targets for improvement. They are however, aware of the development needs for each of their subjects. In the last year the headteacher has systematically monitored teaching and learning in each of the classes. Some limited action has begun to address the most obvious of the weaknesses, but there remains considerable variation in the quality of teaching at Key Stage 1.
47. One of the major changes which management has introduced which has been very successful is the work of the staff in year group teams, in particular for the planning of the curriculum. This is very effective in most year groups and helps to ensure that each pupil gets the same curriculum opportunities.
48. The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities well and is well informed about the outcomes of its decisions. Some of the governors are able to come into the school on a regular basis and gather their own information about teaching, learning and the quality of provision. Some of the governors help in school. These activities contribute to governors monitoring of the quality of provision.
49. Financial planning is very good and the management of finances is secure. All available finances, including the money raised by the parents' association, are used appropriately to provide a good education. Specific grants are used well to improve teachers' skills in the teaching of literacy, numeracy and other subjects. School development planning is very well managed and includes all staff, governors and the parents. The school finance officer is effective in her role; systems are secure and this

is very supportive to the headteacher who gains time from being able to delegate. The school understands and seeks best value for money.

50. The accommodation is well presented thanks to the efforts of all the staff including the site manager. It is adequate to deliver the curriculum. The new classrooms and the outdoor space for the under fives are an asset to the school but there are many features of these new areas which require completion, for example the uneven surface of the play area. The school hall is too small for this size of school and it restricts the curriculum, for example, there are few whole school events or collective meetings. The hall is very small for physical education for some of the classes. Lunchtimes are difficult to organise, classrooms are disrupted and in these rooms all work has to be cleared from the morning session whether this is appropriate or not.
51. The induction of new and newly qualified teachers into the school is very successful and new staff very quickly become full members of the team. There is on-going training for other members of staff and this helps them to improve their skills.

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

52. This school is currently improving rapidly in raising standards in English, mathematics and science as assessed in national tests. In order to improve school performance overall, the headteacher and governing body should:

- (1) Ensure that the strategies which are currently being employed to raise standards in English, mathematics and science become fully embedded as a part of the school's usual practice and in particular:

- ensure that pupils are taught to recognise problems and tasks which are set in written form.

*(Paragraphs: 68/76/80-81)*

- (2) Raise the quality of teaching to the highest levels possible across the school. In particular support staff, where necessary, to acquire the skills to manage classroom behaviour and offer appropriate challenge to all pupils throughout the school day.

*(Paragraphs: 11/15-18)*

- (3) Ensure closer links between the foundation stage and Year 1 to provide continuity of learning by:

- Encouraging teachers in Year 1 to adjust teaching styles to take account of children's limited experience in the foundation stage;
- Ensure that all of the teachers in Year 1 know and fully understand not only what the pupils can do in the areas of learning, but also have the knowledge to adjust their teaching styles in order to help the pupils to fully engage with what is being taught.

*(Paragraphs: 11/18/55)*

### **PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS**

## Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	101
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	14

## Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	22	48	25	2	1	0

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

## Information about the school's pupils

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	453
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	3

FTE means full-time equivalent.

<b>Special educational needs</b>	YR– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	88

<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	11

<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	30
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	29

## Attendance

<b>Authorised absence</b>	%
School data	4.1
National comparative data	5.2

<b>Unauthorised absence</b>	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	26	31

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	21	22	23
	Girls	26	28	27
	Total	47	50	50
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (85)	88 (86)	88 (91)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	21	24	24
	Girls	28	28	29
	Total	49	52	53
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 (89)	91 (92)	93 (99)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	42	41

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	34	34	36
	Girls	35	30	35
	Total	69	64	71
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	83 (84)	77 (78)	86 (88)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	31	29	36
	Girls	37	33	34
	Total	68	62	70
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	82 (76)	75 (79)	84 (80)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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

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

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	3
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	2
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	3
White	487
Any other minority ethnic group	8

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

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

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	17.7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25
Average class size	27

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

Total number of education support staff	12
Total aggregate hours worked per week	264

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

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

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

*This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	774,577
Total expenditure	786,156
Expenditure per pupil	1,601
Balance brought forward from previous year	24,400
Balance carried forward to next year	12,821

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	505
Number of questionnaires returned	144

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	55	42	2	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	38	53	4	0	6
Behaviour in the school is good.	34	61	3	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	29	53	11	3	4
The teaching is good.	40	53	3	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	35	49	14	1	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	56	35	8	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	47	44	4	1	4
The school works closely with parents.	41	45	11	1	1
The school is well led and managed.	42	47	6	1	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	36	55	2	1	6
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	31	44	9	5	11



## **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**

53. The children enter the foundation stage with above average attainment in language and literacy and in mathematics and at least average attainment in the other areas of learning. **The majority of** children now start school part time in September in the academic year in which they are five years old, however they do not receive a full time place until the term after they become five. This means that children born in the summer term have no full time education until they are in Year 1.
54. The curriculum is well planned through themes and it focuses on the early learning goals. The focus for learning at the time of the inspection was *Myself*; this was well planned to include role-play activities in the Shoe Shop and Hospital and varied mathematical and language experiences. For example, children were naming and identifying body parts. The children are given simple targets to achieve, which are shared with the parents and reviewed termly.
55. The unit is mostly well resourced but more could be done to ensure that resources are shared equally between the three rooms. More resources are needed to develop the new outside area as an effective environment to develop a good range of skills. The curriculum is effective but the expectations of the teachers do not match well with those in Year 1.
56. The quality of provision for children under five has improved significantly since the last inspection.

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

57. The teachers have good relationships with the children who demonstrate that they feel confident and secure and are making good progress in learning to work and play cooperatively. The children understand the routines of the classes and display mature attitudes, for example, to changing their books to take home. They are able to select a book and write the title in their home school diary. They enjoy having simple responsibilities such as taking the register to the office and helping to tidy up. The children are encouraged to be independent and are able to select activities from the large range on offer, for example, choosing model making or playing with dough. The children respond well to their teachers and are generally enthusiastic about their learning but are also able to sit quietly and concentrate at the appropriate times.
58. Behaviour is good with all members of staff providing excellent role models for the children. The children work and play well together as seen when they constructed a volcano in the sand tray. The children are encouraged to appreciate each other by choosing their friends to be *the star of the day* and to verbalise their feelings about why they select someone; for example explaining that the child has played well with them.

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

59. Skills in this area are developed in all activities and by the end of the foundation stage most have achieved or exceeded expected standards. Most children develop a good understanding that print carries meaning and show good book handling skills together with a keen interest in books. Children enjoy exploring enlarged text stories and eagerly join in with repetitive elements of the stories and with identifying familiar letters. The

children are beginning to identify letter names and sounds and read familiar words and most are able to identify and write their first name. They use symbols and letters to convey meaning and higher attaining children write short sentences using capital letters and full stops. They use their emerging skills to sound out words they wish to write.

60. The quality of teaching is always satisfactory and often good. The teachers read books and stories expressively and are skilled in using questions during story telling to enhance children's awareness that words carry meaning.

### **Mathematics**

61. Progress in mathematics is good with most children exceeding the expected standard. The children are encouraged to use mathematical language, for example, in role-play activities. In the shoe shop they were measuring their feet and using money and the cash register. They were involved in making a number line by cutting out hands and numbering each one. This gave them the opportunity to count and recognise numbers to 30. The children recognise and count numbers to 10. Teachers use opportunities to enhance mathematical learning well, for instance during registration, children are able to say *there are 26 children here so one is away*. Simple graphs are used to show when the children's birthdays are and to find out which vegetables they like. Counting rhymes and songs are used to good effect with children showing obvious enjoyment during these sessions. Teaching is mostly satisfactory and often good with mathematical activities well planned with clear learning intentions.

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

62. Most children are likely to reach the expected standard by the time they enter Year 1. The range of activities provided make useful links to children's own experiences at home and within the community. Early scientific knowledge and understanding are effectively developed when children observe the changes in the tadpoles on the science table. They demonstrate knowledge of past and present when making comparisons between themselves as babies and themselves now. They have been investigating their five senses and were developing skills in investigating and exploring materials during a finger painting exercise which was enhanced through structured questioning by the nursery nurse.
63. Children use tools well when cutting, joining and shaping, they use the construction kits imaginatively and are very able in selecting materials to use in model making. They are aware of the functions of the computer and use the mouse to move and relocate images on the screen. They had been successful in drawing their own homes on the computer.

### **Physical development**

64. Children reach appropriate levels in their physical development. At present the children have opportunities to use big balls, hoops and wheeled toys and the older children use the adventure playground in the main school. Separate provision for outdoor physical play is currently being developed. Physical education lessons take place in the hall but the teaching is of variable quality. Sometimes they are good, for example the children demonstrated good control of their movements and balancing techniques. They listened well to the teacher who demonstrated good behaviour management. On another occasion the teacher was not fully in control of the situation and the children did not improve their physical skills.

65. Fine motor skills are well developed and the children handle scissors, glue, and paintbrushes with confidence.

### **Creative development**

66. Children are reaching expected standards in this area of learning. Creative development is secure; it is promoted through a variety of techniques. Displays of work indicate that the children handle materials well and can represent their ideas and observations using different techniques. Self-portraits are of a high standard with good attention to detail and there were examples of work where the children had experimented with mixing colours.
67. During the inspection the class teacher created footprints across the classroom floor and instigated the mystery of whose they were and who had left behind gloves and a letter. The children entered into the situation with enthusiasm and had drawn pictures of who they thought had left the footprints. This was a well-planned activity, which challenged the children to use their imaginations and to express and communicate their ideas through drawings and language. The quality of teaching is generally good with teachers encouraging the children to observe carefully and to use tools, resources and techniques with confidence.

### **ENGLISH**

68. Although the last report did not identify low standards in English as an issue, national test results over the past four years have been below average when compared with similar schools. This would indicate that standards have been too low and pupils have not achieved as well in tests as they should have done. However, inspection findings show an improving picture in the subject, with many pupils, especially in Key Stage 2, displaying work of a standard that is above national expectations. The school has shown great determination in seeking ways to raise standards, and has used the national literacy strategy to good effect and various other strategies, such as Reading Restart and the Catch-up programme\* to ensure that pupils do not underachieve.
69. The majority of pupils enter the school as fluent and articulate speakers and standards in speaking and listening are above national expectations throughout the school. Pupils are confident in expressing their views, re-telling stories and describing events. Most listen well, understanding that conversation involves turn-taking and showing an awareness from early on that we speak in different ways according to the audience being addressed. Speaking skills develop well through the school and by the age of eleven, pupils discuss well in groups, can produce persuasive arguments for and against a controversial issue and prepare effective speeches for a debate. These older pupils have a well-developed vocabulary, using words such as 'democracy' or 'constituency' with understanding and confidence.
70. Standards in reading are average in Key Stage 1. Pupils make a sound start, mastering letter sounds and high-frequency words steadily in Years 1 and 2. Some pupils are well-established readers by the age of seven, have definite preferences about stories they enjoy and are confident and capable in using indexes and contents pages to help them gain information from non-fiction books. Pupils who are still underachieving at the end of the key stage benefit from the structured work provided in Reading Restart sessions and the majority achieves the standards that would

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\* additional sessions for pupils who are not achieving as well as they might.

normally be expected of seven-year-olds.

71. By the end of Key Stage 2 very few pupils attain below average standards in reading and the majority read well. They have well developed preferences for certain types of books and are able to infer and predict from stories as well as conduct research from information books. The books available in class libraries encourage pupils to extend their range of reading, and some start to develop a taste for classics such as 'Treasure Island' or 'Black Beauty'. As in Key Stage 1, the use of specialist programmes such as Catch-up, ALS or booster classes ensures that pupils reach the highest standards of which they are capable. Children with special educational needs make good progress.
72. Standards in writing are broadly average at the end of Key Stage 1. Although pupils do not generally write at very great length, the majority are beginning to work out spellings by letter sounds, generally produce legible joined handwriting and show an awareness of different ways of writing for different audiences. Higher attaining pupils produce some lively independent writing and are just beginning to use words for effect. Lower attaining pupils produce work that is short in length and contains spelling and punctuation errors, but their work shows signs of satisfactory progress.
73. At the end of Key Stage 2, a substantial minority of pupils is writing with real flair and awareness of literary style. They use words imaginatively to create effects and know how to produce writing that is appropriate for a range of audiences and purposes, such as structured scientific accounts and interesting diary entries from Ancient Greeks in history. Some achieve this high quality of writing before Year 6, and pupils in Year 5 also produce work that is well above average. Writing about a mythological creature, one pupil wrote: 'The little fish squirmed and wriggled on the edge of the beach, covered in a mix of sand and water and gulping for air.' The work of nearly all pupils is neatly and legibly written, is accurately spelled and punctuated and always well presented. Pupils who are still achieving below average standards at this stage benefit from the booster classes and are in line to achieve average levels in the next national tests. The few pupils with special educational needs who show real difficulty with written work make steady progress because of the carefully focused support given by the special needs co-ordinator or support assistants working with groups.
74. Teaching is mainly satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good or very good in Key Stage 2. The features of the best lessons include crisp pace, imaginative reading aloud to hold pupils' interest, careful sharing and pursuit of clear learning objectives and high expectations of what pupils can achieve. In a lesson on legends in Year 5, pupils were captivated by the way the teacher read aloud, and were confident in exploring ideas and contributing to the class discussion because they received such a clear message about how positively their views were valued. Teachers use a range of methods to help children plan their work and this pays off as children often develop and sequence their ideas effectively and imaginatively. In weaker lessons, teachers do not adhere closely enough to learning objectives or waste time by allowing pupils to distract them from the main purpose and pupils make slower progress than they should. Some of the pupils in Year 1 are not yet able to settle well for their literacy lessons, particularly when the teachers make the introduction inappropriately long.
75. The subject is well managed by an effective and knowledgeable co-ordinator who has a substantial role in the monitoring of standards and teaching. The national literacy strategy is well established and all staff have benefited from recent training. Support from well-trained and experienced classroom assistants is of great benefit helping underachieving pupils to reach the targets on their IEPs and contributes well to the

raising of standards in the subject. Resources are good and are likely to be further improved by the planned re-structuring of reading books into more detailed categories so that pupils can choose books that are more precisely targeted at their reading level.

## **MATHEMATICS**

76. Standards have been maintained at broadly the same level since the last inspection. The school has attained the national average in the annual tests and is now improving the rate of progress pupils make as they move through the school particularly for the seven to eleven-year-olds. This has been achieved through the introduction of the national numeracy strategy and good teaching with clear learning objectives. The lesson planning shows that the teachers are aware of how to challenge the higher attaining pupils to greater effort and pupils are taught in ability based sets and have individual targets. Standards achieved by seven-year-olds are broadly average. However, poor recording skills especially in Year 1 are slowing progress.
77. Children enter the reception class with a good level of skills in mathematics. By the age of seven the higher attaining pupils are working on place value, are able to add and subtract to 50 and count in 2's, 3's, 4's, 5's and 10's. They add money competently, are handling measurement in centimetres and demonstrate knowledge of the properties of two-dimensional shapes. The higher attaining pupils can record well using squared paper but others find this restricting, which impedes progress. Careful lesson planning and clear instructions ensure that the pupils achieve well. In a Year 2 lesson for instance the pupils began to understand multiplication through examples of repeated addition. Occasionally progress is less rapid and teaching unsatisfactory, this is when the pace is slow and inappropriate behaviour disrupts the flow of lessons and impedes learning.
78. Consistently satisfactory, good or very good teaching of the older pupils ensures that they make good progress and enjoy their lessons. They are encouraged to learn their tables and demonstrate skill; they work well with high numbers and use what they know to solve problems as in Year 6 when working on a problem written in words instead of numbers. Pupils use calculators confidently to check results. Lessons are usually well paced, especially the initial oral section as seen when pupils were engaged in halving and quartering whole numbers. They were keen to show their knowledge and explain how they reached their answer. Good subject knowledge and clear explanations and instructions underpin the lessons for older pupils. Daily plans have clear learning objectives and the setting arrangements for seven to eleven-year-olds are successful. The lower attainers are well taught and challenging targets are enabling them to attain national averages, teachers are conscious of the need to stretch the higher attaining pupils and extension activities are planned. Teachers use the ends of lessons well to assess and reinforce learning.
79. Teachers emphasise good behaviour which enables pupils to concentrate and make worthwhile gains in learning. Pupils' enjoy mathematics and most work hard at all times. They are keen and eager and show commitment and interest in the subject. They have good relationships with their teachers, and show maturity and respect for each other's feelings enabling pupils to make mistakes comfortably.
80. The subject is successfully managed. Most teachers are confident in their approach to the subject and most lessons have a clear structure. There is an appropriate emphasis on basic numeracy and aspects such as shape and space, measurements and data handling are included appropriately. The use of ICT to raise achievement is expanding and good use was made of the computer suite to reinforce work on

fractions. Pupils' progress is monitored through the use of standardised tests, which are being used to set targets for pupils as they move through the school. The co-ordinator monitors planning and observes lessons in the subject; providing good support for colleagues.

## SCIENCE

81. The standards achieved by seven-year-olds are as expected for their age but not as high as reported in the school's last inspection report when they were judged to be above average. The pupils attained average standards in the 2000 end of Key Stage 1 assessments when compared with schools nationally but below the average of schools of a similar background. This indicates that standards are not high enough. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in this key stage.
82. Year 6 pupils are achieving standards above the expected level. This shows an improvement on last year's test results, which were below average when compared with schools nationally and well below the average for similar schools. Standards achieved in tests have been declining steadily in the last four years. Last year's results were worse than the previous year. This indicates that pupils are either achieving much higher standards this year or that they are ill-prepared for written test situations. Pupils with special educational needs are achieving well for their abilities and make good progress through the key stage.
83. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall at Key Stage 1 and promotes sound progress. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. Pupils enjoy science and generally work co-operatively on investigations. They try hard to concentrate on their work and make effective use of the time available. In a Year 2 lesson teaching and learning were good as the teacher and other adults encouraged the pupils to think about fair testing when carrying out their investigation. They explored whether people with the longest legs can jump the furthest and were encouraged to predict, investigate and record their findings. In a Year 1 lesson, the quality of teaching and learning was unsatisfactory. The teacher's difficulty with managing pupils' poor behaviour led to many pupils making very little progress in their investigation. Many did not follow instructions and when the teacher brought them together, many did not listen and disrupted others.
84. The quality of teaching and learning is at least good and often very good at Key Stage 2. This is a significant improvement on the previous inspection where it was "sound or better". Lessons are well planned, resourced and delivered. In all lessons teachers manage behaviour well and pupils are keen to learn. This high quality teaching contributes to higher standards. In Year 6 and Year 3 teaching and learning are very good. In Year 6 the teacher planned the lesson very well to enable pupils to understand and construct a range of circuits using a range of switches. Very good management meant that the pupils carried out their investigation safely and sensibly and all made good gains in learning. A pupil with special educational needs was supported well to show his high level of scientific knowledge and understanding. In Year 3 there was very good teaching as pupils investigated shadows. The teacher resourced the lesson well and made good links with work in history on silhouettes. The pupils were busily engaged and showed good initiative. In a Year 5 lesson the teaching was good and pupils made good gains in understanding up thrust and measuring the force using a Newton meter. The teacher intervened well to extend pupils thinking by asking "What are your results showing?"
85. Good leadership is provided by a keen and enthusiastic co-ordinator. She has a clear

vision for the subject and has worked hard to successfully improve teaching and resources. She has analysed data and clearly identified what needs to be worked on. Indications are that the subject will continue to improve. Good links with numeracy were evident during the inspection but too little use was made of information and communication technology other than to present findings. The science curriculum is well balanced and all required aspects are covered. Assessment is used effectively to identify working groups within the class and to target additional support. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils work co-operatively on investigations and are developing awareness of environmental issues.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

86. Standards are good throughout the school. Pupils display enthusiasm for, and pride in, their work and they have access to a range of techniques and a variety of media. Since the previous inspection, the school has produced a detailed scheme of work which now ensures continuity and progress in the acquisition of skills and experiences in art and design.
87. Standards achieved by seven-year-olds are most often good. Pupils develop skills in colour mixing and had constructed shade charts of a variety of colours. Their observational skills develop well as seen in the drawings of African artefacts. They demonstrated the ability to use colour tones sensitively to paint self-portraits. By eleven years old the pupils' artistic abilities are very well developed. Very good work was seen in connection with a history project on the Ancient Greeks when pupils designed vases and printed impressions of Greek artefacts.
88. The quality of teaching is at least satisfactory and often good. Learning objectives are clear and resources consistently well organised. In a Year 5 lesson, the teacher demonstrated well how to construct a still life by displaying works by Cezanne and Courbett. The pupils approached the task sensibly, co-operated well, shared resources and came to joint decisions on how to set up the still life. The quiet working atmosphere ensured success in their finished product. In a Year 6 lesson the teacher intervened well to extend illustrations of the story of Heracles and to encourage the pupils to improve their drawings. In a Year 1 class pupils were confident when explaining the papier-mâché technique whilst creating masks. Good use is made of sketchbooks to plan designs, sketch objects and to construct imaginative pictures.
89. The subject is well managed by the co-ordinator who checks the medium term planning to ensure coverage of the art and design curriculum. Displays are attractively presented in the school and show a full range of techniques. Art is used well to support other curriculum areas, notably history and geography. The school has addressed the lack of printing and sculpture which was noted in the previous inspection. In Year 5 the pupils were observed making Roman clay candle holders and had previously made Greek plates. The subject is well resourced and enriched by the after school club which is run by the co-ordinator.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

90. Timetable arrangements meant there were few opportunities to observe lessons during the inspection. Judgements were made by looking at previous work and teachers' planning and by discussions with staff and pupils.

91. Standards across the school are in line with national expectations and have been maintained since the previous inspection. The new scheme of work ensures that design and technology tasks become progressively more challenging as pupils move through the school.
92. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have designed and made finger puppets. They have selected appropriate materials and have taken care to finish their puppets in line with their designs. Previous work on a lighthouse and paper weaving show work at an appropriate level for seven year olds. Pupils have designed masks, which were at the making stage. Work showed appropriate use of tools and materials and pupils were clear about their designs and their intentions for the finished products.
93. By the age of eleven pupils undertake increasingly complex "design and make" projects and are encouraged to use their good knowledge and understanding of science and mathematics to support this work. The work on bridges for a recent science week shows pupils have a clear understanding of the design and make process: they identify the need, design, make and evaluate. The work shows accurate measurements of dimensions and load and pupils put their knowledge of forces into practical use. Digital photographs show good quality finished products. Cross-curricular links are good. In Year 3 the teacher has incorporated a task into their history project and pupils have designed and made Valentine cards and "silver" picture frames. In Year 4 pupils have designed and made Egyptian masks and in Year 5 they have made clay lamps as part of their study of the Romans.
94. No overall judgement on teaching can be made as only one design and technology lesson was observed during the period of the inspection. However, displays, scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions demonstrate that the newly adopted scheme of work and enthusiasm of the co-ordinator have improved teachers' subject knowledge, confidence and expertise in this area. In the Year 1 lesson, teaching and learning were good. The teacher had planned the lesson well and provided good examples for pupils to learn about the characteristics of paper. They concentrated well and confidently discussed how they had changed the paper by folding, curling, bending, crumbling and tearing.
95. The planned curriculum provides for distinctive design and technology units of work in a blocked period of time and ensures appropriate coverage of the National Curriculum. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and understanding and has worked hard to monitor and support developments in the subject. Effective assessment systems are in place to monitor standards and suitable resources are available for use, with well-organised lockable work stations in each area of the school. Due regard is taken of health and safety requirements for the safe handling of tools and equipment.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

96. Standards achieved are good throughout the school. Teaching is good; lessons seen were well planned with clear learning objectives that were shared with the pupils, ensuring that they understood the focus of the lesson. The planning and delivery of the lessons reflected a secure grasp of the subject and the linkage between subjects strengthened and enriched the learning. This was exemplified in the work undertaken by the younger pupils who had been studying Australia. They gained knowledge and understanding of a different environment, and this was supported by work in English where they used reference books and dictionaries to find relevant information.
97. As part of their studies of a contrasting locality, older pupils had learned about the



different foods produced in different regions of the world. Through mature discussion, they gained an understanding of different cultures and were able to demonstrate an understanding of how climate is linked to economy.

98. European studies effectively develop pupils' geographical skills and enrich their knowledge and experience of other cultures through art, literature and music. Pupils studying Italy have a good understanding of maps and were able to identify different countries in Europe, both on a globe and in atlases. They have a secure knowledge of appropriate terminology and an awareness of key physical features and how they are represented on maps. They worked confidently with a variety of maps of differing complexity (some of which had been obtained from the Internet) in order to complete the task set. They were mutually supportive and confidently explained their work. They were also able to relate their current study of modern Italy to the study they had undertaken recently on the Romans.
99. The subject is well managed. The co-ordinator has ensured appropriate coverage of the subject throughout the school with an appropriate emphasis on the development of geographical skills. Links between subjects provide rich learning opportunities. Planning is monitored and the co-ordinator has been able to visit all classes and give feedback to teachers. Resources to support the teaching of geography are sufficient and of good quality.

## **HISTORY**

100. Standards have improved since the last inspection, when only higher attaining pupils achieved high standards. Now the majority of pupils, especially in Key Stage 2, achieve good standards, showing good knowledge and understanding of the subject. They are confident and interested in carrying out research from books, the Internet or from observation of documents and artefacts. They communicate their findings well in a range of lively and well-presented written formats, such as posters advocating the pros and cons of the railway system, diary entries from ancient Greek times or recruitment advertising for the Roman Army. No lessons were observed in Key Stage 1, but written and display evidence shows that pupils have worked hard on chronology and sequence as well as producing some interesting work on the Fire of London.
101. By the age of seven, pupils have a clear idea of how things were different in the past, and can begin to put forward their views on the difficulties such differences would have made in people's lives. By the age of eleven, pupils talk with assurance and confidence about the legacy of ancient Greece, recognising that Greek myths have influenced writers throughout the centuries and acknowledging that the Modern Olympic Games are a direct descendant of the ancient ones. They have a good knowledge of Greek art and architecture, and are surprisingly mature in realising that they might not have understood concepts such as democracy if they had studied Ancient Greece earlier in their school careers. In other classes, such as in Year 3, pupils discuss how historical events can be viewed differently according to the effect they have on people's lives. A discussion on whether or not the development of the railways was a good or a bad thing provoked lively debate, with pupils able to put the argument from more than one point of view.
102. Teaching is almost always good and sometimes very good. Teachers are interested in the subject and inspire their pupils to conduct their own personal research. Displays are often good and encourage pupil motivation. The attractive display in Year 3 of a wide range of Victorian artefacts and photographs motivates pupils to ask questions about how people lived in those times and to produce high quality art work based on

artefacts they have seen. The cross-curricular links of history to other subjects such as English and art is a real strength of the teaching and promotes high standards.

103. Although a relatively limited start has been made on issues such as assessment and monitoring, the subject is basically well managed by an enthusiastic co-ordinator who has collected a good range of resources to stimulate pupils' interest in the subject. The recently revised scheme of work gives teachers a clear idea of what to teach and ensures that the subject develops cumulatively throughout the school.

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

104. Standards are in line with expectations for seven and eleven-year-olds. By the time pupils leave the school they have high levels of skill in handling and communicating information and average skills in exploring patterns and relationships. Skills in controlling events and sensing physical data are at present below average but more challenging work is planned for the summer term. The school is well resourced and good use is made of the computer suite. ICT is taught well through other areas of the curriculum and this is particularly evident in how it is used to support English work for drafting and redrafting. It is also used well to support the development of basic skills in mathematics. At Key Stage 1, pupils make steady progress and show positive attitudes to their work. At Key Stage 2 pupils make good progress and produce a good standard of work in the areas covered. Pupils with special educational needs make progress in line with their peers.
105. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 as it was at the time of the last inspection. Teachers plan their work well in line with national guidelines and pupils are now building systematically on their information and communication knowledge and skills. As a result, pupils in Year 2 show appropriate skills across the curriculum. Sound teaching enables pupils to enter, retrieve and store their work. They are taught how to produce text and pictures and to handle and display simple data. Using a controllable toy they learn to write simple procedures to make it move in a pre-determined way. In a Year 2 lesson, careful teaching led to pupils learning to use the basic tools in a package to build faces and convey mood. Pupils have handled data and made graphical representation of their favourite foods and have combined text and graphics to produce a 'wanted' poster.
106. The quality of teaching and learning is good at Key Stage 2 and the school indicates that this is a significant improvement over recent months. In three of the four lessons seen teaching was very good. Teachers in Key Stage 2 are becoming very confident users of information and communication technology and impart their skills well to the pupils. Teachers carefully build on the pupils' knowledge and each step in their learning builds on the previous one well. Recent training has greatly increased teachers' confidence and skills and they make very good use of the laptop and projector for whole class teaching in the computer suite. Pupils show good independence as they work unsupervised before school.
107. Previous work shows that pupils across the key stage can handle and combine text, graphics and data well. They had been taught well how to use the digital camera and use the software to produce their photographs. By the age of eleven they show an awareness of audience when combining text and graphics in their work. Through skilful teaching, pupils have scanned in pictures and text and use hyperlinks and incorporate animation and sound in their presentations. Pupils have been taught to use multi-media and the Internet to access information. Teachers work well with the pupils

and manage to maintain high levels of interest. Teachers ask taxing questions to see if they fully understand what they are doing. Many pupils bring good skills from their experience of using computers at home, though these pupils are not always identified and therefore staff are not always fully aware of the pupils' levels of competence.

108. The co-ordinator provides very good leadership through her enthusiasm and knowledge. She has a very clear vision for the subject and monitors its development very well. All aspects of ICT are planned for and there is a clear, concise well-structured scheme of work in place. The expenditure on information and communication technology has been targeted well and rising standards are a clear indication of the good quality teaching and of money well spent. The subject enhances pupils' personal and social development – they work well in pairs sharing tasks, sensibly discuss which options they will choose and relate positively to peers and adults alike. They take a pride in their achievement. Although the computer suite provides a valuable resource; classes with high numbers of pupils are disadvantaged under present arrangements. The suite is overcrowded and some pupils do not gain sufficient access to computers.

## **MUSIC**

109. Pupils achieve well, demonstrating enjoyment and confidence in making music. The standards achieved are at least in line with expectations for pupils at the age of seven and eleven years old.
110. The standard of singing is good. The older pupils respond well to voice exercises and apply the techniques of good breathing and voice control to their singing, which they execute with good tuning and sensitive regard to dynamics, diction and expression. Pupils are given opportunities to work in small groups to compose music using a range of pitched and unpitched instruments. In lessons, they worked with a good level of concentration and co-operation, listening to each other's ideas and producing compositions that reflect their skills in developing texture and structure, maintaining a steady rhythm and introducing dynamics. When invited to perform their compositions, they did so with confidence and enjoyment. They listened well to each other and were able to offer evaluative and constructive comments.
111. Younger children demonstrated a developing knowledge of how sounds can be produced and controlled, matching different sounds to actions occurring in a story. They were able to suggest simple notation to reflect the different sounds.
112. The teaching of music is good overall. Lessons are carefully planned, featuring clear learning objectives and link strongly with other subjects. Many pupils learn to play the recorder and there are clubs that cater for different levels of expertise. Tuition in a variety of other instruments is provided by visiting specialists and enhances the provision for the older pupils.
113. The subject is well managed by the co-ordinator who is ably supported by other members of staff who have expertise in music. The scheme of work fully addresses the requirements of the National Curriculum, but the co-ordinator is aware that non-specialist staff require further support in the planning and teaching of music. Resources are good with a wide selection of tuned and untuned percussion instruments, electronic instruments plus a range of instruments from different cultures. A wide range of recorded music is available. The music and drama studio is an asset to the teaching of music, giving the pupils space and freedom to compose and practice. Many pupils perform in the school orchestra and the school choir. The musical life of the school is further enhanced by visits from musicians and students

from neighbouring secondary schools.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

114. Standards are in line with expectations for each year group and have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils demonstrate agility and imagination in their dance work. They use space well and are considerate of each others' needs when moving around. Younger pupils responded imaginatively to Australian music. They altered the rhythm, speed and direction of their movements in response to the music. As the lesson progressed they showed the ability to observe each other and constructively evaluate performance. The skills and abilities of the older pupils' work in dance reflect sound progression and development in learning.
115. In gymnastic work, pupils demonstrate developing abilities to link balance activities with different directions and speeds of travel. They work with concentration to refine their work and are confident to evaluate their own and each others' efforts. They showed independence and maturity and gave due regard to safety when requested to set out large apparatus. Work using the apparatus reflected and developed from their earlier floor work. The standard achieved by the older pupils shows good progression in gymnastic skills. The pupils worked co-operatively in small groups, devising and refining sequences of movements featuring clear starting points, well-structured development and appropriate conclusions.
116. Teaching is good. Lessons are well prepared and reflect the scheme of work. Appropriate attention is paid to warming up and cooling down. Positive and supportive comments on the pupils' work helps them to refine their work and make good progress. Visiting sports professionals add to the value of the teaching.
117. All pupils participate in games lessons and also have access to a variety of extra-curricular games activities. The football and netball teams regularly compete with neighbouring schools with success. The pupils have the opportunity to swim, although this was not observed during the inspection week. The older pupils have the opportunity to attend an outdoor pursuits centre. This venture is very successful, giving the pupils experience of challenging activities.
118. The subject is well managed. The co-ordinator has taken up this responsibility recently, and is building on the sound practice already in place. Resources are good with spacious hard and grassed areas plus a well designed adventure playground. Large apparatus is appropriate for primary age pupils and is regularly checked for safety. Small apparatus is in sufficient quantity and appropriately stored.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

119. Only three lessons were seen during the inspection as the timetable involves alternating religious education and personal, social and health education. Scrutiny of work, discussion with pupils and observation of lessons reveals that the standards achieved by seven-year-olds are as expected in the locally Agreed Syllabus but eleven-year-olds reach standards that are higher than expected. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils reach high standards in their knowledge of a range of religions and in their ability to put religious belief into a social and political context. Although similar standards were reported in the last inspection report, there have been improvements, particularly in the focus on academic success in the subject

at Key Stage 2.

120. Religious education has an appropriately high profile in the school. There is a relatively small amount of written recording of the subject although there are some good examples of teachers using the pupils' developing note taking skills to record the outcomes of some very detailed discussions. This was seen in a Year 4 class where the teacher engaged the pupils in a discussion about the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem and the origins of Palm Sunday in the Christian Year. Through excellent questioning in this lesson, the teacher was able to pass on his good knowledge of the political and social factors of the period to put the choices made on that occasion into context, for example, the effect of Jesus' choice of a donkey on the crowd and on the Pharisees. The class clearly understood the implications of the threat of Jesus to the rulers of the time.
121. The quality of teaching is good or better. The teachers have good subject knowledge and use a variety of ways of getting the pupils involved. In a good lesson with Year 6 pupils, the teacher and class discussed what they knew about some of the practices and customs associated with Islam and related these to art forms. The pupils were able to discuss this knowledgeably making good use of the expert knowledge of one Muslim pupil in the class. The pupils show respect for other faiths. The work on Islamic patterns linked well to pupils' mathematical work on symmetry. The school has continued to develop its range of artefacts and other resources since the time of the last inspection and there is a very good range of good quality book resources in the school library.
122. Discussion with Year 6 pupils reveals that they enjoy the subject. Whilst they do not remember every detail about the religions they have studied over the years in school, they have a good knowledge of the major faith practices of Judaism, Christianity, Islam and Hinduism. The oldest pupils show good skills in comparing religions and contrasting their practices.
123. Subject co-ordination is satisfactory. There has been no monitoring of standards in the subject because of the school's focus on other national initiatives. However, the subject is scheduled for review and the co-ordinator's target is appropriately to forge closer links between the locally Agreed Syllabus and the nationally recommended planning.