

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST PHILIP HOWARD ROMAN CATHOLIC
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Hatfield

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117469

Headteacher: Mrs N Pawley

Reporting inspector: David Westall
2414

Dates of inspection: 2 – 5 July 2001

Inspection number: 192189

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Voluntary aided

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Woods Avenue
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Telephone number: 01707 263969

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr N F Matthews

Date of previous inspection: 10.2.1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
2414	David Westall	Registered inspector	Science Art and design Design and technology Foundation Stage Equal opportunities	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
1333	Elizabeth Forster	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
3856	Sandy Wellsted	Team inspector	English History English as an additional language	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
3856	Angela Jensen	Team inspector	Mathematics Music	How good are curricular and other opportunities?
21034	Stewart Smith	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Geography Physical education	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

There are 229 pupils on roll, aged between four and 11, and they are taught in nine classes. The classes are organised into six single age group classes and three classes with mixed year groups. An average percentage of pupils is known to be eligible for free school meals, while the percentage on the school's register of special educational needs is below the national average. No pupil has a statement of special educational need; and two pupils speak English as an additional language. On entry to the school, children's overall standards are broadly average, including in communication, language and literacy, and in their mathematical and scientific understanding.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a sound school with satisfactory leadership. The quality of teaching is sound, overall, and is particularly effective in the youngest and oldest classes in the school. As a consequence, pupils generally make sound, and sometimes better, progress in their learning. The school makes satisfactory overall provision for pupils' personal development, and caters well for their cultural development. There are a number of areas for improvement but these are outweighed by the stronger elements of the school's work, and it provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The teaching is good in the reception class, and enables children to make a good start at the school.
- In Year 6, the teaching is mainly very good, including in English, mathematics and science.
- Pupils achieve well in art and design in Years 3 to 6, and their standards are above average.
- The music lessons, taught by a specialist teacher, are good; and older pupils achieve well in singing.
- The school makes good provision for pupils' cultural development.

What could be improved

- Pupils' standards in information and communication technology (ICT) need to be increased.
- Most subject co-ordinators need a clearer understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in their subjects, across the school.
- Pupils need to be more actively involved in some lessons, and require more opportunities to develop their initiative and decision making skills. When these factors are added to inconsistencies in the implementation of the school's behaviour policy by some teachers, they can have a negative effect on pupils' attitudes to school.
- Pupils' attendance needs to improve, since it is below the national average.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made satisfactory progress in addressing most of the weaknesses identified in the last inspection, in 1997, but some elements still require improvement. The percentage of unsatisfactory teaching has reduced from 14 per cent in 1997 to five per cent in this inspection but some lessons are still over-directed by teachers, giving pupils little opportunity to make their own decisions. The school has responded constructively to criticisms about pupils' standards in art and design, so that current standards in the subject are good in Year 6, and now represent a strength of the school. In addition, schemes of work have been introduced, as recommended by the last inspection, and the school development plan has been significantly improved. However, the monitoring roles of subject co-ordinators required improvement in 1997, and this is still the case.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 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	A	A	C	C	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	A	A	A	A	
Science	B	C	D	D	

The table shows that pupils' results in English in 2000 were in line with the national average and average when compared to the results of similar schools. Inspection findings broadly reflect these results, and show that most pupils in the current Year 6 class are achieving the nationally expected level in the subject, and a significant minority are exceeding this level. Indeed, the written work of the most able pupils is of a high standard. In mathematics, the 2000 results were well above the national average and the average results of similar schools. Current findings in mathematics are not quite as favourable as these results and show that, while a high proportion of pupils reach the expected standards in Year 6, relatively few do better. In science, the test results in 2000 were below the national average and the results of similar schools, but inspection findings show the vast majority of pupils now reach the nationally expected level, and a significant minority do better.

Standards are in line with those expected nationally in all other subjects of the National Curriculum except: in art and design where they are above average in the older half of the school; in geography where they are a little above average in Year 6; and in ICT where they are below average in both Years 2 and 6.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Most pupils enjoy their lessons and have positive attitudes to school. They generally listen well to their teachers, and take particular care over the presentation of their work. A minority of pupils believe the school's detention system is used unfairly. Their attitudes are also negatively affected in lessons where they have limited active involvement.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Most pupils behave well at all times. However, there is some unsatisfactory behaviour in a minority of lessons.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils form constructive relationships with each other. When given the opportunity they work together amicably on shared tasks, and respond well when given responsibility for a range of school duties.
Attendance	The attendance rate is below the national average, mainly due to holidays taken by pupils during term time. Punctuality has improved since the last inspection but the school is rightly concerned about the small minority of pupils who still arrive late.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged 4-5 years (in reception)	aged 5-7 years (in Years 1 and 2)	aged 7-11 years (in Years 3-6)
Lessons seen overall	Good in the reception class, and satisfactory in the mixed reception and Year 1 class.	Satisfactory overall.	Satisfactory overall, but very good in Year 6.

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

The quality of teaching was satisfactory, or better, in 95 per cent of all lessons observed. Good, and occasionally very good, teaching was evident in 47 per cent of all lessons. The most effective teaching is in the reception class, where it is mainly good, and in the Year 6 class, where it is mainly very good. There are also strengths in the teaching in the Year 4 and Year 5 classes; and the music lessons, taught by a specialist teacher, are of good quality.

In the reception class, the teacher has a good understanding of the needs of young children, and the teaching is stimulating and captures their interest. The relationship between the teacher and the class is particularly good, and the children strive hard to respond to her teaching, thriving on the positive feedback they receive for their efforts. In the mixed class of reception and Year 1 pupils, the teaching is satisfactory overall but pupils are sometimes given tasks which are too difficult.

The National Literacy Strategy is being implemented successfully. In the lessons seen, the teaching of key literacy skills was mainly good but opportunities were sometimes missed to

develop pupils' speaking skills. In mathematics and science, the teaching is satisfactory, overall, and enables pupils to make mainly sound progress in their learning.

Most lessons are characterised by good relationships between teachers and pupils, an orderly atmosphere in lessons, clear explanations of tasks and work which is appropriately matched to pupils' learning needs. As a consequence, pupils usually respond positively to their work, and concentrate and persevere with their tasks. However, in a minority of lessons, pupils' behaviour was not managed effectively and this generated a negative climate in classes. This often happened when pupils are not actively engaged which frustrated them and led to their disinterest, off-task behaviour and underachievement.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Children in the reception class benefit from a good range of learning opportunities, and the curriculum for older children is sound overall. However, not all the requirements of the ICT curriculum are taught and pupils need more opportunities to develop their decision making skills in lessons.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The school makes sound provision for these pupils.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The one pupil who is at an early stage of English language acquisition is taught well. Staff take care to rephrase or explain things to make sure he understands, and help him to express his thoughts clearly in speech and writing. Provision for the other pupil with English as an additional language is sound.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school makes sound provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development, and good provision for their cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Procedures for ensuring the health, safety, care and protection of pupils are effective; and procedures for assessing pupils' academic performance and personal development are sound.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher has sound leadership and management skills. She is highly conscientious, develops positive relationships with her staff and provides an effective role model through her good teaching skills. She checks teachers' planning and observes lessons, and provides teachers with valuable feedback which has a beneficial effect on their professional development. The headteacher now needs to secure a consistently positive climate in all classes, and to develop the roles of subject co-

	ordinators. The deputy headteacher works closely with the headteacher and provides sound support.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body provides sound support for the management of the school. They debate the information they receive from the school, including test results, very thoroughly but recognise their insights would be increased by more regular visits to observe the school in operation. The governors have worked effectively with the headteacher to formulate the school development plan, and have a clear view of the school's future. Not all of the ICT curriculum is taught, otherwise statutory requirements are met.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The results of statutory and non-statutory tests are analysed carefully, and the headteacher demonstrates sound analytical skills when she evaluates the lessons she observes. However, most subject co-ordinators do not monitor and evaluate the quality of learning and teaching in their subjects with enough rigour.
The strategic use of resources	The school budget is analysed very carefully, and financial planning is linked appropriately to the school development plan. Overall, the school makes sound use of its resources.

There are sufficient teachers, and their knowledge of the subjects of the National Curriculum is generally secure. However, they would particularly benefit from in-service training to increase their confidence and skills in ICT. The school's accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory overall.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most believe the school expects children to work hard and to achieve well. • Most believe the teaching is good. • Most believe pupils make good progress in the school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some believe the school should provide a better range of activities outside lessons. • Some believe the school is not well led and managed. • Some believe the school should work more closely with parents.

Inspection findings confirm that the school expects pupils to work hard and to do their best; and show the quality of teaching and pupils' progress are mainly sound but sometimes better. The after-school clubs are rather limited but pupils benefit from a good range of educational visits, and from visitors to the school, to enrich the curriculum. Leadership and management are sound but there are opportunities for improvement. Overall, there is scope for the school to sometimes demonstrate more clearly that it listens to the views of parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. On entry to the school, the attainment of most children is broadly average. In the reception class, children achieve well as a result of good teaching, while the older reception children who are in the mixed reception/Year 1 class make satisfactory progress. Overall, children's standards generally match those expected nationally for children of similar ages when they start Year 1, including in communication, language and literacy, and in their mathematical and scientific understanding.
2. The results of the Standard Assessment Tests (SATs) in Year 2 in 2000 were well above the national average and the average results of similar schools in reading; and were above the national average and the average results of similar schools in writing. In mathematics, the Year 2 SATs results in 2000 were in line with the national average and the results of similar schools. In science, the teacher assessments show the percentage reaching the expected standard in Year 2 was above the national average, but the percentage reaching a higher level was below the national average and well below the results of similar schools.
3. The results of the SATs in Year 6, in 2000, were in line with the national average in English, and were average when compared to the results of similar schools. In mathematics, the results were well above the national average and average results of similar schools; and the science results were below the national average and the results of similar schools. The results of the 2001 SATs were received by the school during the inspection. They show that the overall English results in Year 6 are a little lower than in 2000, while the science results are an improvement. In mathematics, a higher percentage reached the expected level in Year 6, but a much smaller percentage exceeded this level. At present, there are no national averages to compare with these results.
4. In English, inspection findings show that the achievements of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are at least sound in relation to their starting points at the beginning of Year 1. Pupils acquire a particularly thorough grounding in the basic skills associated with reading and writing, and most achieve the nationally expected levels for their ages in Years 2 and 6. Few do not reach these standards, and a significant minority do better. Indeed, in Year 6, the written work of the most able pupils is often of a very high standard. In their final year at the school, most pupils read fluently and expressively, and are able to understand a variety of texts written for different purposes. For example, in a very good Year 6 lesson, they were able to identify the specific phrases and vocabulary used by the writer of a holiday brochure to appeal to a young audience, and were aware of the reassuring messages about supervision and safety which were 'directed' at parents. Their writing is characterised by well-formed handwriting, and by spelling and punctuation which is usually correct. The vast majority of pupils use spoken standard English correctly, and have satisfactory listening skills. However, in a minority of lessons, pupils' listening skills are not well promoted; and there are many occasions when opportunities to develop their speaking skills are missed.
5. In mathematics, inspection findings are not quite as favourable as the 2000 SATs results. Nevertheless, they show that pupils' achievements in the subject are

sound, overall, in the school; and pupils generally progress well in the Year 5 and the Year 6 class. In both Years 2 and 6, most pupils demonstrate standards which match the levels expected for their ages; and overall attainment is broadly average. In general, pupils' standards are better in number operations than in using and applying their mathematical skills to solve problems.

6. In science, inspection findings show that pupils' achievements from Years 1 to 6 are satisfactory, overall, in relation to their starting points at the beginning of Year 1. A high proportion of pupils in Years 2 and 6 achieve the nationally expected standard, and the significant minority which achieve above this level in both years represents sound achievement for the school. Across the school, pupils make better progress in developing scientific knowledge than they do in developing the skills of scientific investigation. In this respect, there are strong similarities between pupils' achievements in mathematics and science, since there is scope for pupils to do better in enquiry and problem solving work in both subjects.
7. In design and technology, music and physical education, overall standards are in line with the national expectation in Years 2 and 6, and represent sound achievement. A good feature is pupils' singing in Year 6, which is of high quality. In history, there was insufficient evidence to judge pupils' standards in Year 2 or whether pupils are achieving as well as they should in Years 1 and 2. However, their achievements are mainly sound but sometimes good in the older half of the school, and standards match those expected nationally in Year 6. In geography, pupils' achievements are sound in Years 1 to 5, and their standards are satisfactory for their ages in these year groups. However, Year 6 pupils achieve well as a result of good teaching, and reach standards which are a little above average, as a consequence. In art and design, pupils' achievements are mainly sound but sometimes good in Years 1 and 2. Overall standards are in line with those expected nationally in Year 2, but examples of good work are also evident. In Years 3 to 6 pupils achieve well in art and design, and their standards are above average, including in their final year at the school. The only subject in which pupils make unsatisfactory progress, overall, is in ICT. Standards are below the nationally expected standards in Years 2 and 6. Some important elements are not covered so pupils have no opportunities to achieve in these areas. The last inspection, in 1997, found that standards were at least in line with those expected nationally in all subjects, except in art and design in Year 2, where they were a little below average.
8. Pupils with special educational needs make mainly sound, but occasionally good progress in their learning. When account is taken of their starting points at the age of five, most achieve satisfactory results in the national tests for 11 year olds. Some do better than might have been anticipated in reading but, overall, their results broadly reflect their capabilities. The most able pupils also make sound progress overall. Some of the written work by the most able pupils is of a very high standard for their age by the time they reach the end of their final year in the school. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are making consistently sound progress.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Most pupils in the school enjoy learning, try hard to do their best in lessons and take particular care over the presentation of their work. They take pleasure from the many enrichment activities the school provides, and they are enthusiastic participants in extra-curricular clubs and sporting activities.

10. In the great majority of lessons, pupils listen well to their teachers and to one another, and they are keen to demonstrate what they know or have learned during whole-class discussions. Usually, too, they are keen to get on with independent work and can be trusted to work responsibly without being supervised directly. This same trustworthiness is also evident in pupils' homework: most pupils read at home regularly and learn spellings, and there are very good examples of projects in which pupils have spared no effort and have invested a great deal of time, for example in history.
11. Pupils with special educational needs enjoy the warm support of their peers. They generally work hard to improve their work and, where relevant, their behaviour. However, pupils with learning difficulties associated with emotional/behaviour special educational needs are sometimes discouraged when they receive negative feedback on their performance or behaviour. This has the effect of making the least resilient pupils amongst them disaffected in some lessons. Their self-esteem is sometimes very low, and the arbitrary way in which rewards are occasionally given does not necessarily convince them of their own worth.
12. Most pupils also behave well at all times. They know and abide by the school rules, take pride in the rewards they are given for their achievements and, where necessary, comply with the school's system of sanctions without complaint. In class discussions on moral and social issues, for example in English lessons, most pupils demonstrate a mature ability to appreciate, and to respect, others' viewpoints, and there is no evidence of systematic bullying, of racial or religious prejudice, or of disrespect associated with gender. Pupils from all backgrounds represented in the school normally work well together in class, co-operating fairly and constructively in paired or group work when asked to do so. From the security of their own religious faith, pupils talk in a tolerant and respectful way about other major world faiths and about other religious practices. In the playground, as is often the case, girls tend to choose to play with girls, and boys with boys but, again, there is no evidence of animosity linked to difference in gender. In their role as prefects, many older pupils enjoy the opportunities they are given to care for younger children, for example during wet playtimes. At lunch-time, pupils queue quietly and wait their turn to be served without fuss. They welcome visitors politely, are happy to accommodate them within their midst, and answer questions thoughtfully and courteously.
13. Pupils enjoy taking responsibility for routine jobs such as setting up the hall ready for assembly or ringing the school bell, and they rise well to the occasions when they are asked to take leading roles, for example by playing the piano in front of the assembled school. The pupils from each class who represent their peers as elected members of the school council take pride in their role and demonstrate a very clear understanding of the democratic need to consult those they represent. The older pupils show great maturity in the way they fulfil their roles in key positions as chairperson, secretary and treasurer. Through fund-raising for charities and through other activities such as singing to the elderly in the community at Christmas, pupils demonstrate their practical support for others less fortunate than themselves. In lessons, for example in science and in English, and through activities such as an imaginative recycling project, they also reveal a strong sense of moral responsibility for the stewardship of the Earth and for the care of their immediate environment.
14. Pupils excel when given the opportunity to take the initiative in their learning, as in a very good formal debate in Year 6. However, opportunities such as this are quite rare, and in a number of lessons seen, in both the younger and older halves of the

school, a significant number of pupils quickly became disaffected and off-task when expected to listen passively throughout lengthy expositions or question and answer sessions led by teachers. Some clearly feel disenfranchised from the learning process, particularly when, as sometimes happens, their views are not sought even when they volunteer to answer questions. It also happens when they receive strongly negative feedback about relatively minor misdemeanours such as not sitting up straight or, in one case, sneezing rather loudly. During the inspection, inspectors became aware of an understated but genuine unhappiness on the part of a significant number of pupils who feel that the detention system is not always administered fairly, and there is also some concern, amongst pupils of both sexes, that boys and girls are not always accorded the same privileges or awarded the same punishments for similar infringements of the behaviour code. There have been five fixed-term exclusions during the last academic year (1999-2000). These were for the same pupil.

15. Levels of attendance at the school over the last two years have been below the national average and this is unsatisfactory. This is mainly due to the amount of holidays taken in term time. Unauthorised absence is in line with the national average and the school takes care to follow up reasons for absence with parents. Registration procedures fully meet statutory requirements and punctuality has improved since the last inspection. However, the school is rightly concerned about the small minority of pupils who still arrive late. Registration periods and lessons start promptly.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. The quality of teaching was satisfactory, or better, in 95 per cent of all lessons observed. Good, and occasionally very good, teaching was evident in 47 per cent of all lessons. The most effective teaching is in the reception class, where it is mainly good, and in Year 6 where it is mainly very good. There are also strengths in the teaching in the Year 4 and Year 5 classes; and the music lessons, taught by a specialist teacher, are of good quality. The percentage of unsatisfactory teaching has reduced from 14 per cent in the last inspection, in 1997, to five per cent in the current inspection.
17. The teaching in the reception class is a strength of the school. The curriculum is well planned and provides children with a good range of learning opportunities. The teacher has a good understanding of the needs of young children, and the teaching is stimulating and captures their interest. Children are encouraged to be independent, and good use is made of open-ended questions such as "Why do you think that?" or "What do you think will happen if ...?". The relationships between the teacher and the children are particularly good, and children strive hard to respond to her teaching, thriving on the positive feedback they receive for their efforts. In the mixed class of older reception children and Year 1 pupils, the teaching of reception children is satisfactory overall. These children are appropriately being introduced to some elements of learning in the statutory curriculum for Year 1 pupils, and the teaching enables them to make sound progress. However, children are occasionally given tasks which are too difficult, for example, in science, a lesson based on the formation of shadows was inappropriately matched to their level of understanding. It was also unsatisfactory that the boys in this class took part in a physical education lesson, on a hot day in the school hall, still wearing their school ties.

18. In English in Years 1 to 6, there is no unsatisfactory teaching, in contrast to the situation when the school was last inspected. The National Literacy Strategy is being implemented effectively and, in the lessons seen, the teaching of key literacy skills was good overall, and very good in the Year 4 and Year 6 classes. In the mixed Year 1/2 and 4/5 classes, the teaching is satisfactory overall but there are sometimes weaknesses in the management of pupils' behaviour which restrict their progress. In addition, teachers sometimes miss opportunities to develop pupils' speaking skills in literacy lessons, some of which include a heavy emphasis on listening at the expense of more active learning methods. In the best lessons, teachers have established very good working relationships with their pupils. They value and respect each pupil's contribution, engage pupils as partners in the learning process, and raise pupils' self-esteem by giving positive and constructive feedback on their achievements.
19. In mathematics, teachers are making sound use of the National Numeracy Strategy, and the teaching is satisfactory, overall. However, there is considerable variation, with very good teaching in Year 6 and evidence of unsatisfactory teaching in the Year 1/2 class. In the best lessons, pupils benefit from teaching which provides them with sufficient challenge and well focused support to take their learning forward. Unsatisfactory teaching is demonstrated when pupils' errors and misunderstandings are not identified, when they have too few opportunities to explain their methods of calculation, and when behaviour management is not secure. Teachers provide pupils with ample opportunities to develop their numeracy skills but pupils would benefit from more chances to use and apply these skills in problem-solving situations. Overall, however, the teaching enables pupils to make sound progress in mathematics; and the oldest pupils progress well as a result of effective teaching.
20. In science, the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, and enables pupils to make mainly sound progress in their learning. Unsatisfactory features are sometimes evident in lessons, while pupils in Year 6 benefit from particularly effective science teaching. The teaching in Year 6 is characterised by the skilful use of questions to probe pupils' understanding; the introduction and reinforcement of scientific vocabulary; and by the teachers' very secure subject knowledge. Weaker elements, which restrict pupils' progress in science, include a lack of pertinent questioning to encourage pupils to explain their thinking in some lessons, tasks which are too prescribed to allow pupils to make decisions and to use their initiative, and work which is inappropriately matched to their scientific learning needs.
21. In art and design and design and technology, insufficient lessons were observed to make a secure judgement about the overall quality of teaching. However, evidence from an examination of pupils' completed work shows the teaching enables pupils to make mainly sound, but sometimes better, progress in art and design in Years 1 and 2, and good progress in the subject in the older classes. In design and technology, pupils' work shows the teaching enables them to make sound progress, overall. Too few lessons were seen in Years 1 and 2 in geography and history to judge the teaching. In history, there was also insufficient evidence in pupils' work to assess the progress they make, but in geography the completed work shows they make sound progress. In geography, the teaching of older pupils is satisfactory overall, and Year 6 pupils progress well as a result of good teaching. In history, the lessons seen in Years 3 to 5 were mainly good and otherwise satisfactory. In music, the lessons observed were taught by a specialist music teacher, from the

local education authority. She has good teaching skills and enables pupils to progress well in her lessons. In ICT, the lessons seen were broadly satisfactory but included unsatisfactory elements. Overall, pupils make insufficient progress in the subject, and evidence suggests that teachers need to increase their knowledge about ICT.

22. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is mainly sound and often good. All teachers plan suitably different work for group activities during the literacy and numeracy hours, and additional adult support in the form of classroom assistants is allocated appropriately to make sure that the pupils who most need help actually receive it. Classroom support assistants are well briefed about the lesson content and they interact very constructively with pupils, giving enough guidance to make sure that pupils can complete tasks satisfactorily but not taking over and doing the work for them. Most class teachers have good relationships with all their pupils, including those with special educational needs and the more able, and they value the contribution each pupil makes, irrespective of ability, background or special need. In most classes and in most lessons, therefore, pupils with special educational needs, and the more able pupils, are included in all activities and are encouraged and helped to do their best. However, the targets set in pupils' individual education plans (IEPs) which are drawn up by their class teachers are not always very precise, whether for learning or behaviour. As a result, the most specific areas of a pupil's learning needs may not always be addressed as thoroughly as they should be. In some lessons, where the management of behaviour is insecure, pupils do not always sustain concentration well and this affects the rate of their progress. The one pupil who is at an early stage of English language acquisition, and speaks English as an additional language, is taught well. Staff take care to rephrase or explain things in a variety of ways to make sure he has understood, help him to express his thoughts clearly in speech and writing, and generally give him the praise and encouragement he needs to succeed.
23. Most lessons are characterised by good relationships between teachers and pupils, an orderly atmosphere in lessons, clear explanations of tasks and work which is appropriately matched to pupils' learning needs. As a consequence, pupils usually respond positively to their work, and concentrate and persevere with their tasks. However, in a minority of lessons in both the younger and older halves of the school, teachers are not fully confident in their control of the behaviour of some pupils, and this can have a detrimental effect on the rapport developed with their classes. The situation sometimes stems from teachers placing far too much emphasis on passive listening in their lessons, rather than engaging pupils in sustained discussion or investigative approaches to work. Overall, pupils have insufficient opportunities to develop their decision making skills and to show initiative in their learning. The lack of involvement and 'ownership' which sometimes follows clearly frustrates some pupils and leads to their disinterest, off-task behaviour and underachievement.

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

24. The curriculum is broad and reasonably balanced. In the reception class, the children are given a good range of opportunities to develop their learning, including their personal, social and emotional development. The curriculum for pupils in

Years 1 to 6 complies with the Curriculum 2000 requirements in all subjects except ICT, where some of the required elements are not taught.

25. Sufficient time is allocated for developing the key skills of literacy and numeracy, and the implementation of the national strategies in both these areas is having a beneficial effect on pupils' learning. The curriculum ensures that pupils make at least satisfactory overall progress in all subjects, except in ICT. However, pupils often have limited opportunities to take responsibility for their learning or to show initiative in lessons, across the school. Indeed, in some lessons they have little chance to put forward their ideas. In science and mathematics, pupils would benefit from more opportunities to develop their enquiry, problem solving and investigation skills.
26. The school makes satisfactory provision for pupils' personal, social and health education including sex and drugs education. The school council and regular discussions in personal and social education sessions contribute positively to this area. All the classes have recently learnt about healthy eating; and an effective lesson for the oldest pupils on the dangers of smoking was observed during the inspection. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum, and can participate fully in all school activities.
27. The 1997 inspection identified the need to develop schemes of work in English, science, geography and design and technology. These are now in place and are having a beneficial effect on pupils' learning. However, the school recognises the need for a scheme of work in music to promote continuity in pupils' learning as they move through the school.
28. There is a limited range of extra-curricular activities. These include drama, football, netball and choir. Some of these are only externally funded for a limited period but the school has sometimes financed their extension. However, pupils benefit from a good range of educational visits, and visitors to the school, to enrich the curriculum.
29. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is sound. While class teachers are mainly responsible for drawing up pupils' IEPs, work planned for the pupils also draws variously on recommendations and advice from the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO), the headteacher, and, where relevant, outside specialists. Support for pupils with learning difficulties associated with literacy is very sound overall, and there is also some limited but useful support for a small number of pupils who have learning difficulties in mathematics and in other subjects. Various relevant assessments are used to identify pupils needing support both on entry to the school and as they move through the year groups. Pupils' subsequent progress through the attainment levels of the National Curriculum in English, mathematics and science is closely monitored. The most able pupils in each year group have recently been identified, and most teachers provide extension work which is appropriately challenging for these pupils, especially in English. The very few pupils who need medical support are looked after well, and most pupils with behavioural needs also receive appropriate support. However, there are instances in some lessons when the management of behaviour is inappropriate to the needs of certain pupils, and it would be timely for the school to review the way its behaviour policy is interpreted into practice.
30. The school provides accommodation for a pre-school on site and there are close links with the staff there to ensure that there is no duplication in the planning of

topics. The children make use of the school's facilities and this, together with the planned induction programme to introduce them to school routines, helps them settle quickly and be ready to learn in the reception class. Pupils have a sound range of opportunities to mix with others in sporting, musical and drama activities, and the school invites other local schools to join them when speakers such as authors or artists visit the school. The school has effective links with the Catholic secondary schools to which most pupils transfer.

31. The school makes good use of the community as a learning resource. Pupils visit the local area as part of their studies in history and geography and make use of the public library as part of the curriculum in English. Links have been established with the local supermarket in developing a programme to teach pupils about healthy eating. The school invites a wide variety of visitors into the school to make literature, art and music come alive for the pupils. Pupils are also encouraged to think about the wider community and initiate or participate in charity fund-raising events to help those less fortunate than themselves. Pupils benefit from regular contact with the clergy from the parishes served by the school and its activities are regularly reported in parish magazines.
32. The school makes sound provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development, and good provision for their cultural development. In the parents' pre-inspection meeting, some expressed the view that the climate of the school was not as positive as in the past. The fact that the last inspection, in 1997, judged the school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development to be very good tends to support these views.
33. Pupils' spiritual development is promoted satisfactorily through assemblies and religious education lessons. Pupils are also given regular opportunities to pray throughout the school day. 'Prayer corners' provide a meaningful focus point in all classrooms, and it is clear from the prayers written by pupils and displayed or 'housed' there, that pupils value prayer as a means of developing their own relationship with God. The school has strong links with the local parish church of St Peter, whose priest, Father John Boland, is involved in the planning of all school and class masses, and who prepares pupils in Year 3 for the sacraments of First Confession and First Holy Communion. In some subjects, such as history, pupils are encouraged to reflect on human experience and to empathise with the feelings of others. For example, they learn about Harriet Tubman's work in rescuing slaves in the United States, and they learn how Florence Nightingale chose to serve others when she left behind a comfortable life in England to tend soldiers wounded in the Crimean War. In English, pupils are encouraged to reflect on the feelings of various characters in the stories they read and to appreciate different points of view. In a particularly effective English lesson in Year 4, pupils were prompted to consider the uniqueness and preciousness of the Earth and all life on it. In this lesson, in particular, the teacher's handling of the topic inspired awe and wonder in the pupils and, as a result, a shared experience struck a spiritual chord in all those present. Just such a feeling is also apparent when pupils sing in harmony during assemblies. Nevertheless, in many lessons, and in some assemblies, the practical realities of routines to be accomplished, work to be done and pupils to be managed, tend to dilute the spiritual ethos that the school undoubtedly wishes, and intends, to promote.
34. The school's promotion of pupils' moral and social development has both strengths and weaknesses but is satisfactory overall. Through the gospel values promoted in assemblies and religious education, pupils are taught to aspire to the highest moral

principles and to view their own experience and behaviour towards others in the light of what can be learned from the life and teachings of Jesus. In this way, pupils are taught the difference between right and wrong in a positive way. This enables them to become increasingly aware of the need to make appropriate choices in life and to treat all other people with respect: they develop self-awareness and the will and desire to make good moral judgements. However, a different strand of the school's provision for pupils' moral and social development, namely its behaviour policy, is less successful in achieving its aims, mainly because it is interpreted in different ways by different people and because the system of sanctions and rewards which accompanies it is not always applied fairly and consistently. For example, observations during the inspection show that, whatever teachers' best intentions may be, there is no shared view of what constitutes 'good behaviour' during lessons, nor, indeed, of how good behaviour is to be secured. In the best lessons seen, teachers promote pupils' self-esteem through equal partnership in the learning process and through achievement, and in so doing, they secure pupils' whole-hearted commitment to learning along with a total willingness to 'be good.' In such lessons, no 'rewards' other than the feeling of being valued as an individual and of having one's ideas listened to and appreciated are necessary. However, there are some lessons where pupils are not managed very well: 'being good' seems to be equated with being obedient and following instructions to the letter rather than playing an active role in learning, and an undue emphasis on pupils as listeners, rather than as speakers with valuable ideas to offer, tends to prevail. The sometimes very liberal allocation of house points or sweets as rewards on the one hand, and the sometimes repeatedly negative feedback given to some pupils do little to secure either goodwill or good behaviour. Indeed, it is the apparent unfairness of such a system that tends to make some pupils discontent, whether or not they themselves are affected directly.

35. The school does much that is positive to develop pupils' social skills and sense of social responsibility. Pupils are encouraged to work co-operatively during lessons, in team-games and sports and in community activities such as music festivals. Prefects in the school are given opportunities to take responsibility for younger children, while the school council involves pupils of all ages and helps to promote an understanding of individual and collective responsibility in a very constructive way. Pupils are also helped to develop an awareness of practical ways of helping those less fortunate than themselves, for example through fund-raising. Through personal and social education lessons, they are encouraged to listen carefully to others and to be aware of others' feelings. For example, they are taught to look out for children who might feel lonely or isolated, and to 'include' them in their games. However, an anomaly in the school's provision also concerns playtime arrangements, since pupils say they are actively discouraged from playing outside with children other than those in their own class. The headteacher states that this is not school policy, and is concerned that the perceptions of these pupils are incorrect.
36. The school makes good provision for pupils' cultural development, including the raising of multicultural awareness. In religious education, history, art, music and geography, pupils are introduced to other cultural traditions, to other major world religions as well as to Christian beliefs, traditions and practices, and to past civilisations. Some topics in history are dealt with in considerable depth and detail, as in the study of ancient Egypt in the Year 4 class. Those pupils in the school who come from minority ethnic cultures are valued and are encouraged to contribute to their peers' knowledge and understanding of different cultural traditions. Music is a strong feature of school life: many pupils learn to play musical instruments and there

is a thriving school choir. There is a tradition of strong Christmas productions in the school, and a recent drama project culminated in a performance at the Hatfield festival. Reading is strongly promoted throughout the school as a worthwhile and rewarding activity, and authors were invited to read to the children during World Book Day. Pupils in all year groups benefit from well-planned educational visits. Some visits bring history to life, some are designed to develop pupils' geographical skills and knowledge, and some to enrich their experience of art.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

37. Overall, the school has sound procedures for monitoring academic performance and personal development. Assessment information gathered soon after pupils start at the school is analysed and used to inform planning for the youngest pupils; and the reception staff keep useful notes on their observations of pupils' progress and learning. This information, along with the results of statutory tests in Years 2 and 6, and annual optional tests in English and mathematics, is used systematically to inform target setting through the school. Challenging targets are agreed with the local education authority for attainment in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6. Numerical targets for each pupil in English and mathematics are set against National Curriculum levels to track progress and identify children who require additional help. Teachers also set six monthly targets for these two subject areas and these are usefully shared with parents. If required, a target to improve an aspect of behaviour may also be set. Each child has short-term targets in English and mathematics, for example to learn their four times table, or to use full stops consistently, and this is sound practice. There are regular spelling and tables tests, and teachers check pupils' progress to ensure that future tasks reflect pupils' needs. Lessons generally have clear learning objectives which are shared with pupils and, often, pupils are asked to share what they have learnt at the end of lessons. This helps teachers to judge progress in learning and, along with brief notes made on weekly planning, to inform future teaching. The last inspection found that the quality of teachers' marking was inconsistent, and this is still the case. The best marking helps pupils understand how to improve, but sometimes pupils receive little guidance from marking. Teachers have carefully analysed examples of pupils' work to ensure they have common interpretations of National Curriculum standards in English and mathematics, but there is scope to develop this practice with other subjects, particularly in science. Some subject co-ordinators have recently started to analyse pupils' work to assess the overall progress and standards achieved by pupils as they move through the school. However, this form of monitoring is at an early stage of development, and needs to be more rigorous.
38. The school is a community where the pastoral support, safety and security of pupils is well managed. There are clear guidelines for pupils and staff about these matters, so all are aware of the school's expectations. Adults know the pupils well and generally live up to the aims of respect and care for the pupils. Most of the time, relationships between teachers and pupils are good. Support staff are effectively used to give extra attention and encouragement to the few pupils who have particular pastoral needs. Communication between teachers and parents is mainly good and this ensures that problems can be identified quickly and strategies can be planned to address pupils' needs.
39. Child protection matters are well handled with adults having clear guidelines on awareness and procedures. There are no pupils currently being looked after by

adults other than their parents. The school closely monitors attendance and reminds parents from time to time of their obligation to ensure regular and punctual attendance. However, there is scope to spell out more forcefully the impact on learning that occurs when children are taken on holiday during term time. The school is an active participant in the local initiative to raise attainment in Hatfield schools and is aware of the need to develop further strategies to address poor attendance.

40. The school has a detailed behaviour policy which has an appropriate balance between rewards and punishments. However, evidence suggests this policy is not consistently applied across the school. In most classes and at playtimes this policy is effectively put into practice, with praise and encouragement resulting in good behaviour and positive attitudes. However, in a few classes there is more emphasis on control and punishment than on encouraging pupils to develop self-discipline and enjoyment in the learning process. This leads to a lowering of self-esteem amongst some pupils and has a negative effect on their attitudes to learning. The inconsistent application of punishments also leads to pupils having a feeling of unfairness about the system and a few pupils have feelings of resentment about the way they are treated. There is scope for the school to review its approach to behaviour and to ensure that all staff follow the best practice evident in the reception class and in Year 6.
41. The school maintains appropriate documentation to record and report to governors the rare instances of racist behaviour in the school. The senior management team provides sensitive support for pupils who have pastoral or medical needs to help them cope with school routines.
42. Pupils have a well-planned programme of personal, health and social education which ensures they learn life skills such as road safety and healthy eating. Appropriate coverage is given to drugs and sex education. Pupils also benefit from regular opportunities within their classes to discuss and share their feelings, and this makes a positive contribution to their personal development. Most pupils joining the school have attended the pre-school on site so they are familiar with the buildings. There is a sound programme to introduce them to school routines and help them settle quickly into school life.
43. The school maintains thorough records of minor accidents and incidents. Those occurring at lunch-times are routinely shared with the class teacher, and this is good practice. There are well-established procedures for fire safety and the storage of medicines. The school buildings and grounds are regularly inspected for health and safety hazards and the caretaker is alert to any hazardous debris that may appear on the school site overnight. The buildings are well maintained, very clean and tidy and provide a safe environment for pupils

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

44. Parents value the grounding in the Catholic faith that their children receive and the standards of education provided. Some have themselves attended the school, and there is a sense of tradition that parents feel comfortable with. They find the class teachers easy to talk to and know they will listen to any concerns about their children. This creates a positive atmosphere for sharing information about pupils' learning or personal development.

45. Parents receive a sound range of information about the school and its activities. The prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents provide clear information about the school and its expectations. Termly newsletters give adequate warning of school events, and brief summaries of what is to be taught are included at the beginning of the school year. The school has held occasional meetings to explain new educational strategies, such as for literacy, and the governors' annual meeting usually includes a workshop on some aspect of what is taught in the school. Parents are appropriately invited to a meeting to hear about how the school teaches drugs and sex education to the oldest pupils.
46. Parents have regular opportunities, through the year, to discuss progress and targets for improvement, and they appreciate the amount of time the staff are willing to devote to this. The open day, held towards the end of the school year, is popular with parents and gives pupils the chance to show their work as well as providing parents with opportunities to see the work displayed in other classes. Annual written reports give sound indications of academic standards attained, as well as targets for improvement in English and mathematics. Reports on pupils' personal development, based on records maintained through the year, are perceptive and pertinent.
47. For their part, parents give good support to the school. They are happy to help with jobs around the school, to accompany visits and to assist with the after-school activities. There is a dedicated group of parents, former parents and friends of the school who regularly give their time to hear children read, and this has a positive impact on pupils' progress. The vast majority of parents also help their children with homework tasks and listen to them read at home. However, a significant minority of parents take their children on holiday during term time. The active 'Friends Association' organises well-supported social and fund-raising events, and the money raised helps towards improving the resources and environment of the school.
48. Overall, parents have positive views about the school, and these were reflected in the pre-inspection meeting for parents and in their questionnaire returns. However, the responses of a minority of parents at the meeting show they do not feel the school has sufficiently addressed their concerns about mixed age classes, and they do not believe the school is as successful as it should be in promoting pupils' attitudes to learning. These views, linked with the feelings of a minority that they do not feel comfortable discussing their concerns with the headteacher or deputy, are reflected in the 18 per cent of questionnaire returns which show parents do not feel the school works closely with them, and the 20 per cent which show parents do not feel the school is well led and managed. Inspection findings show that the leadership and management of the school are satisfactory, overall, but also show the management of pupils' behaviour sometimes has a negative effect on pupils' attitudes to school, and that the school sometimes needs to demonstrate more clearly that it listens to parents' views.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

49. The governing body provides sound support for the management of the school, and is well placed to make an even more significant contribution. It comprises committed individuals who have considerable experience and expertise, particularly from their own work in management. As a consequence, the information they receive from the headteacher, and the results of statutory testing, are debated

rigorously. The chair of governors has regular discussions with the headteacher, focused on pertinent issues, and the finance committee is effective in planning and managing the budget. Since the last inspection, the governing body has become much more involved in the creation of the development plan, and governors now have a clear strategic view of the school's future. However, significant recent changes in the membership of the governing body have had an understandable effect. In particular, the governor with responsibility for literacy has only just taken on the role, and a replacement has yet to be found for the previous numeracy governor who was particularly well informed. In addition, the governor with responsibility for special educational needs is a teacher at the school, which is not an ideal situation. As a consequence of the above, governors recognise there is scope to increase their awareness of the school's work through focused visits to observe it in operation, especially to learn more about its provision for literacy and numeracy. Statutory requirements are met, except that not all of the required elements of the curriculum for ICT are taught.

50. The headteacher, who was appointed from January 1998, has sound leadership and management skills. She is highly conscientious, develops positive relationships with her staff and provides an effective role model through her good teaching skills. She checks teachers' planning and provides staff with useful feedback which has a beneficial effect. The headteacher also observes teaching, and her lesson observations demonstrate sound analytical skills. In meetings with individual teachers following these observations, she ensures that good practice is recognised and there is mutual agreement about the areas for improvement. However, the headteacher's monitoring would be improved by more frequent lesson observations; and there is no programme of observations for the current term or future terms, to ensure that her observations are part of a coherent schedule of classroom visits. It is particularly important for the headteacher and senior staff to take steps to deepen their awareness of the variation in pupils' attitudes to the school, and to take action to secure improvements. It is very unusual indeed for so many pupils to complain explicitly about their treatment in a school, and the senior management needs to reflect very carefully on the cause of this dissatisfaction from a minority of its pupils.
51. The deputy headteacher works closely with the headteacher and provides sound support. Co-ordinators check the planning for their subjects, willingly provide advice to their colleagues when it is requested, and audit and organise resources. However, their procedures for monitoring their subjects are generally underdeveloped, as they were when the school was last inspected. For example, the English co-ordinator has observed few literacy lessons and has no programme for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in the subject; there is currently no numeracy co-ordinator, but the last one did not observe any numeracy lessons or analyse pupils' work to judge pupils' standards and progress across the school; and the science co-ordinator does not study pupils' work with enough rigour to develop a clear overview of standards, and has never observed science lessons. As a result of weaknesses in the monitoring procedures of most co-ordinators, they are in a relatively weak position to identify strengths and weaknesses in their subjects, and to target areas for improvement. Overall, co-ordinators have conscientious attitudes to their work but need more guidance, through in-service training, to develop their roles. The headteacher needs to ensure this is provided.
52. The school development plan has been formulated through effective leadership by the headteacher, deputy headteacher and the governors who have invested considerable time to ensure it is a comprehensive document, with clear strategic

aims. The last inspection found the structure of the 1997 plan required improvement, the financial implications of initiatives were not identified and it did not extend over a sufficiently long period. All of these deficiencies have been addressed, and the current plan is a coherent document which promotes school improvement. Indeed, the plan appropriately identifies a number of areas for improvement which are reflected in this report including the development of the work of co-ordinators.

53. Arrangements for the leadership and management of special educational needs provision are satisfactory. The SENCO is a part-time teacher who gives useful advice and support to colleagues and who carries out the administrative part of her role well. However, she has little time outside her commitment to class teaching to devote to other aspects of special educational needs work such as monitoring provision or attending review meetings. She is, therefore, supported in her role by the headteacher who maintains appropriate links with parents and with external agencies. The special educational needs governor is also a class teacher in the school. Her support, like that of the headteacher, is welcomed by the SENCO who finds her comments on special educational needs matters perceptive and helpful. However, the role of the governor as a 'critical friend' who monitors special educational needs provision is less easy to define since she lacks the objectivity of an outside view. Nevertheless, all statutory requirements associated with special educational needs provision are met: appropriate policies and procedures are in place, professional contacts with outside agencies are constructive and helpful, and the report on progress in regard to the school's special educational needs provision is duly included in the governors' annual report to parents. The progress made by pupils with special educational needs is monitored closely, and pupils are moved to different stages of the special educational needs register in the light of the progress they make. The school is aware that the targets in pupils' IEPs are not always as precise as they might be, either for learning or behaviour, and this is an area of special educational needs work which requires particular attention.
54. The day-to-day management of the school is sound. Routines are well organised and help to promote an orderly atmosphere in the school. The administration of the budget is carried out efficiently by the headteacher, with the able support of the conscientious school secretary/bursar. Spending is also carefully monitored by the finance committee of the governors. The committee provides good support for the management of the school. There are regular meetings and the budget is analysed with particular care during the spring and early summer terms. Financial planning is securely linked to the initiatives on the school development plan; and the school takes care to obtain value for money when purchasing equipment or improving the school building. The governors have also discussed the value of support provided by classroom assistants, and have allocated additional finance for this in a well-considered manner.
55. Overall, the quality of teaching in the school is sound, with good practice particularly evident in the reception and Year 6 classes. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall in all subjects of the National Curriculum, except in art and design in Years 3-6, where they make good progress, and in ICT where they should do better, across the school. Overall, pupils' behaviour and attitudes are satisfactory, although there is scope for improvement in both these elements on occasions. The school makes sound provision for pupils' personal development, and caters well for their cultural development. When all these factors are considered, along with the school's income, they show the school provides satisfactory value for money.

56. There are sufficient teachers, and staff have the expertise and experience to cover the age and ability range of the pupils. Children in the reception class and in the Year 6 class benefit from particularly well-informed teaching. The subject knowledge of teachers is generally secure, although some would benefit from in-service training to increase their knowledge and confidence in ICT, geography and design and technology. Classroom assistants develop positive relationships with pupils, and are well briefed by teachers. They have good skills and make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning.
57. The school has an adequate policy for equal opportunities but there is scope to review it to identify the full range of groups to which it applies and to monitor more closely its consistent implementation across the school. The progress of boys and girls is monitored but this practice has not yet been extended to cover pupils from ethnic minorities.
58. The school's accommodation is satisfactory, and classrooms have sufficient space. It is kept in a clean condition by the conscientious caretaking staff, and is enhanced by displays of pupils' work, carefully presented by the teachers. The accommodation is on several levels and is difficult for wheelchair access. There is no toilet provision for the disabled. There is sufficient hard play space outside, and a good school field. However, the outside environment could be made more interesting for the pupils and, while the youngest children in the school have easy access to an outside area, this needs to be more secure. Resources for learning are satisfactory overall.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

59. In order to improve standards, the leadership and management of the school, the quality of learning and attendance, the school should include the following issues in its post-inspection plan.

- Raise standards in ICT by ensuring that all the required elements of the curriculum are taught, and that teachers improve their subject knowledge (see paragraphs 7, 21, 24, 115, 116, 118, 119 and 120).
- Improve the role of co-ordinators by developing a structured programme of rigorous monitoring procedures, evaluations and action planning to identify and address areas for development in their subjects (see paragraphs 37, 51, 79, 86, 96, 106, 111, 114, 120, 125 and 131).
- Secure positive attitudes to learning with all pupils by:
 - (i) providing more opportunities for pupils to be actively involved in some lessons, to develop their decision making skills and to use their initiative;
 - (ii) ensuring that the implementation of the school's behaviour policy is consistent and appropriate, is seen to be fair by the pupils and is beneficial to their personal and academic development.
(see paragraphs 11, 14, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 25, 29, 34, 40, 48 and 50).
- Improve the attendance rate of pupils by making parents more aware of the negative effects on pupils' learning which result from children taking holidays in term time (see paragraphs 15, 39 and 47).

In addition to the key issues listed above, the governors should also consider the following, less important, weakness for inclusion in its action plan:

- ensure the IEPs for pupils with special educational needs always include targets which are sufficiently precise in order to inform the teaching (see paragraphs 22 and 53).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	63
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	27

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	10	37	48	5	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	n/a	229
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	n/a	30

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	n/a	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	n/a	34

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.9
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3
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	16	12

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	14	15
	Girls	11	11	12
	Total	26	25	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (94)	89 (97)	96 (97)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	15	15
	Girls	12	12	12
	Total	27	27	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	96 (94)	96 (100)	96 (100)
	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	22	24

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	20	20	21
	Girls	18	16	17
	Total	38	36	38
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	83 (82)	78 (89)	83 (86)
	National	75 (70)	72 (68)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	20	21	20
	Girls	18	17	17
	Total	38	38	37
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	83 (82)	83 (84)	80 (80)
	National	70 (68)	72 (60)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	6
Black – other	0
Indian	3
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	181
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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)	10.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.9
Average class size	25.4

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	85

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	n/a
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	n/a

Total number of education support staff	n/a
Total aggregate hours worked per week	n/a

Number of pupils per FTE adult	n/a
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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	5	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	2000/2001
	£
Total income	444,391
Total expenditure	440,070
Expenditure per pupil	1,939
Balance brought forward from previous year	16,435
Balance carried forward to next year	20,756

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	228
Number of questionnaires returned	116

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	49	45	5	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	42	52	3	2	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	36	55	6	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	29	53	12	3	3
The teaching is good.	53	41	3	1	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	34	53	11	1	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	56	35	6	2	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	64	33	1	1	1
The school works closely with parents.	30	50	16	2	2
The school is well led and managed.	35	43	17	3	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	46	46	5	1	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	19	37	24	10	10

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

60. Children are usually admitted to the reception class at the beginning of September if their fifth birthday is before the end of the next March, and in January if their birthday is between March and August. At present, there are two classes with reception children: one just contains reception age children, including the youngest, while another class has the older reception children, together with Year 1 pupils. On entry to the school, children's overall standards are usually broadly average, including in communication, language and literacy, and in their mathematical and scientific understanding.
61. The quality of teaching is good in the reception class, and is satisfactory for reception children in the mixed reception and Year 1 class. As a result, children make mainly good progress in their learning in the younger class, and mainly satisfactory progress in the reception/Year 1 class. In the reception class, the curriculum is well matched to their needs, and the teaching is stimulating and captures their interest. The teacher uses skilful questions to encourage children to think about their work and to express their ideas; and her good relationship with the class benefits children's learning. In the mixed reception and Year 1 class, the reception children receive a sound range of learning opportunities and are appropriately being introduced to elements of the Year 1 curriculum. While the teaching is satisfactory, overall, in the class, reception children are sometimes given tasks which are too difficult and this restricts their progress. At the end of their reception period, children's standards are generally in line with those expected nationally for pupils of similar ages, in all areas of learning.

Personal, social and emotional development

62. Children make good progress in their personal development in the reception class, and sound progress in the reception and Year 1 class. This aspect of children's learning is taught well in the reception class and is satisfactorily promoted in the reception/Year 1 class. The supportive and caring ethos which is so evident in the youngest class helps children to settle quickly at school and to be happy there. A wide range of learning opportunities is provided for these children to develop good personal and social skills in this class, and to promote their emotional development through talk, enquiry and play. As a result, children are very responsive to the activities on offer and are eager to explore new learning.
63. Children play together co-operatively, for example in the role-play corner, with water, and when using 'small world' toys or construction kits. In this class, children are also given ample opportunities to make decisions and to develop independence. In both the reception and the reception/Year 1 class, children have learned the difference between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour, and listen carefully to their teachers. Classroom assistants make a valuable contribution to children's personal development, and support and encourage them effectively. Children generally meet the standards expected nationally in the Early Learning Goals for personal, social and emotional development by the end of the Foundation Stage.

Communication, language and literacy

64. All children in the reception class make good progress in lessons as a result of effective teaching. They build securely on their pre-school experience of language and literacy and advance at an appropriate rate through the 'stepping stones' towards the Early Learning Goals in communication, language and literacy. In the reception/Year 1 class, reception children make generally sound progress and are prepared for the early stages of the National Curriculum.
65. Most children listen well to stories, to their teachers and to one another. Children in the reception class begin to develop confidence in themselves as speakers and gradually learn to respond to their teacher's questions. In both classes, children make good progress over time in reading. Most children in the reception class can identify rhyming words when they listen, with obvious enjoyment, to the story 'This is the Bear and the Windy Night'. The higher attaining children can talk about what the characters might be feeling and saying, and can read some sentences from the teacher's Big Book with appropriate expression and phrasing. Lower attaining children sometimes struggle to apply their knowledge of phonics when they try to work out unfamiliar words, but the more competent readers read expressively and accurately. They talk with understanding about what has happened in a story, about what might happen next, and about the various characters. Children in the reception/Year 1 class can read many common words on sight and can readily identify many initial and final letter sounds. Almost all reception children can form most letters accurately and can build simple three-letter words such as 'bus' using their knowledge of phonics. The most able children can already write a few sentences independently, in at least one case incorporating rhyming words, and can make plausible attempts at spelling 'difficult' words such as 'double-decker'. Lower attaining children still rely on their teacher to record their ideas for them in writing, but they have mastered some essential concepts such as the left to right direction of writing on the page, and the need for spaces between words, and they can copy what their teacher writes with reasonable accuracy. Overall, children's standards in communication, language and literacy are in line with the national expectations of the Early Learning Goals at the end of the Foundation Stage.

Mathematical development

66. This area of learning is well taught in the reception class, and is satisfactorily taught in the mixed reception/Year 1 class. By the end of the reception year most children will have met, and some exceeded, the standard expected nationally in the Early Learning Goals for children in mathematics. All children in the reception year can count to ten, many to 20, and a few to 100. Older children use mathematical language with confidence, such as, "I count on four more in my head to make nine". Adults help children to understand and apply their growing understanding of how to use mathematics, for example, by using addition to calculate shopping list totals in the class shop, making mosaics to understand pattern, and by identifying full, nearly full or half-full containers.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

67. Overall, this aspect of children's learning is well taught in the reception class and is satisfactorily taught in the reception/Year 1 class. In the youngest reception class, children make good progress in developing their scientific understanding of the world when learning how different surfaces affect how well toys travel over them. In

a good lesson observed in this class children experimented with a range of toys to discover that they moved whether by electricity, by the force of a wound elastic band, by the wind or by pushing or pulling them. They made their own model boats with simple sails and experimented, by blowing or by using fans, to make them move in the water tray. Evidence from children's completed work suggest they make sound progress in developing their scientific understanding in the reception/Year 1 class. However, in the lesson seen, children made limited progress because the concept taught was beyond their grasp.

68. Sound foundations for the study of history are laid in the reception class and in the reception/Year 1 class. On a daily basis, children use language associated with the passing of time, for example when they talk about the changing dates or when they recall the immediate past. They consider ways in which they have changed since they were born, noting their accomplishments at various ages and stages of development. They talk about their own birthdays and about other important family events, and they make simple time-lines on which they place pictures in order of age. They look closely at trees and learn that certain trees 'started' a long time ago, as can be seen from the size of their trunks. In a study of 'things that move', they learn about transport in the past and talk about the changes from horses and carts, through trams to steam trains and modern cars. Developing the skills of historical enquiry, they ask questions about changes in transport and make simple comparisons between 'old' and 'new' vehicles. Children have been environmental detectives looking into the school locality and have learned how colour links to the environment, for example red for danger, and special coloured clothes for safety and visitors. The importance of visits and first-hand experiences is supported by good use of the local environment and more adventurous visits to places like Beckonscot model village. Most children can use simple computer programs to reinforce their knowledge of number or to create pictures, and they make sound progress when using recycled materials and construction kits to make simple models. Overall, the children meet the standards expected nationally in the Early Learning Goals in their knowledge and understanding of the world at the end of their period in the Foundation Stage.

Physical development

69. Children make good progress in physical development in the younger class and sound progress in the reception/Year 1 class. This aspect of children's learning is taught well in the reception class and is taught satisfactorily in the reception/Year 1 class. By the time they are five, children are growing in confidence in their movements and developing their hand-eye co-ordination. Structured physical education lessons develop skills in throwing and catching, and dance provides opportunities for expressive movement linked to the pace and style of music. Finer physical skills such as using scissors or holding pencils are appropriately developed. While children do have easy access to an outside area, this needs to be made more secure, and the school requires more of its own large play apparatus, including wheeled toys, to develop children's physical skills. At present, it borrows resources from the adjacent playgroup. Overall, children generally reach the standards expected in the Early Learning Goals for physical development at the end of the Foundation Stage.

Creative development

70. Children know and sing a range of songs by heart and are beginning to respond to requests to sing strongly or quietly. They are making good progress in learning how to play triangles, bells and tambourines to beat to the rhythm of a song. In the youngest class, children progress well when creating their own plays, using puppets, and when using the role-play corner. In both classes, children achieve sound standards for their ages when drawing and painting, and the older children sometimes achieve particularly well in painting. Overall, children generally reach the standards expected in the Early Learning Goals for creative development at the end of the Foundation Stage.

ENGLISH

71. Most pupils entering the school at the age of five demonstrate levels of attainment in communication, language and literacy which are broadly average for their age. Across the school, pupils acquire a particularly thorough grounding in the basic skills associated with reading and writing. Overall, pupils tend to do slightly better in reading than in writing, a finding which mirrors results nationally.
72. In the national tests (SATs) for Year 2 pupils in reading in the year 2000, the school's results were well above the national average and also well above the results of similar schools. In writing, the results were above the national average and also above the results of similar schools. In the same year, the English results for pupils in Year 6 were broadly in line with the national average and also with the results of similar schools.
73. Inspection findings show that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make at least sound progress in relation to their starting points at the beginning of Year 1. Most pupils achieve the levels expected for their ages in Years 2 and 6. Few do not reach these standards, and a significant minority do better. In Year 6, the written work of some of the most able pupils is outstanding, and reflects the very good English teaching they receive.
74. Pupils between the ages of five and seven acquire a very secure grasp of the many skills involved in reading and writing. By the time they are seven, most pupils read confidently and accurately, using an appropriate range of strategies to decode unfamiliar words. They observe the cues to phrasing and expression offered by the punctuation, and they demonstrate their understanding of mood and characterisation well, for example by changing their tone of voice when reading dialogue. All pupils can recall what has happened in a story, predict what might happen next, and describe the main characters. The most able readers are developing personal preferences in their reading and can talk about favourite books and authors with real interest and enthusiasm. They also understand most of the words in what they read, and they have few problems dealing with the different uses of language. A few of the less able readers are sometimes puzzled by the meanings of words and by deeper meanings hidden in the text, and a very few pupils occasionally struggle to apply their knowledge of phonics when trying to work out unfamiliar words. Most pupils know how to use information books to find things out, and have a sound understanding of the ways in which graphics and layout can be used to create specific effects. The written work of most seven year olds is very well presented for their age. Most pupils have developed consistently neat, legible, well-formed handwriting and they take great pride in producing their best work, in this respect, at all times. They write competently, for a suitable range of purposes,

in English and in other subjects. Almost all pupils understand the use of basic punctuation, and their work is written in sentences which are correctly punctuated. The most able pupils organise their ideas logically, combine ideas skilfully within complex sentences, include descriptive detail when appropriate, and generally match the style and vocabulary of their writing to its intended purpose and audience. Their stories are coherent, interesting, and engage the reader, while their written work in other subjects, such as history, is well informed, organised appropriately, and characterised by the inclusion of relevant technical terms. Most pupils have a good grasp of common spelling patterns and rules. They draw on their knowledge of these, and on their general awareness of phonics, when attempting to spell unfamiliar words.

75. By the end of Year 6, most pupils are able to read and understand a variety of texts written for different purposes. For example, in a very good lesson seen, they read and analysed the persuasive language used to promote adventure holidays for children. They can pick out the phrases and vocabulary used by the writer of a holiday brochure specifically to appeal to a young audience, and they are also aware of the reassuring messages about supervision and safety which are 'directed' to parents. They also demonstrate a good level of understanding of the use of presentational and graphic devices to organise information in ways which make it accessible and appealing to readers. All pupils understand the main ideas in the stories they read, and almost all read fluently and expressively. Common strengths of the written work of pupils in Year 6 include technical accuracy and control. Most pupils produce well-formed cursive handwriting, spell most words correctly, and use punctuation accurately. Most have learned to set out their work in paragraphs. Only the work of the few lower attaining pupils has real weaknesses related to these 'secretarial' aspects. The written work of the most able pupils is outstanding, and not only in respect of its technical accuracy and the high standard of presentation. In addition, it reveals a very mature certainty in the choice of words for their impact, in the use of literary devices such as metaphor and simile for effect, and in the deliberate use of long and short sentences, for example to create a feeling of suspense. In history, individual research topics produced by higher attaining pupils are of a very high standard indeed: they testify to pupils' skills as readers, to their ability to analyse and select relevant information, and to their powers as writers of information texts in their own right.
76. Given the right circumstances, most pupils of all ages show the ability to listen well and to act upon what they have heard or are told. Occasionally, however, in lessons where pupils are not managed very well, a number of pupils affect an air of quiet but cultivated disinterest, and they appear not to listen, particularly during the 'shared discussion' time at the beginning of the literacy hour. The vast majority of pupils use spoken standard English correctly and become increasingly fluent and articulate throughout their time in the school. Most learn to adapt the register and tone of their speech, as well as their vocabulary, to suit their different audiences and to match specific contexts. Pupils in Year 6 apply the conventions of formal debate successfully when they discuss the motion that 'Children should not be allowed to watch television', and they show great respect for the views of others, as well as acknowledging the conventions of turn-taking. A very few pupils in the school seem unaware of the social conventions associated with speech and sometimes use language that is inappropriate for a given occasion or for a particular audience.
77. Since the last OFSTED inspection in 1997, the National Literacy Strategy has been introduced and is having a beneficial effect on the English curriculum as well as

upon standards. It provides a supportive framework for teachers' planning and for pupils' progress in reading and writing. The school is also introducing the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's (QCA) framework and guidance for speaking and listening, and there are planned opportunities, outside the literacy hour, for pupils of all ages to develop skills as speakers. However, there are also many times during literacy hours when pupils would benefit from being more actively engaged than they are at present. In some lessons teachers place far too much emphasis on passive listening rather than engaging pupils in sustained speech or investigative approaches to work. The lack of involvement and ownership of learning which follows clearly frustrates some pupils in a few classes and sometimes leads to disinterest, off-task behaviour and under-achievement.

78. At the time of the last OFSTED inspection, work was not always matched to pupils' needs and abilities, and some teaching was unsatisfactory. There was no unsatisfactory teaching of English in the current inspection. In the majority of lessons, the teaching was good or better, and it was otherwise broadly satisfactory. Teachers now plan work to extend the most able pupils as well as modifying tasks for, or giving extra support to, those pupils with special educational needs. Support staff are well briefed, interact well with pupils receiving targeted support and with small groups, and make a significant contribution to the pupils' progress and attainment. Teachers and support staff take care to repeat or rephrase questions and instructions when necessary to help pupils understand, a strategy which is useful both for pupils with special educational needs and for the one pupil who is at an early stage of English language acquisition. All teachers plan their lessons well and make sure pupils are aware of what they are meant to learn. They give clear instructions and explanations, and they monitor work in progress well during group activities. All teach basic literacy skills well and make sure that pupils maintain high standards in the presentation of their work. All provide good role models for reading aloud, and all select appropriate texts for 'shared-text' work during the literacy hour. In the best lessons seen, in Years 4 and 6, teachers have established very good working relationships with their pupils. They value and respect each pupil's contribution, engage pupils as partners in the learning process, and raise pupils' self-esteem by giving positive and constructive feedback on their achievements, irrespective of ability. Very good examples of the modelling of writing by teachers was seen in both these classes. Elsewhere in the school some weaknesses did occur in teaching which was judged to be satisfactory overall. These involved a lack of pace, teachers' insecurity about lesson content, and inappropriate or ineffective strategies for the management of behaviour, including a very heavy emphasis on listening at the expense of more active learning methods.
79. Assessment in English is developing well. The results of various tests, including statutory and optional SATs, are used to identify pupils and groups needing support as well as to monitor the progress of individuals. All pupils have individual literacy targets and these are helping them to develop a satisfactory level of awareness of what they need to do to improve their work. There are, however, significant variations in the quality of teachers' marking. For example, there is some very good marking in the exercise books of pupils in Year 6 which gives very precise indications as to the strengths and weaknesses in pupils' work, although some of the marking in other year groups is far less diagnostic and therefore far less helpful. Resources for English are adequate and are generally well matched to the ages and abilities of the pupils. However, the strict adherence to structured materials (which support pupils' progress in reading well) also means that few pupils read as widely as they might from the work of well known children's authors and poets, and

few of the older pupils are able to discuss a variety of fictional genres. Opportunities for pupils to practise and develop English skills in other subjects vary. For example, there are very effective links in history, and most teachers also ensure that pupils acquire appropriate technical terms in all other subjects. However, opportunities for pupils to record their work in their own words are sometimes missed in geography, and teachers do not always give pupils the chance to explain the strategies they use in mathematics or to explain their methods in science. Some pupils are given too few opportunities to talk in discussions during literacy hours, and in English lessons generally, too little of the work is initiated by pupils. There has been some useful monitoring of teachers' planning and of pupils' written work by the English co-ordinator, and she has also observed a few lessons and discussed her findings with the teachers concerned. However, there is no systematic programme for the monitoring of teaching and learning in English. There remains a real need to identify the significant strengths that exist in English teaching in the school and to disseminate the best practice. At the same time, weaknesses associated with the inappropriate management of behaviour also need to be addressed.

MATHEMATICS

80. On entry to Year 1, the mathematical knowledge and understanding of most pupils are broadly average. The results of the national mathematics tests (SATs) at the end of Year 2 in 2000 were in line with the national average and the average results of similar schools. Inspection findings show that pupils' achievements are generally sound in relation to their starting points at the beginning of Year 1, and their overall standards generally match the nationally expected level in Year 2. However, some pupils mark time in lessons when they do not have the opportunity to extend their learning or try out or explain different ways of tackling problems. A significant minority of pupils attain above the average national expectation in number work but, in common with many other pupils, do not achieve as well when using and applying these skills. More able pupils also make slower progress in their understanding of measures, shape and space since the tasks are not as well matched to their needs as tasks in number work. Overall, pupils' progress in mathematics, including for those pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory, in Years 1 and 2.

81. The results of the Year 6 SATs in 2000 were well above the national average and the average results of similar schools. The results were well above the national average because of the significant proportion who achieved a level higher than that expected nationally. The proportion of children achieving a higher level has dropped in 2001 although an increased proportion has attained the level expected for their age. There are no national statistics available with which to compare the 2001 results. Inspection findings broadly reflect the 2001 results; the majority achieve the level expected for 11 year olds and a few do better. By the age of 11, pupils have a secure understanding of the number system, of measures, shape and space and are learning to handle data effectively. Pupils' standards in using and applying their mathematics could be better as the development of these skills is not a regular feature in lessons in Years 3, 4 and 5. Overall, however, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress in the older half of the school, and generally progress well in the Year 5 and the Year 6 classes. When the school was last inspected, pupils were making good progress in mathematics, across the school, and the majority were achieving at least the nationally expected standard.

82. Overall, the quality of teaching is sound. In the lessons seen in Years 1 and 2, teaching ranged from unsatisfactory to satisfactory, with the majority being satisfactory. Teachers have secure knowledge in the teaching of number and often use additional time at the beginning of the school day for children to practise their number knowledge. The amount of emphasis on using and applying pupils' mathematical skills needs improvement, for example, by using questioning more effectively to encourage pupils to share different ways they have found of finding an answer or solving a problem. In the unsatisfactory lesson, pupils had little opportunity to develop their mental number skills in calculating counting on in fours or to understand how counting on could help them work out a number problem. The majority of pupils tackle their mathematics tasks conscientiously and respond well to teachers' questions, but some are negative when they receive little encouragement or praise from the teacher. The tasks given for more able pupils to develop their understanding and use of shape, space and measures are sometimes the same as for other pupils and do not extend their learning sufficiently. In the lessons seen in the older half of the school, teaching was satisfactory for pupils in the Year 3 and Year 4 classes, and in the mixed Year 4/5 class. However, it was good in the Year 5 class and very good in Year 6. In the Year 6 lesson, the verbal problems involving subtraction of decimals were well matched to five different groups, ensuring that all pupils were challenged. The more able pupils were given an investigation on digital roots and were able to identify a pattern in the results. The teacher used her time well when the groups were working by helping the middle ability pupils to tackle the same challenge as the higher ability group.
83. The teachers are making sound use of the National Numeracy Strategy. The three-part lesson structure is established and planning is satisfactory. The use of questions to assess what pupils have learnt is not a strong feature of all teaching and sometimes sessions to review learning at the end of lessons are too brief. When these sessions are used effectively teachers are able to assess pupils' learning and take it even further. A good example of this was seen in Year 6 when the lesson ended with the pupils carrying out a quick investigation into the digital root of a three-digit number. Some pupils were intrigued by their findings and remarked "I am going to try and find out at home what happens with a four digit number".
84. In all areas of the school, pupils' ability to use ICT to develop their mathematical knowledge is limited. This is because teachers lack confidence in this area and, until recently, resources have been limited. Pupils use mathematics to help their learning and record their findings in some other subjects. For example, pupils are involved with number work when taking measurements of plants in science or using their data-handling knowledge when drawing and interpreting graphs in geography.
85. Teachers often make brief notes on pupils' progress on their weekly planning to inform their teaching and, for older pupils, keep records of results in weekly tables tests. Assessment is used appropriately to set sufficiently challenging targets for pupils in Year 6. The school uses non-statutory tests and the results of the Year 2 statutory tests to track pupils' progress from year to year. However, the school is not yet analysing the statutory test results or the pupils' answers with sufficient rigour to evaluate which areas of mathematics require improvement. Six monthly targets are set for each pupil for mathematics and shared with parents. Pupils also have shorter term targets, for example, to learn the three times table, and this is sound practice.

86. The school has no numeracy governor and the co-ordinator's role is temporarily being covered by the headteacher. The previous co-ordinator checked teachers' planning and assisted the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy by ensuring each teacher observed effective mathematics teaching in other schools. However, the co-ordinator did not observe mathematics teaching at St Philip Howard, and there are no records of the results of work sampling. As a consequence, the co-ordinator's role was relatively underdeveloped. Resources are sufficient, and a range including number squares, number lines, whiteboards and counting equipment, is used effectively in lessons.

SCIENCE

87. On entry to Year 1, the scientific knowledge and understanding of most pupils are broadly average. The percentage of pupils achieving the expected level for their age in the Year 2 statutory teacher assessments in 2000 was above the national average and above the average results of similar schools. However, the percentage exceeding this level was below the national average and was well below the results of similar schools. The results of the 2001 teacher assessments show that a similar percentage reached the expected level as in 2000, but the percentage reaching a higher standard has increased significantly.
88. At present, there are no national averages to compare with these results in Year 2. Inspection findings show the achievements of pupils in Years 1 and 2 are generally satisfactory in relation to their starting points, although Year 1 pupils sometimes mark time when they are given inappropriate tasks. They broadly reflect the most recent assessment results, and show that the vast majority of pupils reach the expected level in Year 2, and overall standards are broadly average.
89. The overall results of the science SATs in Year 6, in 2000, were below the national average and were also below the average results of similar schools. However, the 2001 results show an improvement, with all pupils attaining the expected level for their age, and an increase in the percentage reaching a higher level.
90. Inspection findings show that pupils' overall achievements, across Years 3 to 6, are satisfactory. Pupils' standards are mainly average in Year 6, and the scientific knowledge of a significant minority is above average. Across the school, pupils make better progress in developing scientific knowledge than they do in developing the skills of scientific enquiry, and more able pupils sometimes underachieve in this important element of their work in science.
91. In Year 1, pupils can recognise and name different sources of sound and light, and make satisfactory progress when learning that they use their senses to experience the world around them. They also achieve standards which are satisfactory for their ages when discovering that some materials are changed when they are heated; and that ice cubes melt at different rates according to the temperature of the air around them. However, they make little progress when lesson content is poorly matched to their early stage of scientific understanding, and is more appropriate for older pupils. For example, while pupils are able to understand that light comes from different sources, they have understandable difficulty in grasping complex ideas about the formation of shadows including the differences between those cast by the sun and a torch. In addition, while they can describe common materials in simple language,

for example, whether they are smooth, rough, bumpy or shiny, they make little progress when asked to decide whether materials are translucent, transparent or opaque, since they have little grasp of the meaning of these terms. In Year 2, pupils know that some materials can be changed by bending or stretching them; and learn that plants need water to remain healthy. They can also create a simple electrical circuit, using a battery, and know that different living things are found in various habitats.

92. In Year 3, pupils make satisfactory progress when learning that the amount of light or water a plant receives can affect its growth. However, they make limited gains when copying unnecessarily complex diagrams of the human ear, and when copying texts provided by their teacher. In Year 4, pupils can draw simple electrical circuits, using the correct symbols; and Year 5 pupils can undertake investigations to show their pulse rate increases after exercise. However, Year 5 pupils mark time when undertaking simple experiments to discover if plants need light to remain healthy and more able pupils, in particular, are insufficiently challenged when required to discover if materials are magnetic or non-magnetic. In Year 6, pupils make the most effective progress, across the school. They achieve well when learning about the dangers of smoking, and understand the importance of healthy eating and dental hygiene. They achieve satisfactory standards when learning if materials are transparent, opaque or translucent; and appreciate that feeding relationships exist between plants and animals in a habitat. They know that light travels in straight lines, and how the path of the sun affects the shadows that are created.
93. The quality of teaching in science is satisfactory overall, and enables pupils to make mainly sound progress in their learning. Unsatisfactory features are sometimes evident in lessons, while pupils in Year 6 benefit from particularly effective teaching. Teachers generally have satisfactory subject knowledge but evidence suggests there is scope for improvement when pupils are sometimes given tasks which are too hard in Year 1 and too easy in the older half of the school. Very good teaching in Year 6 is characterised by skilful use of questions to probe pupils' understanding; the introduction and reinforcement of scientific vocabulary; work which is well matched to pupils' learning needs; and by the teacher's very secure subject knowledge. Weaker elements, which restrict pupils' progress in science, include a lack of pertinent questioning to encourage pupils to explain their thinking in some lessons, tasks which are too prescribed to allow pupils to make decisions and to use their initiative, and work which is inappropriately matched to pupils' scientific learning needs. In a minority of lessons, in both the younger and older halves of the school, teachers are not fully confident in their control of the behaviour of some pupils, and this can have a detrimental effect on the positive rapport developed with their classes. However, pupils' behaviour was mainly good in the lessons seen, except in the Year 1/2 class and the Year 4/5 class, where it was satisfactory, overall. Pupils generally concentrate well, and they work together effectively on shared tasks.
94. The last inspection, in 1997, found the quality of teaching varied from good to unsatisfactory but was mainly good. In common with the current situation, pupils were making satisfactory progress, overall, in the subject and standards were mainly in line with those expected nationally in Years 2 and 6.
95. Teachers' use of the current scheme of work for science is mainly satisfactory but there is scope for improvement, since the development of pupils' scientific

investigation skills needs a higher profile in most classes. There is unnecessary repetition of some work which has already been mastered, and teachers sometimes decide to set tasks which are inappropriate.

96. The science co-ordinator's monitoring of teachers' planning means she is aware of some of the areas which need attention; and the school development plan appropriately includes a focus on science in the near future. At present, the co-ordinator does not analyse samples of pupils' work with sufficient rigour to develop a clear overview of pupils' progress and standards across the school, and she has not observed science teaching. As a consequence, she is in a relatively weak position to identify and target areas for improvement. The co-ordinator is keen to develop her role, and now requires clear guidance and structured support from the school's senior management to enable her to make a more significant contribution to the quality of teaching and learning in the subject. Resources for science are adequate.

ART AND DESIGN

97. Overall, pupils make sound progress in art and design in Years 1 and 2, and their standards, at the age of seven, are generally in line with national expectations. However, there are also examples of good achievement in these classes; and the school has made effective progress since the last inspection when standards were a little below average in Year 2. In Years 3 to 6, pupils generally achieve well in art and design, and their standards are mainly above average, including in their final year at the school. This also represents good progress since the last inspection, when standards were average in Year 6.
98. The youngest Year 1 pupils make sound progress when creating colourful fish paintings, and their copies of the paintings of Monet are good for their ages. Older Year 1 pupils have made large collage pictures, after studying reproductions of tapestries from St Albans cathedral, and these demonstrate satisfactory standards. They also make sound progress when making repeating patterns, using simple printing techniques, and create carefully observed drawings of different fruits. In Year 2, pupils achieve satisfactory standards when making collage pictures; and their drawings of trees reflect mainly sound, and sometimes good, achievement.
99. In Year 3, pupils create their own carefully painted designs, based on the work of Clarice Cliffe, and achieve well when making coil pots from clay. Year 4 pupils have discussed the sculpture of a range of artists, and have created their own sculptures, using plaster. These demonstrate high achievement and are well above average for Year 4 pupils. Pupils make good progress in Year 4 when creating bold paintings which reflect the mood of music, and demonstrate effective painting skills when creating abstract pictures which show the effect of their discussions about the work of a contemporary Cornish artist. Year 5 pupils have made three-dimensional masks which are painted with vibrant designs; and their pastel interpretations of Aztec masks demonstrate good standards. In Year 6, pupils make careful drawings of their classmates, and achieve particularly well when painting creative interpretations of faces, after discussing the work of Picasso.
100. Due to timetabling arrangements, insufficient art and design lessons were observed to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching in the subject. However, an analysis of pupils' work, across the school, shows the teaching enables pupils to make mainly sound, but sometimes good, progress in Years 1 and 2, and good

progress in the older classes. Pupils benefit from a good range of learning opportunities in the subject, and are able to work with many different mediums. Teachers ensure that pupils are made aware of the work of artists, and this has a beneficial effect on their own artwork, as well as on their knowledge and understanding about art and design. For example, Year 4 pupils have recently visited the National Gallery, Year 4 and 5 pupils have worked with a professional illustrator who visited the school, and Year 6 pupils benefited from working with an artist at the nearby University of Hertfordshire. In the lesson observed in Year 2, the teaching was sound and appropriately encouraged pupils to create drawings through looking carefully at trees in the school grounds. In the lesson seen in Year 4, the art and design co-ordinator motivated pupils effectively and helped them to achieve well when creating paintings from their imagination.

101. The art and design co-ordinator is very enthusiastic and has good subject knowledge. She provides valuable advice to her colleagues and this is the key reason why standards have improved since the last inspection. Although she has few formal strategies for checking pupils' standards and progress in the subject, she takes a keen interest in the work produced in her colleagues' lessons, and has a clear overview of provision. Resources in the subject are generally good.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

102. Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress in design and technology, and their standards are in line with those expected nationally in Years 2 and 6. These findings reflect those in the last inspection.
103. The youngest Year 1 pupils make sound progress when making model tepees, as part of their work on homes. They are carefully made, using twigs and papier-mâché. These pupils also achieve satisfactory standards when making models from construction kits. Older Year 1 pupils and the younger Year 2 pupils make sound progress when learning simple weaving techniques, and when making model vehicles with simple axles from card and wood. They are beginning to learn to use a hacksaw and are carefully supervised to ensure they understand the importance of safety. Older Year 2 pupils also demonstrate satisfactory standards when making simple vehicles; and their felt glove puppets show good sewing skills.
104. In Year 3, pupils make sound progress when making structures using rolled paper; and the puppet theatres made by Year 4 pupils demonstrate satisfactory standards. In Year 5, pupils design and make simple musical instruments, using recycled materials, and made adequate progress when creating model adventure playgrounds. In Year 6, pupils have made slippers, and these show considerable care and good precision in cutting and sewing. These pupils achieve satisfactory standards when creating model shelters, and show sound evaluation skills when judging the success of their structures.
105. Insufficient lessons were observed in design and technology to judge the quality of teaching in the subject. However, evidence from the analysis of pupils' completed work shows that it enables pupils to make sound overall progress in the subject. However, the older pupils in the school would sometimes benefit from more demanding tasks, for example to design and make models which incorporate an electrical circuit, and to use cams to create movement.

106. Planning for the subject is satisfactory overall, but would be more coherent if all teachers were using the recently introduced scheme of work for the subject, produced by the QCA. The current provision does not ensure that pupils' key skills in the subject are developed systematically due to this variation in the use of the scheme. In addition, evidence suggests that teachers working with the older classes would benefit from in-service training to increase their confidence and expertise in teaching some of the more challenging elements of the subject. The design and technology co-ordinator examines teachers' planning, willingly provides advice to her colleagues when it is requested, and organises resources for the subject. She recognises she now needs to develop a more rigorous approach to the monitoring of the subject, particularly through the analysis of pupils' completed work, to ensure that key skills are developed systematically as pupils move through the school. Resources for design and technology are adequate, overall.

GEOGRAPHY

107. Standards in geography in Year 2 are broadly average, and reflect satisfactory achievement by the pupils. In Years 3 to 5, pupils' achievements are usually sound and their standards are generally satisfactory for their ages. However, good teaching in Year 6, by the geography co-ordinator, enables these pupils to make more rapid progress in the subject, and to achieve overall standards which are a little above average. In the last inspection, standards were broadly average in Years 2 and 6.
108. In Years 1 and 2, pupils gain a working knowledge of the main features of their locality. Visits to Beckonscot, a model village, and Syon Park, benefit pupils' learning; and a comparison of homes in Laximpur and Hatfield contrast the locality effectively with another locality. The pupils' own pictorial maps and Barnaby Bear's travels also develop pupils' understanding. Teachers have made good use of their own and pupils' travels to Toronto and Fiji to support pupils' developing understanding of places in the wider world.
109. In Years 3 to 6, pupils are able to discuss the effect of people on the local environment, including improvements to the local town centre, car parking for the school and the effects of traffic on pollution. Links to science are made with experiments undertaken on the effect of traffic pollution on materials placed in chosen areas; and pupils have undertaken enquiries into recycling and noisy areas of the school with satisfactory results. Links and comparisons are made with towns in this country (York and Manchester) and with localities in the wider world (St Lucia and Mexico).
110. No geography lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2, so it is not possible to judge the quality of teaching in these classes. However, evidence from pupils' completed work shows the teaching enables pupils to make mainly sound progress in the subject. The quality of teaching for older pupils is satisfactory overall, and results in pupils in Years 3 to 6 making broadly satisfactory progress. However, it includes both good and unsatisfactory teaching. The geography co-ordinator enables her Year 6 class to achieve well; and the Year 4 class benefited from a successful study of the town centre during the inspection. However, unsatisfactory teaching is evident when tasks focus on historical rather than geographical learning; when there is too little direct teaching since the teacher is pre-occupied with the management of pupils' behaviour; and when insufficient reference is made to geographical terms.

An examination of pupils' completed work shows that teachers sometimes rely too heavily on worksheets, and there should be more opportunities for most classes to develop enquiry skills in the subject. Visits and first-hand experiences in the locality contribute to pupils' learning; and the newly implemented scheme of work is beginning to have a beneficial effect. However, continuity in pupils' learning is restricted when the earlier, and less effective, topic work planning is used, and there is consequent uncertainty about whether lessons focus on geography or history. Evidence suggests the subject knowledge of some teachers is not yet fully secure.

111. The co-ordinator has identified appropriate areas for development, produced a long term overview of task development, provided resource files and planned activities to rectify teachers' subject knowledge deficiencies. However, she has not analysed pupils' work with sufficient rigour, from across the school, to judge pupils' progress, and has not been able to observe geography teaching. As a consequence, although she is enthusiastic and has good subject knowledge, her impact on teaching and learning in geography is restricted. Resources for geography are just adequate.

HISTORY

112. As a result of timetabling arrangements, few history lessons could be observed, and there is, therefore, insufficient evidence on which to base secure judgements about the standards attained by pupils in Year 2 or about the quality of teaching of pupils in Years 1 and 2. However, evidence from the written work of these pupils shows that they cover an appropriate range of historical topics. When the school was last inspected, standards were above average in Year 2 and were average in Year 6.
113. Three lessons were seen in Key Stage 2: in Year 3, in the Year 4/5 class and in Year 5. Evidence from these lessons, from pupils' work and from displays shows that pupils achieve broadly average standards for their ages, including in their final year at the school. However, individual research topics by the minority of higher attaining pupils are clearly above average in terms of the range of knowledge assimilated, the depth of pupils' understanding, and the research skills involved. Pupils of all abilities demonstrate a sound grasp of historical language and of chronology. They know that the past can be divided into distinct 'periods', and they use appropriate terms and dates to define and pinpoint events on timelines. In a study of the Anglo-Saxon period, pupils in Year 3 demonstrate a very sound understanding of archaeology as a means of finding out about the past. They know that archaeology helps us to find out about the past 'beyond living memory'. Their answers to their teacher's questions about the Sutton Hoo burial reveal a sound understanding of ancient burial practices, while the questions they raise reveal a lively interest in the past. In the Year 4/5 class, pupils studying the history of printing learn to link causes and effects. They know that advances in printing methods introduced by Gutenberg and Caxton changed, irrevocably, the speed at which ideas could be communicated and the size of the 'audience' ideas could reach. In Year 5, pupils display a sound understanding of the reasons why the Vikings raided monasteries and why the monks put up little resistance. No lessons were observed in Years 4 or 6, but the work available for scrutiny shows extensive evidence, in both year groups, of sustained study and independent research by pupils. In all years, pupils demonstrate a good capacity for using secondary sources effectively to inform their research.

114. In the lessons seen in Years 3 to 5, the teaching was mainly good and otherwise satisfactory. Evidence from the examination of pupils' completed work suggests it enables pupils to make mainly sound, but sometimes better, progress in their learning in the subject in Years 3 to 6. All lessons are planned well and pupils know what they are expected to learn. Visits to places of historical interest enrich pupils' studies and are a real strength of provision; they bring history to life and provide ready access to artefacts and experiences which stimulate historical enquiry. The teachers' own enthusiasm for history is also a motivating factor. Teachers' knowledge of the subject is generally good, and they communicate their love of history to pupils in their classes. There remains scope to strengthen pupils' understanding of history by demonstrating links between different historical periods more explicitly, and by heightening their awareness of different interpretations of history. Word processing is used to good effect in the presentation of pupils' written work, and there is some evidence of pupils having used CD-ROMs to download information related to independent research topics. The use of data handling to support work in history is limited. The history co-ordinator has had no opportunities to observe lessons, but has undertaken useful sampling of pupils' work across the school and has organised all the school's resources for the subject. She has helped staff to introduce the curriculum framework devised by the QCA, and to organise the curriculum in such a way that pupils in mixed-age classes do not repeat work already covered.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

115. Pupils' attainment in ICT is below average. The school gives pupils a range of computer experiences but does not fulfil all National Curriculum strands. Aspects of modelling and control are not covered, and pupils' overall progress in the subject is unsatisfactory.
116. In Years 1 and 2, pupils learn to control a mouse, enter text into a word-processing package and to store their work in a file. They know how to switch between upper and lower case and can change the style of font. Pictures and drawings have been produced in Clip-Art and Paintbox, but limited use has been made of databases to store information and produce graphs. A discussion with staff established that pupils have not experienced work in the control and movement of a programmable robot in either Year 1 or Year 2. Year 6 pupils said they had done this in Year 2 but had had no experience of writing instructions for Turtle or logo since.
117. In Years 3 to 6, pupils edit text by cutting and pasting to reorder paragraphs and by using a spellchecker. They use the hardware during lessons to draft assignments directly and can vary print styles and sizes to create a range of posters and book covers. Pupils in Year 4 used a pre-prepared graphics template to create pictures in the style of Matisse's 'Snail', supported again by step-by-step instructions. A good display of digital camera shots linked ICT to work in gymnastics and art but, in general, there is scope for more use of ICT across the curriculum.
118. In discussion with pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6, they talked about limited opportunities to access the internet, only using it once using the search engine 'Ask Jeeves' to find ten facts for a given topic. Year 6 pupils talked about their work with Excel and formula to investigate a holiday with a given amount of money available. These discussions suggest that pupils' knowledge is sometimes ahead of teachers' knowledge. The pupils explained how they loaded the new CD-ROMs, wrote a

guide for the staff, and if anything went wrong, were called to sort it out. Displays in classrooms are often at an elementary level and are not yet integrated into other work; the exception being Year 6. Opportunities for data handling, control and modelling are not planned or undertaken, and this is unsatisfactory.

119. In the lessons observed, across the school, the teaching was broadly satisfactory but included unsatisfactory elements. For example, in most lessons, teachers rely on short burst direct teaching to a set of written instructions, with the whole class crowding round two computers. As a result, it is difficult for pupils at the back to see the operations taking place. This is followed by limited hands-on experiences. Pupils cannot practise sufficiently the skills they are taught and not enough opportunities are planned for them to do so. Sometimes, teachers intervene too readily to help pupils and this restricts the opportunity for pupils to learn to solve problems themselves. Overall, however, weaknesses in teachers' own subject knowledge need to be rectified in order to raise pupils' standards in ICT.
120. The co-ordinator has devised an appropriate scheme of work, carefully blending in elements from the nationally recommended programme of study. A self-audit of the scheme highlights the lack of teacher expertise. She has wisely brought in advisory support and has improved resource provision. Training is planned and will need to raise all teachers' confidence and the profile of the subject. At present, the co-ordinator's strategies for monitoring pupils' standards and the quality of teaching are underdeveloped.

MUSIC

121. Overall, standards in music are in line with the national expectations in Years 2 and 6; and older pupils sing particularly well. These standards are similar to those found on the previous inspection. Music has a high profile in the school and is enriched by the opportunity for individual keyboard lessons, recorder lessons and a choir. These are all taught by a part-time member of staff and take place in the school day. There are also opportunities for pupils to take part in musical performances and for some to enter competitions. The standard of singing by the oldest pupils is high. For example, the Year 6 pupils confidently and tunefully sang a descant to a hymn in morning assembly during the inspection. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall in music. In the majority of lessons seen, which were taught by a recently employed music specialist, pupils made good progress.
122. The younger pupils can maintain a steady beat in time to different speeds of music. For example, keeping a beat to illustrate the slow movement of a tortoise or the fast movement of a hare in the Aesop's fable. By Year 2, many pupils can play untuned percussion instruments competently to perform their own simple compositions. Some of their compositions had a clear beginning, middle and end and demonstrated good achievement. One group's notation method effectively used different shades of red to illustrate when to play softly or loudly. In Years 1 and 2, the vast majority of pupils co-operate well when taking turns to play or sharing resources.
123. Many pupils in Years 3 to 6 are not familiar with musical terms since, until recently, some have had limited music teaching. However, in the lessons seen, pupils quickly picked up on terms such as pentatonic scale. After listening to the teacher playing, some could identify that Chinese music frequently uses this scale. Pupils

were seen to be making good progress in the recent series of lessons, for example, when interpreting notation, playing percussion instruments and when evaluating the work of other pupils.

124. The specialist teacher, recently employed from the local education authority music service for a day a week, is providing good quality, skilled teaching. While she has yet to raise pupils' standards above the nationally expected level, she is on course to do so. Most teachers also provide additional music experiences for their classes. The specialist teacher's lessons have a good pace, with many opportunities for pupils to sing, compose and evaluate their work in group and whole-class activities. Pupils have fun whilst they are learning and are encouraged to ask questions and share ideas. Music from other cultures is used effectively and positively, for example, to learn about different rhythms and scales.
125. There is no music co-ordinator, the policy has not been updated to reflect changes in the National Curriculum and there is no scheme of work to inform consistency in planning or to ensure pupil progression. Assessment procedures are not formalised and there is a need for a co-ordinator to monitor provision by tracking pupils' progress and attainment. The school has a sufficient range of resources for music. These include tuned and untuned percussion, keyboards, recorders, and recorded music. The resources are in good order and were used effectively during the inspection.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

126. Pupils' standards in Years 2 and 6, in those aspects of the subject taught during in the inspection, are in line with those expected nationally for pupils of similar ages.
127. By Year 2, pupils are confident in their movements and show sound co-ordination and skills as they respond to warm-up games and activities which develop throwing, catching and fielding. In dance, Year 1 pupils use expressive movements linked to music and show a growing sense of linking movements to the pace and style of music. Sadly, the pupils were inappropriately dressed for the activity. Boys remained in school ties during a very hot session in the school hall, and this was unsatisfactory.
128. By Year 6, the majority of pupils have developed good hand-eye co-ordination as they catch, throw and strike a ball. They can throw a tennis ball accurately and demonstrate appropriate technique. Catching is progressively developed alongside fielding and striking in individual, partner and small game activities. In athletics, pupils are appropriately challenged to improve their own individual performances in timed running and measured jumping activities. No gymnastics was observed but a display of digital photographs and pupils' artwork suggests that the standards achieved are in line with expectations. Overall, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making satisfactory progress in this subject, and are helped by the structured scheme of work. However, they make good progress and achieve well in swimming, and the co-ordinator's records show that the majority of pupils achieve the national expectation of being able to swim 25 metres. Pupils have the opportunity to take water safety certificates which enables them to be confident in the water and to enjoy swimming.

129. Pupils enjoy physical activities. They are well behaved and listen carefully when their teachers are explaining what they have to do. Pupils work safely and show good co-operation when needed. They work hard and can sustain energetic activity over time.
130. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, overall, and is sometimes good. Lessons are well prepared and organised and teachers manage pupils well. In the good lessons, teachers make effective use of simple coaching points to enable pupils to improve their performance. They also take an active part in the lesson by warming up with the pupils and making the session enjoyable. This was particularly evident in a Year 4 lesson where the teacher was very much part of the activity providing challenge and fun. This continued into the athletic activities with good coaching points to improve performance and encouraging the timer to build confidence in their partner 'go for it!' Particularly good use was made of pupils' skills to demonstrate good practice and it was obvious the teacher was using continuous assessment of activities. In most lessons, although teachers were diligent in delivering the lessons they had planned, and demonstrated satisfactory teaching, there was scope for them to promote work of a higher standard, particularly by making more spontaneous and effective responses which recognised and developed the skills of individuals.
131. The school has a good range of resources but they are ageing and in need of a replacement programme – especially the floor mats and ball stocks. The accommodation is adequate to meet the demands of the National Curriculum. The co-ordinator keeps swimming records and manages a small budget for the subject. However, she had not had the opportunity to watch lessons taught by her colleagues, and this restricts her awareness of provision in physical education. After school coaching is provided in netball and football by parent helpers to pupils from Years 4, 5 and 6. The success of these teams is a credit to the helpers.