

INSPECTION REPORT

**SOUTH MILFORD COMMUNITY PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Leeds

LEA area: North Yorkshire

Unique reference number: 121418

Headteacher: Mr A Lancashire

Reporting inspector: Paul Dennison
17736

Dates of inspection: 26th – 29th November 2001

Inspection number: 193462

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 – 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Sand Lane
South Milford
Nr. Leeds
North Yorkshire

Postcode: LS25 5AU

Telephone number: 01977 682359

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Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr. J. Snowball

Date of previous inspection: 8th April 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
17736	Mr. P. Dennison	Registered inspector	The Foundation Stage Mathematics Music Physical education	What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
14404	Mr. A. V. Rolfe	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
2632	Mr. R. Holmes	Team inspector	Special educational needs Science Design and technology Information and communication technology Geography	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

18618	Mrs J. Gibson	Team inspector	Equal opportunities English as an additional language English Art and design History Religious education	
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in South Milford, approximately 15 miles from Leeds. The school serves an established residential area. There is no nursery class but most children have experience of pre-school provision. There is a wide range of ability on entry, although overall, attainment is above that expected for the age group. It is a popular school and the number on roll has risen considerably in the last few years. At the time of the inspection there were 178 pupils on roll, taught in seven classes. The number of pupils on the school's register of special educational needs is below the national average. One pupil has a statement of special educational need. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is also below the national average. Most pupils are white. One pupil is from a home where English is not the first language.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school. The quality of teaching is good and this helps pupils to achieve well in English, mathematics and science. The pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and their behaviour is good. The headteacher and senior staff provide very good leadership and the school is very well managed. The headteacher, governors and staff work well together with a shared commitment to raising standards and improving the quality of education. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in English, mathematics, and science are good.
- The headteacher and senior staff provide very good leadership and the school is very well managed.
- The quality of teaching is good overall and much is very good. Support staff make a very positive contribution to pupils' learning.
- The provision for pupils' personal and social development is very good.
- The school cares well for its pupils, and relationships are very good.
- Pupils with special educational needs are provided with good support and make good progress.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to school and their behaviour is good.
- The school has established a good partnership with parents and the local community.

What could be improved

- Standards of attainment in information and communication technology
- The accommodation for the older pupils is cramped and library facilities are restricted.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in April 1997. Improvement since then has been good. The key issues from the previous inspection have been effectively addressed as a result of the clear leadership provided by the headteacher. Systems of curriculum planning have been successfully developed. The National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies have been implemented and schemes of work have been developed for all other subjects to support teachers' planning. Procedures for the assessment, recording and monitoring of pupils' attainment and progress have been improved and are now good. Pupils' handwriting and

presentation have improved and the range of writing opportunities has been extended, leading to improvements in the quality of writing. Standards of attainment in Years 1 and 2 have improved, whilst the good standards in Years 3 to 6 have been maintained. The quality of teaching has improved with a higher proportion of good or very good teaching.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	A	A	A	A
Mathematics	D	E	B	C
Science	C	C	A	C

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

In the 2001 National Curriculum tests in Year 6, pupils' performance was well above the national average in English and science and above the national average in mathematics. In comparison with similar schools, the performance was above average in English and average in mathematics and science.

The school performance in these tests varies from year to year because of the relatively small number of pupils in each year group and differing numbers of pupils with special educational needs in each year. However, results of the Year 6 tests between 1996 and 2001 have improved at a rate broadly in line with the national trend. Realistic but challenging targets for the Year 6 National Curriculum tests have been agreed and the results in 2001 exceeded the target set for English and mathematics.

Evidence from the inspection indicates that pupils achieve well. The attainment of pupils in the present Year 6 class is above that expected for their age group in English, mathematics and science. Attainment in Year 2 is above expectations in reading, writing, mathematics and science.

Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are broadly in line with expectations at the end of Year 2 but below expectations in Year 6. The school has made progress since the last inspection in developing its ICT provision and has recently produced a good policy and scheme of work for the subject. This has not yet had time to raise standards sufficiently. Attainment in physical education is above national expectations. In all other subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education, attainment is in line with the national expectations for the age group.

There is a wide range of attainment on entry to the school, although, overall, attainment is above that expected for the age group. Children in the reception class make good progress. By the end of the reception year, attainment is above that expected nationally.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very positive attitudes to school. They work hard, concentrate well and show good levels of interest.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good throughout the school. Pupils know what is expected of them and respond in a positive manner.
Personal development and relationships	Personal development and relationships are very good. Pupils co-operate well with each other and their teachers. They are provided with opportunities to exercise responsibility and they respond well.
Attendance	Attendance is in line with the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is good overall and effectively promotes the progress and attainment of all pupils. Those with special educational needs or those who come from homes where English is not the first language are well supported and make good progress. This good quality teaching is founded upon good relationships and good classroom management skills. Lessons are well planned and organised. Teachers have high expectations and take great trouble to present learning in ways which challenge and motivate pupils. On the occasions where teaching is satisfactory rather than good, it is usually because the work provided lacks sufficient challenge and the pace of the lesson is slow. At times, lessons lack a sufficiently sharp focus and pupils' response slows with an adverse effect on the progress made.

The teaching of English and mathematics is good overall and the skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well. Support staff work closely with the teachers to raise standards and ensure that all pupils gain full benefit from their lessons. They make an important contribution to pupils' learning. Pupils respond well and learning is good overall. They are keen to learn and work hard, showing good levels of concentration and developing their knowledge, skills and understanding.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is good. There is a wide range of interesting and relevant activities. It is enhanced by the good use of visits and visitors.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. They are well supported and make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Pupils are well supported and fully integrated into the life of the school. None are at an early stage of acquiring English.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Very good provision is made for personal development. There are very clear expectations of behaviour and the positive values promoted in assemblies and lessons help to promote spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares for its pupils well. Staff know their pupils well as individuals and create a supportive environment in which pupils can develop.

The school has developed a good partnership with parents.

Pupils' academic performance and personal development is monitored very effectively. There are very good systems in place to analyse the results of assessments, to set clear targets for improvement and to track progress.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very good leadership and has established a very positive climate for learning in the school. He is well supported by senior staff, in particular the deputy headteacher. The school is managed very effectively.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are very supportive. They are aware of the needs and priorities facing the school and contribute very effectively to its success. All statutory requirements are met.
The school's evaluation of its performance	There are effective systems in place to monitor the quality of planning and teaching. Assessment results are analysed to monitor standards of attainment and the progress of pupils. This evaluation is used to inform the planning of further improvements.
The strategic use of resources	Effective use is made of the school budget and additional grants for the benefit of pupils' learning. Financial planning is good and resources are used well to support the school's educational priorities.

There are sufficient, well-qualified and experienced teachers and a good ratio of support staff to meet the needs of pupils. The accommodation is satisfactory overall, although classrooms for the older pupils are cramped. The school has a good range of resources to support learning overall. There are plans to develop the limited resources for ICT.

Collectively, the headteacher, staff and governors contribute very effectively to the quality of education provided and to the standards achieved by the pupils. The school improvement plan has been produced in consultation with staff and governors. This is based on an analysis of the school's needs. It clearly identifies the school's priorities and is reviewed regularly to evaluate progress. The school makes good use of the principles of best value to make effective use of the financial resources available. These are used effectively to support the priorities identified in the plan.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They feel comfortable approaching the school to discuss any concerns. • Their children like school. • The school is well led and managed. • The teaching is good. • Children are expected to work hard and achieve their best. • Children make good progress. • The school helps their children to become 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities outside lessons. • The amount of homework provided for children.

more mature.	
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- The behaviour in school is good.

Through the questionnaire and in discussions with inspectors, parents expressed much satisfaction with the school's provision. They have a high regard for the leadership and management of the school and appreciate the fact that their children are happy, behave well in school and make good progress, both academically and personally. They respect the teachers and find them very approachable. Some parents have reservations about the homework policy and the provision of extra-curricular activities. Evidence from the inspection indicates that there is a good range of extra-curricular activities, albeit mainly for older pupils, and that the provision of homework is good and has a positive impact on pupils' learning.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1 On the evidence of the inspection, attainment by the end of Year 2 is above the national average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science is above the national average. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, achieve well.

2 There is a wide range of attainment on entry to the school, although, overall, attainment is above that expected for the age group. Pupils make good progress in the reception class and by the time they complete the Foundation Stage the great majority achieve the early learning goals established for the age group. Many move beyond this to the National Curriculum programmes of study for Key Stage 1. The good levels of achievement reported at the time of the previous inspection have been maintained.

3 Pupils' performance in the 2001 Year 2 National Curriculum tests in reading was below the national average whilst in writing it was well above the national average. Results of the mathematics tests were well below the national average. Teachers' assessments of their attainment in science were above the national average. In the 2001 National Curriculum tests in Year 6, pupils' performance was well above the national average in English and above the national average in mathematics and science.

4 The school performance in these tests varies from year to year because of the relatively small number of pupils in each year group and differing numbers of pupils with special educational needs in each year. However, results of the Year 6 tests between 1996 and 2001 have improved at a rate broadly in line with the national trend. Realistic but challenging targets for the Year 6 National Curriculum tests have been agreed and the results in 2001 exceeded the targets set for English and mathematics.

5 By the age of seven, most pupils have good skills of speaking and listening. They are competent in the early skills of reading and are developing a range of strategies for attempting unknown words. Their writing shows an increasing fluency and control, with simple punctuation being used accurately. Pupils read a range of texts with fluency and understanding. They use capital letters and full stops appropriately in their writing, with simple words spelt correctly. They develop their ideas logically in a sequence of sentences. By the age of eleven, standards of literacy are good. Pupils listen carefully to one another and their teachers. They give articulate, complete answers to questions, demonstrating good comprehension skills. The majority of pupils are confident when asked to address the rest of the class and speak clearly to the best of their ability. The majority of pupils are competent readers. They read with understanding and discuss the characters and plot of stories confidently. Higher attaining pupils are very fluent and expressive. They read widely and explain their views clearly. Their writing is organised, clear and well adapted for a number of purposes. Most pupils make good use of punctuation and are secure with spelling. They plan work carefully and make good use of parts of speech such as adjectives and adverbs.

6 Pupils have good numeracy skills. They develop their understanding of the number system and their mathematical vocabulary. By the age of seven, pupils are able to carry out written calculations accurately and most have a good knowledge and understanding of number facts, shapes and measures. By the end of Year 6, pupils of all abilities have a good knowledge of the number system and can use the four basic operations competently. The higher attaining pupils have a good understanding of percentages and probability, and can use fractions and decimals accurately. The lower attaining pupils can apply the four rules of number effectively and use a wide range of units of measure competently. Pupils have a sound knowledge of shapes and their properties and a good appreciation of the number system and measures. Pupils make good progress in developing their mental strategies and are able to use their mathematical knowledge to solve problems and to support their work in other subjects such as science and design and technology.

7 By the age of seven, pupils possess a sound scientific vocabulary and knowledge. They are able to observe changes, make sensible predictions and record their observations appropriately in notes and drawings. They know that tests must be fair and can recognise when one is unfair, even if they cannot always say how the fault could be corrected. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a good grasp of the factual knowledge required by the National Curriculum and are able to find answers to scientific questions by systematic investigation. They can make informed predictions about what might happen and explain their findings.

8 Attainment by the age of seven in English, mathematics and science has been improved since the previous inspection. Attainment by the age of eleven has been maintained at a higher level than the national average. This improvement has been brought about through good teaching and the implementation of the National Strategies for Numeracy and Literacy, which have provided a framework for planning and led to a clear focus in lessons. There are also increased opportunities for pupils to develop skills of investigation in mathematics and science.

9 Standards in ICT are broadly in line with expectations at the end of Year 2 but below expectations in Year 6. The school has made progress since the last inspection in developing its ICT provision and has recently produced a good policy and scheme of work for the subject. This has not yet had time to raise standards sufficiently. The school also has well-developed plans to establish a computer suite for an extra 15 machines. By the end of Year 2, most pupils use the keyboard reasonably proficiently and control programs effectively through drop-down menus. Year 6 pupils know how to change the appearance of text for different purposes. However, many enter text by deleting rather than moving words. Similarly they know how to use spreadsheets to store data but do not yet know how to set up calculations to manipulate the information in the cells. They have used the Internet to find information, using web addresses provided for them, but have not used search engines to track down answers to questions of their own.

10 Attainment in physical education at seven and eleven year of age is above that expected for the age group. Attainment in art and design, design and technology, history, music and religious education is in line with expectations throughout the school. Attainment in geography is in line with expectations at seven and above expectations at eleven.

11 Pupils with special educational needs or for whom English is an additional language are supported well in class and often receive very effective, well-focused teaching in small groups. This enables them to make good progress and achieve well in meeting the targets identified in their individual education plans. The school identifies a number of pupils as more able and they also make good progress. Particularly talented pupils are encouraged to extend themselves; they often produce good work, especially in their writing, and achieve well in the national tests.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12 Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good and overall behaviour is good. Both these aspects have been maintained since the last inspection and have a positive impact on pupils' learning.

13 Almost all pupils enjoy coming to school. Discussions with pupils indicate that they have positive attitudes to learning, they are able to identify favourite subjects and a significant number of pupils participate in the wide range of extra-curricular activities provided by the school. In practically all lessons seen pupils were eager to learn. They listen carefully to their teachers' instructions, maintain concentration for appropriate periods of time and make positive contributions to classroom discussions. For example, in a Year 4 English lesson where pupils were tasked to identify the main features of a newspaper, they concentrated very hard, and were clearly very interested in what they were doing. They entered enthusiastically into classroom discussions and were full of ideas, and all clearly enjoyed the lesson, all of which had a positive impact on their learning.

14 Most pupils take an obvious pride in their work and are willing and able to talk about their work and explain their ideas to inspectors. The very positive attitudes in the school and the very good relationships help pupils with special educational needs to grow in confidence. Pupils often support each other in class, for example explaining how to do a mathematics problem or sharing ideas for imaginative writing. This supplements the help that pupils receive from teachers and support staff and contributes to the progress they make in lessons and their personal development generally.

15 The overall standard of behaviour is good. In the majority of lessons seen, behaviour was good and on many occasions very good. Most pupils are aware of what is and is not acceptable behaviour; they like the school's merit system and readily accept the principle of sanctions as an appropriate response to instances of poor behaviour. In only a small percentage of lessons was there any evidence of unsatisfactory behaviour or of poor attitudes to learning. This was mainly due to a small number of boys who were involved in inappropriate behaviour, that on occasions disrupted the learning of others.

16 Generally, behaviour at breaks and lunchtime is good. Where bullying arises as an issue the school has in place an anti-bullying policy that enables it to react quickly and positively to known instances of bullying. Pupils are aware of the help available to them should they be subjected to bullying, and say they would not hesitate to seek assistance in such circumstances. There have not been any pupil exclusions in the current academic year and almost all parents consider pupil behaviour in the school to be of a good standard.

17 Pupils make good progress in their personal development. Relationships between staff and parents are very good, and so too are relationships between pupils. Pupils cooperate well in pairs and small groups and are willing and able to listen to and consider the views of others. These relationships make a positive contribution to pupils' learning. For example, in a Year 6 religious education lesson, where pupils were discussing the symbolism of various items found in a church, all pupils contributed to a discussion relating to the symbolism of a candle. Many contributions showed depth of feeling and understanding. Pupils are developing well their understanding of other people's faiths and cultures and are encouraged to reflect on the impact of their actions on others, mainly through their studies in religious education and personal and social education.

18 Pupils in all year groups show a willingness to undertake additional responsibilities, performing a range of duties including hall and class monitors, team captains and road safety officers. The School Council gives pupils the opportunity to discuss and influence school

policies, for example the development of the school environment. Pupils are encouraged from an early age to use their initiative to enhance their own learning; for example, children in the reception class were observed independently using computers and the listening centre for stories and music.

19 Overall attendance is satisfactory. It is broadly in line with national averages, as it was at the time of the last inspection. However, attendance has declined slightly over the last three years. Authorised absence is slightly above national averages, whilst unauthorised absence is below the national average.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

20 The quality of teaching is good overall and effectively promotes the progress and attainment of all pupils. During the inspection, 79 per cent of the teaching observed was good or better, including 38 per cent that was very good or better and five per cent that was excellent. The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection with a greater proportion that is now good or very good and none that is less than satisfactory.

21 The teaching of children in the reception class is very good overall and at times it is excellent. Teaching in Years 1 to 6 is good overall.

22 Teaching in the reception class is often exciting and interesting, capturing children's imagination and making them very eager learners. All staff have a very secure understanding of how young children learn and of the importance of play and first hand experiences. This has a very positive effect on the good progress children make towards the early learning goals and provides a very firm foundation for learning in Years 1 to 6. Lesson plans provide a very good framework for learning. They are very clear and detailed with appropriate learning objectives linked to the early learning goals. The experiences provided are interesting, challenging and of a very high quality and are focused very closely on what children need to learn. Staff provide very effective support for all activities, continually interacting to check and extend children's understanding. Children are given very clear instructions about what it is they are expected to do. As a result they move quickly to tasks using the time well to reinforce or extend their learning. Praise and encouragement are very effective in promoting positive behaviour and personal, social and emotional development. Staff use questions, comments and observations very well to extend learning and to assess children's progress in order to plan for future learning. Assessment of attainment on entry is used effectively to help teachers plan appropriate learning experiences. All staff work very well together and this has a positive effect on the quality of the learning.

23 Teachers throughout the school plan work carefully. Good use is made of the resources available to provide interesting tasks which motivate pupils. In a Year 6 geography lesson, the teacher made very effective use of a range of different maps to develop pupils' skills of map reading. In a Year 2 history lesson about the Victorians, very good use was made of pupils to play the role of children 'then' and 'now'. This reviewed earlier work and promoted a very good class discussion of similarities and differences between Victorian times and today. Where teaching is good, pupils are encouraged to be responsible about their work, and are given opportunities to work independently and in pairs or groups. In a Year 4 music lesson, groups of pupils co-operated very well together to produce their own compositions to accompany a poem. Group work is organised skilfully to enable some groups to work independently thus enabling the teacher to give more intensive support to others. Lessons usually proceed at a lively pace and pupils work hard, showing good levels of concentration and developing their knowledge, skills and understanding. As a result, they make good progress.

24 Teachers have good subject knowledge. They make effective use of questioning to develop and assess pupils' understanding and they give clear explanations. Teachers effectively build on pupils' earlier learning and use the opportunities of whole class sessions to review and assess pupils' understanding of previous work. In a Year 6 religious education lesson, the teacher made very good use of pupils' recall of an earlier visit to the church to develop their understanding of special features and their symbolism. Classroom support staff are used very effectively to support pupils' learning and make a very positive contribution to the progress made. A group of pupils with special educational needs in Year 5 made good progress in their mathematics lesson because the work had been very well planned and prepared by the teacher. They also benefited from the very positive contribution made by the support assistant who provided sensitive support combined with high expectations of attitude and attainment.

25 Teachers help pupils make relevant links between the various subjects of the curriculum and to use their experiences in one area to support new learning elsewhere. The study of the Egyptians by the Year 4 pupils involved them in research and the development of historical skills and understanding but had also been used effectively to promote interest in their music lesson when providing an accompaniment to the poem 'Down Along The Nile'. In Year 3, pupils study 'The Earth and Space' in science but also developed this theme in dance and art activities.

26 On the occasions where teaching is satisfactory rather than good, it is usually because the work provided lacks challenge and the pace of the lesson is slow. At times, lessons lack a sufficiently sharp focus and pupils' response slows, with an adverse effect on the progress made.

27 Teaching of English and mathematics is good overall. Teachers generally have high expectations and provide work which is well matched to pupils' needs and abilities. Pupils respond well and make good progress. Good use is made of the frameworks provided by the National Literacy and Numeracy strategies for planning activities. This good quality teaching has a very positive impact on maintaining and raising the standards of attainment. Lessons usually proceed at a lively pace and pupils work hard, showing good levels of concentration and developing their knowledge, skills and understanding. A good example was observed in a Year 4 literacy lesson on newspaper writing. Challenging questions reflected the teacher's high expectations and produced a very positive response from the class. In a Year 1 mathematics lesson, the teacher made good use of the numeracy strategy to develop pupils' mental skills when using the hundred square. Pupils were challenged to explain how they worked out the answers to problems and this supported their own learning as well as that of classmates.

28 Pupils' work is assessed and marked constructively on a day-to-day basis. Teachers know their pupils well. They provide good verbal feedback during lessons and help pupils to improve their work. The use of written marking is less consistent. The use of written comments is not always used effectively to ensure that pupils are aware of areas which need to be improved or to set clear targets for improvement.

29 Pupils with special educational needs, and those who come from homes where English is not the first language, are taught well. Teachers are very aware of the extra help they need. They modify work effectively so that the pupils are able to take part in normal lessons and there are good arrangements to provide special help. Teaching assistants work very closely with the class teachers. They know the pupils particularly well and provide very effective support, particularly when they are working with small groups and focusing on specific difficulties. They have established very effective relationships with the pupils so that

they are able to encourage them to try hard, and their sensitive approach helps to maintain pupils' self-confidence.

30 Homework is used effectively to support learning. The amount of homework given to pupils is increased as they progress through the school. This takes a variety of forms including reading activities, learning multiplication tables and spellings and work which reinforces or extends learning in class.

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

31 The school's curriculum is good overall. In the early years it is very good, securely based on the national guidelines for the Foundation Curriculum and skilfully modified to meet the needs of individual children. The curriculum is good in the rest of the school. All subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education are covered and, whilst there is an appropriate emphasis on English and mathematics, other subjects are allocated sufficient time to cover the required material.

32 Curriculum planning has been strengthened since the last inspection. The school has had to adapt its planning as it has grown in recent years and the number of classes has increased. It has done this wisely, taking advantage of national guidelines for schemes of work but also retaining good features that had been developed through local authority material. The plans for ICT have been written carefully and give good progression through the school. However, the subject has been developing rapidly and pupils who are in the older classes have not had the experiences of ICT in earlier years that the plans assume. Consequently they are not ready for some of the work shown in the plans. Teachers are modifying the plans effectively and matching work to pupils' actual experiences.

33 Whilst the school has ensured that all of the subjects of the National Curriculum are covered, it has retained a vision for the curriculum as a whole, strengthening pupils' learning by developing relevant links between subjects. A good example of this is the use of the theme of a river's flow to the sea in dance alongside the part of the geography curriculum which looks at rivers. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been introduced very successfully. Teachers are making effective use of ideas from the strategies in other lessons, setting clear objectives and reviewing what has been learnt at the end. They are also helping pupils extend their skills further by using them in other subjects. Discussion, for example, is developed well throughout the school, with pupils in Year 1 confident in exploring the ideas of God being all around us in a religious education lesson, and pupils in Year 4 exchanging ideas with each other about which way is 'up' if you are in Australia.

34 The school takes particular care to ensure that all pupils are able to benefit from the curriculum. Any pupil who is not making sufficient progress is identified and given extra support. This is sometimes provided in the classroom and sometimes in small groups elsewhere. This extra provision is mainly for pupils who need help in language or mathematics. It is well planned and generally matched to the work the rest of the class are doing in literacy or numeracy. The support often takes place at the time when the rest of the class are being taught these subjects, but sometimes it happens when other subjects are taught. It is important that these pupils miss as little work as possible while they are getting support in this way.

35 Alongside the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education the school has a well-structured scheme of work and teaching programme to support pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education. This covers issues such as friendship, fairness and

the unacceptability of violence and bullying. Developing an awareness of the key aspects of citizenship is an integral part of the programme. Health is included at an early stage and older pupils confront the issues of drugs abuse and the consequences of choices that they make. Sex education is included appropriately and the overall strength of the programme contributes significantly to pupils' positive attitudes to the school and their good behaviour.

36 Out of lessons there is a very good range of extra activities, and many pupils take part. Sports clubs are available for boys and girls from Year 1 upwards, as is the recorder club. There are more activities for older pupils than younger ones, but younger pupils have much more opportunity to take part in extra activities than in most schools. The weekend club for Year 6 is also a special feature of the school, which contributes well to the quality of these pupils' relationships and their positive views of the school.

37 The school has good links with the local community. People from the community support the school, including parents who provide some of the extra-curricular activities. Local clubs support sports coaching and very effective use has been made of local sponsorships to improve the school's environment and to provide a very good range of playground equipment, much of it designed by the pupils in collaboration with professional engineers. There are also productive links with other primary schools, for example providing half a day of ICT technicians' time in the school. Links with local secondary schools are also good and these help pupils make informed choices about their next stage of education and smooth their transition when they move.

38 Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is at least good and remains a strength, as it was at the last inspection. A good climate is set throughout the whole school, conducive to the development of pupils' personal qualities and skills. This climate is found in assemblies, lessons and other aspects of the school day, such as in the dining room at lunchtime. The positive ethos originates with the headteacher, while being contributed to by all members of staff. It is well aimed at ensuring all pupils are included fully in all aspects of school life.

39 Provision for spiritual development is good. In assemblies, a quiet atmosphere promotes thoughtfulness. The school meets requirements with regard to the act of collective worship. Pupils are encouraged to think about others and their own school community as they join in prayer. Experiences in lessons contribute to pupils' spiritual development. This was seen in art when Year 6 pupils admired the beauty of a picture by a famous artist, and in English when Year 5 pupils responded thoughtfully to poetry. There are good opportunities for reflective writing, including poetry, and personal accounts. All staff value the contributions made by pupils in lessons: pupils show willingness to express their thoughts and feelings in the positive and open learning climate created.

40 Provision for moral and social development is very good. Appropriate behaviour is emphasised and teachers ensure that pupils follow the simple rules displayed. There is a very clear sense of purpose and belief in what the school stands for; this is seen in assemblies and is fully reflected in its everyday work. Teachers have high expectations about how pupils should behave towards one another. Recognition of pupils' personal qualities and skills is made in lessons and in the weekly 'Heroes' assembly. Opportunities to appreciate personal qualities start early – as in Year 1 where pupils are encouraged to record 'something nice' about one another in the form of a compliment slip. School routines promote orderly behaviour, seen for example in the way that pupils enter and leave the hall for assemblies. 'Circle time', during which pupils learn to take turns and listen to one another's points of view, is well established. Through residential visits, there are many opportunities for pupils to take a full and valued role as members of the school community. The School Council makes a particularly good contribution to the pupils' social development by promoting

high levels of personal responsibility and awareness of the needs of the school family and the wider community. Older pupils benefit from a residential visit when they learn how to be self-reliant and to function in a social group away from their families.

41 Provision for cultural development is good. Opportunities for pupils to learn about the cultural background of the majority are provided well, for example in history, where the pupils, who live in a former agricultural and mining area, learn about the impact of the railway on the local area. In this predominantly white school and neighbourhood, pupils have good opportunities to learn about cultural diversity. This is mainly through the study of world faiths in religious education, made meaningful through visits to different places of worship and talks by visiting speakers, such as the celebration of the Jewish festival of Hanukkah. The school occasionally organises special events, such as the puppet show on the story of Rama and Sita, performed by a visiting theatre group. Pupils were involved in the making of their own puppets, composing and performing their own music.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

42 This is a caring school that is successful in creating a warm and friendly environment in which pupils feel safe and secure, and can learn and develop. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good. Staff know their pupils well and are responsive to their needs both inside and outside the classroom. Pupils say they ask teachers for help should they have any problems either with their school work or of a personal nature, and are confident that appropriate support and guidance would be forthcoming.

43 The school has worked hard and successfully to maintain and improve the good assessment procedures reported in the last inspection. Good systems are in place throughout the school for each pupil, with appropriate focus on English, mathematics and science. Careful records of each pupil's test results are kept from entry to the school, and are passed on from year to year. Information gathered from the various formal and optional tests is used to target pupils for additional learning support and booster classes where necessary. Procedures are particularly well developed for English and mathematics where teachers throughout the school set clear individual targets for improvement for each pupil. They have recently begun the practice of sharing these targets with pupils and their parents and both parents and pupils welcome this innovation. It helps pupils to understand their own strengths and weaknesses and guides teachers when planning new work. Teachers are in the process of developing easily manageable systems for assessing progress in the remaining subjects on the curriculum.

44 Pupils with special educational needs are identified early in their school life. Their needs are assessed accurately and individual education plans are written to address them. Teachers and support staff are very sensitive to their needs and work well to help them make progress and remain fully active in the life of the school. Pupils are helped to understand what they need to do to improve. These targets are clear and appropriate, so that pupils can see the progress they are making. When necessary, the school involves colleagues from the local authority in providing specialist support.

45 The school is committed to providing a safe working environment for staff and pupils. There is a health and safety policy which meets statutory requirements. Generally, risk assessment procedures, including fire risk assessment are in place, although some areas of the school, for example the boiler house, have not been subject to fire risk assessment. Procedures for the assessment of hazardous materials (COSHH) are not fully in place. Some concerns relating to school security were brought to the attention of the headteacher during the inspection. Overall, procedures for child protection are satisfactory. The

headteacher is the designated teacher and has received appropriate training. Whilst teaching staff have received informal training on child protection training at staff meetings, there is a need to formalise this training and extend it to all members of staff.

46 The school's procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance are satisfactory. Registers are completed at the beginning of each school session. However, inspection of attendance registers indicates some discrepancies in the categorisation of authorised and unauthorised absence. Teachers monitor pupils' attendance, and contact parents if there are any unexplained absences. In instances of poor attendance the school seeks the advice of the educational welfare officer. Pupils with 100 per cent attendance are awarded good attendance certificates on a termly and annual basis.

47 The school has good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. There are high expectations of good behaviour and this is reflected in the school's behaviour policy. There are clear procedures to discourage bullying and oppressive behaviour.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

48 Overall, parents have very positive views of the school. Approximately 43 per cent of parents returned the questionnaire and 16 parents attended the parents meeting. In particular, parents are pleased with the progress their children are making in their learning, the quality of teaching, the standards of behaviour and the expectation that their children will work hard. Parents also indicated that their children liked school, that the school is helping their children to become more responsible and mature and that the school is well led and managed. Evidence from the inspection confirms these positive views of the school. A significant minority of parents expressed concerns about the lack of extra-curricular activities, and a small number of parents about the school's homework provision. Evidence from the inspection indicate that there is a good range of extra-curricular activities, albeit mainly for older pupils, and that the provision of homework is good and has a positive impact on pupils' learning.

49 Parents' involvement in their children's learning is very good and has a positive effect on pupils' learning. A significant number of parents help in school on a regular basis. They help in classrooms listening to pupils read, work with pupils on computers, and work with groups of pupils under the supervision of class teachers. Parents run a pre-school group, that also provides crèche facilities, that enables parents who have children of pre-school age to come into school to work in classrooms. The school also encourage parents who are unable to come into school to undertake work at home, for example mounting pupils' work. Parents are given the opportunity to attend parents' workshops. Past workshops have included 'Listening to pupils read' and the school is currently hosting a ten-week course on how mathematics is taught in primary schools. There is a very active Friends of the School association who organise social and fund-raising events; they have raised significant amounts of money to finance additional learning resources which have assisted pupils' learning.

50 The quality and range of information provided for parents are good. The school brochure and annual governors report provide a wide range of information about the school and its activities. Regular newsletters, including one produced by Year 6 pupils, and letters about specific events ensure parents are aware of current school issues. Parents also receive good quality information about the topics to be covered by pupils on a termly basis; this enables parents to assist pupils in their learning both at school and at home. The 'Nitty Gritty' guide, a guide to the school written by parents for parents, provides new parents with

very good quality information about the school and its activities. Parents are invited to two parents meetings, in the autumn and spring terms; attendance at these meetings is very good. Parents can also request a meeting in the summer term to discuss their children's annual report. Overall, pupils' reports are satisfactory, although there are some inconsistencies. All reports give good information about pupils' strengths, though not all identify weaknesses and make clear what pupils need to do to improve. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are involved well in their children's work. They attend regular meetings with teachers to discuss the progress that is being made.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

51 The school is very well managed. The headteacher provides very good leadership, promoting and sustaining a clear sense of direction for the work of the school. The senior managers, and in particular the deputy headteacher, set good examples in the work they undertake and consequently there is an enthusiastic and committed staff team, including those in non-teaching positions. The very positive and supportive atmosphere and the sense of commitment displayed by all who work in the school reflect the quality of this leadership. Governors, teachers and non-teaching staff work well together to support the headteacher in promoting the school's aims. The school has taken positive and effective steps to address the areas for improvement identified in the last inspection report. Systems of curriculum planning have been successfully developed and there are now schemes of work for all subjects. Procedures for the assessment, recording and monitoring of pupils' attainment and progress have been improved and are now good. Pupils' handwriting and presentation have improved and the range of writing opportunities has been extended, leading to improvements in the quality of writing. Standards of attainment in Years 1 and 2 have improved, whilst the good standards in Years 3 to 6 have been maintained.

52 The governors are regular visitors to the school and they are kept well informed about the issues. This enables them to make a positive contribution to supporting the work of the school. They provide effective support for the school and are effectively involved in decisions about finance and the curriculum. Individual governors have links with curriculum areas and special educational needs. They have established an effective structure of committees to oversee and meet the requirements of their statutory responsibilities.

53 The school improvement plan has been produced in consultation with staff and governors. This is based on a clear analysis of the school's needs. It identifies the school's priorities and is a useful and effective management tool. It is linked to the school budget and is reviewed regularly to evaluate progress. It is supplemented with clear and effective action plans for each area of development.

54 Provision for special educational needs is managed effectively and the school fulfils all the requirements of the Code of Practice. The governing body has a good overview of provision through a named governor. Arrangements for assessing pupils are well established and appropriate individual education plans are written with good consultation between the class teacher, support staff and the special educational needs co-ordinator. Specialist advice is sought when necessary and the special educational needs co-ordinator provides effective leadership and good overall management. Support staff are deployed well and work very effectively with the pupils. Their expertise is valued by the school and they have an important role in its work. The school has good relationships with outside agencies and uses their expertise when necessary.

55 The school has effective strategies in place to promote skills of literacy and numeracy. The literacy and numeracy co-ordinators provide very good leadership; the literacy and numeracy strategies are very well managed and have been implemented effectively.

56 In consultation with staff and governors, curriculum co-ordinators have produced whole-school policies and schemes of work which support teachers in delivering the National Curriculum. Co-ordinators are responsible for managing their subject and providing curriculum support. They are also involved in monitoring teachers' planning and pupils' attainment. The major focus for such monitoring has been in English, mathematics and science and this work is less developed in other subject areas. The headteacher regularly monitors curriculum development through classroom observations and the scrutiny of teachers' planning. The headteacher has introduced good systems to monitor the quality of teaching and learning. He carries out regular classroom observations and some monitoring has also been done by subject co-ordinators. Systems have also been established to monitor pupils' attainment and to set clear targets for improvement.

57 Financial planning is good and decisions are closely linked to priorities in the school improvement plan, for example the improvement of resources for ICT. The school makes efficient and effective use specific grants, such as those for the support of pupils with special educational needs. Governors are appropriately involved and take a close interest in planning and monitoring the school's budget. Long-term trends, such as changes to pupil numbers, are identified and contingencies have been established to cope with them. At the moment the budget does not balance within the financial year because the school has had the expense of employing extra staff before it receives the money linked to the additional pupils coming into the school. The local authority has been consulted and is happy with this temporary situation.

58 Governors consider a range of options before making decisions about spending. Competitive quotations are evaluated carefully against the value for money they would provide and decisions are made prudently. Financial control and monitoring are good. The few recommendations in the school's audit report have been addressed. Staff in the school office support the headteacher well and their courtesy and warmth contribute well to the school's standing in the community. Routine administration is carried out efficiently and the school runs very smoothly.

59 There are sufficient staff to meet the demands of the curriculum. Teachers are well qualified and have good subject knowledge. Teaching assistants work very effectively with individuals and groups and make a very good contribution to pupils' learning. Teamwork between teachers and support staff is very good. Appropriate training for teaching assistants has been provided, for example in additional literacy support, and this has been very beneficial in helping to raise standards. Training for the Early Literacy Strategy and Springboard materials in mathematics has recently been undertaken in order to target support for specific groups of pupils.

60 Arrangements for staff development are good, and the development of teachers and support assistants is linked to the school improvement plan as well as their own identified needs. Good performance management procedures are embedded in the practice of the school and the national requirement for a policy has been fully implemented. This is complemented by the award of Investors in People status. The school has good procedures for the induction and mentoring of new staff, and makes good provision for the training of teachers new to the profession.

61 The caretaker and cleaning staff maintain the accommodation in a high level of cleanliness and the quality of the internal environment is further enhanced by very attractive

displays of pupils' work. Accommodation is adequate for the current numbers of pupils in the school, but classrooms for older pupils are cramped. Teaching spaces are small: this will present problems in the future as the rising number of pupils move through the school. The use of the limited additional space is well prioritised, being used for specific pupil support and resources. One room, currently used by parents and the community, has been designated for a computer suite. Very good use is made of the school grounds. These have been made particularly attractive by the development of stimulating play features, such as a climbing wall and monorail which are particular favourites of pupils. These features provide a physically challenging environment in which pupils can learn and play. An outdoor area has been developed for the youngest pupils and includes a safe, soft landing area.

62 Resources, including those for pupils with special educational needs, are well organised and generally adequate, with strengths evident in physical education and all areas of learning in the Foundation Stage. There is no available space for a designated library but the school strives to overcome this problem through a well-organised system of topic boxes. These are well used in lessons, for both research and personal choice. There are also good book collections in all classrooms.

63 The school has a clear set of aims. These are reflected in all aspects of the school's work. The school has high expectations of the pupils in terms of their personal and academic development. The school is forward moving and has a positive and supportive atmosphere, putting the needs of the pupils as a high priority.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

64 In order to further improve the quality of education and the standards of attainment, the headteacher, governors and staff should:

- (a) Raise standards of attainment in ICT by:
 - completing the planned development of the computer suite;
 - raising teachers' expertise and confidence;
 - implementing the new scheme of work to provide a clear progression in the development of skills;
 - planning more opportunities for pupils to use ICT to support their other learning in the classroom.

(Paragraphs 9, 32, 86, 120, 126-130, 136)

- (b) Investigate ways in which the classroom accommodation for the older pupils could be expanded.

(Paragraph 61)

- (c) Develop the school library facilities.

(Paragraph 62, 86)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

57

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

18

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	3	19	23	12	0	0	0
Percentage	5	33	40	21	0	0	0

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

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)		178
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		6

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		1

Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		18
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English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

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	9

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.4
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	14	14	28

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	11	11
	Girls	14	14	14
	Total	23]	25	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (100)	89 (100)	89 (100)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	12	14
	Girls	14	13	14
	Total	26	25	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (100)	89 (100)	100 (100)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	10	12	22

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	9	10
	Girls	11	11	12
	Total	20	20	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	91 (90)	91 (62)	100 (95)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	7	8
	Girls	12	12	12
	Total	19	19	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	79 (90)	79 (71)	83 (86)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	176
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)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22:1
Average class size	25

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	47.5

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	0
Total number of education support staff	0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	0
Number of pupils per FTE adult	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1.63
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3.00
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	2000-01
	£
Total income	348374
Total expenditure	332316
Expenditure per pupil	2014
Balance brought forward from previous year	-4725
Balance carried forward to next year	11333

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	178
Number of questionnaires returned	76

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	63	36	0	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	58	38	0	1	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	54	41	1	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	45	38	9	1	7
The teaching is good.	57	41	0	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	47	45	4	3	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	72	28	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	64	33	0	1	1
The school works closely with parents.	51	42	5	0	1
The school is well led and managed.	66	32	0	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	63	32	0	1	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	25	42	16	9	8

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

65 Children start full-time in the reception class in the September prior to their fifth birthday. At the time of the inspection, there were 33 children on roll. The school does not have a nursery class although most of the children in the reception class have experienced pre-school education at local play groups or nurseries. There is a wide range of attainment on entry to the reception class, but overall, attainment is above that expected for the age group.

66 The provision for children in the Foundation Stage has improved since the previous inspection and is now very good. The curriculum is securely based in the six areas of learning appropriate for this age group. Particular emphasis is rightly given to personal and social development, as well as to communication, language and literacy and to mathematical development. Appropriate elements of the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy are incorporated into lessons. The children are encouraged to enjoy learning and to take part in a wide range of lively practical activities, which support their progress effectively in all areas. The Foundation Stage prepares children well for the next stage of education.

67 Children achieve well. This is due to the suitable curriculum and the very good teaching. Children with special educational needs are supported very well and have full access to the curriculum. They make good progress. The great majority of children attain the early learning goals set for pupils of this age group in personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; creative development; and physical development, and many move on to the National Curriculum programmes of study.

68 The quality of teaching is very good overall and at times it is excellent. All staff work hard and the warm, welcoming, secure and challenging environment they create makes children's first experience of school interesting, happy and positive. Good relationships and trust between children and staff allow children to explore ideas and be confident to ask for help. The teacher's knowledge of the curriculum and of how young children learn is very good and the comprehensive planning, along with thorough assessment of children's progress, results in constantly changing learning and practical opportunities which stretch their thinking and demand concentration. Children receive a good amount of individual input and they respond positively to the challenges asked of them. Staff work closely together as a very competent and effective team. The classroom support assistants provide very good quality support to the teacher in the running of the class.

69 Careful assessment is made of the children soon after they start school. This is used to identify children who may need extra support and also to set targets for their future attainment. The children's progress is tracked carefully and good records of progress are maintained. These are used very effectively to plan work, which is well matched to children's needs.

70 Parents and school work closely together in the Foundation stage. Parents have the opportunity to talk to staff regularly when they bring children to school or collect them at the end of the day. This enables any concerns to be dealt with as they arise; it also reassures children and encourages them to be confident about coming into school. Children are very

proud of their work and are confident to talk about the contributions they have made to the very good quality displays in the classroom.

Personal and social development

71 The quality of teaching and learning in this area is very good, and pupils are cared for very well and make good progress. The aims of the school are effectively implemented by the promotion of good, caring relationships, which encourage good responses and good behaviour and ensure children feel safe and secure. Opportunities to promote personal, social and emotional development are built carefully into all aspects of the curriculum and staff set and model high standards of care and consideration. Children interact well with each other, showing consideration and kindness. They are aware of the difference between right and wrong. Concentration is good; children are involved for quite long periods on particular tasks, are well organised and gain independence in managing themselves. Good examples of this include the confident manner in which they operate the computer or the listening centre and the way in which they organise and sustain lengthy periods of role-play. Children settle well into the routines of school life because teachers make clear what is expected. In whole-class sessions, they listen attentively and their acknowledgement of class routine is good. They put up their hands and are confident to ask questions. Self-confidence and independence grow as children are given responsibilities for a variety of tasks to which they respond positively. They are becoming independent in looking after themselves, for instance, in dressing and undressing for physical education. At the end of activities, they help to tidy up and put things away. They are good at taking turns and in sharing equipment, for example, when using the sand and water. They show pleasure in their own achievement and are appreciative of the work of others. They co-operate with others in their work and play, for example when developing relatively complex scenarios in the 'DIY store'. They handle equipment and books carefully and with respect. They follow instructions well and are sensible when moving around the school as was observed when they went to the hall for a physical education lesson.

Communication, language and literacy

72 The quality of teaching and learning is very good with many examples of challenging opportunities presented to children. The curriculum appropriately emphasises the development of speaking and listening skills as well as promoting the development of reading and writing skills carefully over time. The well-planned, clearly focused activities include formal whole-class and group teaching, and informal independent learning, for example, through role-play. Use of good and varied language is promoted in all activities. Children talk and role-play well, and staff sensitively encourage the development and use of good vocabulary. Children are encouraged to speak to the group and they talk clearly and in extended sentences about their likes and dislikes. They listen carefully to the teacher and to each other. All staff use questions carefully to help children express and extend their ideas. A good example was the use of 'sand stories', when children used models to tell a story. This activity was very successful because of skilled questioning by the classroom assistant.

73 Children develop a growing enjoyment of books and stories. Staff place a good emphasis on reading and they are positive and encouraging in stimulating children's interest and enjoyment. A good selection of books and a comfortable and interesting library corner provide a good focus for reading for pleasure. When listening to stories, children concentrate attentively. Most children recognise some letters by shape and sound, and some high frequency words from simple texts.

74 Words and labels are clearly evident in the classroom and many children make attempts at using a few familiar words to accompany their pictures. They are developing

pencil control and learning how to form letters. Early writing skills are presented in small, focused sessions with much individual help and structured guidance given by staff. By the end of the reception year, higher attainers compose and write their own sentences. Most children can copy the teacher's writing. Children make use of their knowledge of letter sounds to read unfamiliar words. They are reading simple texts with confidence and enthusiasm. Learning to communicate through talking, reading and writing is a fun activity and this has a positive effect on children's achievements.

Mathematical development

75 Teaching and learning is very good. There is a variety of interesting well-structured practical activities, which support learning well. Staff provide good support for groups to talk through ideas and ask questions, and so promote good understanding. They encourage children to use and develop appropriate mathematical language. Children make very good progress in practical and investigative skills. They have many opportunities to develop their numeracy skills, using a variety of apparatus both in structured activities and in play situations. The 'DIY store' offers opportunities to compare sizes and 'measure' wood using a tape measure. Through well-planned work they explore pattern, shape and measurement. Very good use is made of the outdoor area to reinforce number skills through counting games. They are beginning to correctly use the language of quantity and measurement such as 'bigger than', 'smaller than', 'more or less than', 'tallest' and 'shortest'. The children enjoy singing a variety of songs and jingles, which are number related and which consolidate their understanding of numbers and positional language. They recognise numerals and match these accurately to the correct number of objects. Higher attaining pupils can count forwards and backwards and are able to place numbers in the correct order. By the end of the reception year they calculate simple addition and subtraction sums. Counting and ordering skills are encouraged through use of a wide variety of games and activities which challenge children to count, look for patterns and carry out simple calculations.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

76 The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Children achieve well and gain good experience of the world around them. They are offered a wide variety of experiences indoors and out which provide them with opportunities to learn about their world. The natural curiosity of young children is enhanced as staff continually encourage them to talk about their discoveries and experiences, to ask questions and to explore made and natural materials. They respond enthusiastically and are very keen to extend their knowledge about everything they experience. They develop their understanding of science through exploring changes which occur when adding soap flakes to water or soaking spaghetti in water. The excellent questioning of the teacher encouraged children to contribute their own ideas and provide simple explanations of what they observed. They learn about the passage of time through celebrating birthdays, and by talking about the days of the week and the changing seasons and weather. They have looked at photographs of themselves as babies and discussed how they have changed. Children talk about their family members who are older than them and are encouraged to talk about past events and they recognise the difference between past and present. Stories are used to encourage pupils to develop concepts of time and place. They recall their experiences through a range of role-play situations. Floor play equipment is used to enable pupils to develop their language use and to make connections with their own surroundings. Children are able to use the skills of cutting, joining and building using a range of materials. They are confident in working independently to design and make a bed for their teddy bear. Construction toys are used well to encourage children to design and make their own models and to discover how things work. Children use ICT to support their learning and become confident in using the mouse to control computer programs.

Creative development

77 Teaching and learning are very good. Teachers plan a range of activities to develop children's imagination. They encourage children to develop their own ideas as well as learning skills. Children use paint and create collage pictures using a very good variety of textures. They confidently create three-dimensional models using recyclable materials. Children make good progress with observational skills and their representations of what they see reflect their capacity to look accurately. Their work is celebrated in very good displays throughout the classroom. Children are involved and collaborate effectively in role-play that is actively supported and extended by staff involvement. The children enjoy singing and join in with nursery and number rhymes within a range of class activities. They use percussion instruments to create loud and quiet sounds and maintain a simple rhythm.

Physical development

78 Teaching and learning are very good. Physical education lessons in the hall are well planned and organised. Staff establish clear rules in the use of space and apparatus and children respond well. They develop good spatial awareness, as they move around with increasing co-ordination and confidence. They respond well to music, moving in time to the rhythm using a variety of steps. Children listen carefully and respond positively to the clear guidance on how to improve their skills. In addition to lessons in the school hall, the class also has easy access to a very well equipped outdoor area. Weather permitting, this is used to provide opportunities for outdoor play, including large apparatus on which they can climb, and wheeled toys. They also use small apparatus such as stilts, quoits, and balls to develop skills of balance and control. Children are given a variety of tasks to develop their physical skills in the classroom. They show increasing expertise in using tools like glue spreaders and scissors safely, to complete their tasks. They manipulate construction equipment with ease, and they manage small play equipment carefully. The majority of children are confident with the computer and use the mouse with increasing proficiency.

ENGLISH

79 In the 2001 National Curriculum tests for seven year olds, the school's results in writing were well above the national average and above average in comparison with similar schools. Results in reading were below the national average and well below average in comparison with similar schools. However, taking the results from 1998 to 2000 together, the results were above average. The higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs had an adverse effect on the reading results for 2001. In the tests for eleven year olds, the school's results in English were well above the national average and also well above average in comparison with similar schools.

80 Inspection evidence indicates that by the ages of seven and eleven, pupils attain above average standards in all aspects of English. Standards by the age of seven have improved since the previous inspection. All pupils show ability to concentrate, engage with their work and make good progress. This is partly due to the good provision for the personal development of pupils, but also to the good standards of planning and teaching for the subject. There is no significant difference in the attainment of girls and boys. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well, both in lessons and in withdrawal groups. They make good progress in relation to their prior attainment.

81 Standards in speaking and listening are above average. Most pupils are articulate and can engage in discussions at an appropriate level for their age. They are encouraged to extend their use of vocabulary, and to develop and explain increasingly complex ideas during

discussions, in English and other subjects. They listen very well to their teachers and to one another, and reply confidently. During a Year 2 lesson, pupils' knowledge of adjectives enabled them to find words of their own to describe, for example, chocolate. When discussing the key features of newspapers, as part of a guided writing task, Year 4 pupils had many imaginative ideas for headlines and identified the need to use interesting words in their report, such as 'thrillingly', 'fabulous' and 'extraordinary', saying "People won't read it otherwise." All teachers provide good chances for pupils to respond to questions and enlarge their vocabulary. For example, in a Year 5 lesson the teacher took pains to explain unfamiliar vocabulary, such as 'perplexed', using words to which pupils could easily relate. In Year 6, the teacher's probing questions helped pupils explain how the writing of an author "...appeals to the senses." Teaching assistants provide very good support for pupils with special educational needs during class discussions, by encouraging speaking and listening skills.

82 Standards in reading are above average. Teachers build effectively on the good start pupils make in the reception class. There is a strong emphasis on the teaching of letters and their associated sounds in Years 1 and 2. Well-planned support for pupils with special educational needs is given by teaching assistants in Year 1, where letter sounds and names are taught well using tactile resources. At this early stage in the year, a significant number of pupils in Year 2 are already confident readers. Regular sessions of group reading are also used effectively to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding and to encourage the use of expression when reading aloud. By the end of Year 6, the pupils have experienced and enjoyed an interesting selection of literature, and are keen to express their likes and dislikes. They are familiar with a variety of writing from poetry to newspaper reports and with the work of classical as well as children's writers. Pupils are able to read independently, fluently and with good expression from a range of texts. When asked about their reading they show good comprehension skills. Pupils know how to use a thesaurus and dictionaries. In their study of an extract from 'James and the Giant Peach', a Year 6 pupil volunteered: "Everyone's a stranger to James because he's never allowed out." Others identified the ways in which the author's style affects the reader, for example "...then he comes nearer still' tells you something's going to happen next and keeps you interested." Teachers use technical language consistently so that, by Year 6, most pupils identify and talk about 'alliteration' and 'metaphor'. More able pupils recognise the use of 'assonance', such as 'clang, clatter, shattered'. Pupils throughout the school have many opportunities to read and parents' support is harnessed well.

83 Standards in writing are above average. There is good continuity of learning between the reception class and Year 1, for example in the work planned by the Year 1 teacher to develop and extend the vocabulary of the most able pupils. Year 1 pupils are encouraged to write independently, supported by alphabet strips and word lists, and are willing to have a go. By Year 2, most pupils write independently and spelling is always phonetically reasonable. Above average pupils write well-organised and interesting pieces; spelling, handwriting and presentation are good. All pupils take spellings home to learn and spelling lists build on pupils' prior knowledge. Vocabulary continues to develop well, such as the ideas collected by Year 3 pupils – 'twinkled and glittered', 'flashed and sparkled'. Opportunities for pupils to write in other subjects are good. Some of the best writing is based on texts studied in the literacy hour and designated writing lessons. High attaining pupils in Year 6 write vivid descriptions arising from work on 'A Midsummer Night's Dream'. Pupils are able to adopt different styles, as when a Year 5 pupil wrote a poem with rich metaphors and similes. By the end of Year 6, higher attaining pupils are able to compose sustained, well-organised pieces, which demonstrate accurate sentence construction, punctuation and grammar. They write complex sentences with consistent accuracy. They choose words carefully to persuade or describe, and their extended writing, in narrative or poetic form, is well organised and imaginative. Paragraphs are used to good effect and punctuation and spelling are usually correct.

Handwriting and the presentation of work vary but are satisfactory overall and by Year 6 most of the pupils write clearly and legibly in neat joined script.

84 Teaching is good overall. It is never less than satisfactory and at times it is excellent. All teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the subject and of the National Literacy Strategy. Basic skills such as matching letters to their sounds are taught systematically so that pupils quickly become independent in their learning and are keen to use their emerging skills to read and to write purposefully. Most teachers use questions thoughtfully to help pupils extend their own ideas and are sensitive in modifying the pupils' answers to make teaching points to the class. Interesting and varied approaches to reading and writing are planned. Spelling, grammar and punctuation are taught well through purposeful writing tasks. Where teaching is excellent, pupils enjoy the challenges set. This was very evident in Year 4, where pupils in the role of 'The Amazing Ideas Company' came up with many ideas for 'headlines' and eye-catching sentences. In a small minority of lessons, textbook and worksheet exercises fail to inspire pupils in the same way. At times, discussion takes up too large a part of the lesson in upper junior classes and analysis of texts is over-emphasised at the expense of pupils' personal creativity in writing. The marking of pupils' work is good, showing what has worked well or how improvements might be made. Pupils with special educational needs are given good support by teachers and teaching assistants. Teamwork is very good between teachers and support staff. Additional literacy support provided by teaching assistants is very good.

85 Pupils usually respond positively to their work in English lessons. They are generally enthusiastic and hard-working readers and writers who are able to persevere with their work. They work well independently and in groups and are aware of the needs and contributions of others. They enjoy the whole-class and group reading activities and are keen to contribute to class discussions.

86 The English curriculum is broad and balanced with a good range of interesting and relevant activities which stimulate pupils' interest. Pupils are encouraged to make good use of their reading, writing and speaking and listening skills across the curriculum. They are introduced to a wide range of stories and poems and are also encouraged to read non-fiction texts in support of their work in other subjects. ICT skills are used to support some work in English, mainly through the use of word processing. However, the use of ICT is still under developed. The school has improved the range and quality of books. Additional books, including sets of group readers and large books for whole-class sessions, have been used very effectively to support the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. Pupils have opportunities to develop their research and reference skills in the classroom. However, the current library arrangements do not support the development of these skills.

87 The subject is co-ordinated very well and developments are up to date. For example, teaching assistants have received training for the Early Literacy Strategy, set to start in January. All elements of the National Literacy Strategy are properly planned for and covered. Extra English lessons ensure that pupils have the chance to practise their writing skills. Thorough assessment systems are in place, and standardised test results are carefully analysed to review individual and school performance. The school's systems for 'tracking' pupils' progress work well and teachers have a good knowledge of levels of attainment achieved by all pupils. Individual targets for writing have been introduced so as to further refine the assessment process and give pupils greater knowledge of their learning and progress. Resources are satisfactory overall, although the use of ICT is limited because of the small number of computers in the school.

MATHEMATICS

88 The school's results in the Year 2 National Curriculum tests in 2001 were well below the national average and well below average in comparison with similar schools. Taking the years 1998 to 2000 together, results have been above the national average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs had an adverse effect on the results for 2001. The school's results in the Year 6 National Curriculum tests in 2001 were well above the national average. This was an improvement following declining results between 1998 and 2000. The evidence from the inspection shows that standards of attainment by the end of Year 2 are currently above the national average. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Standards by the end of Year 6 are also above average. The good standards reported at the previous inspection have been maintained. There is no significant difference in the results of girls and boys in the Year 6 tests, although boys have performed better than girls in the Year 2 tests. The school is on course to maintain and improve standards, and pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, are achieving well.

89 By the age of seven, pupils have an appropriate mathematical vocabulary. Most have a good understanding of pattern in number and know the difference between odd and even. They are encouraged to use and develop their skills of mental arithmetic and make good progress in this area. They develop a good understanding of the value of each digit in numbers with three digits. Higher attaining pupils use their knowledge successfully to calculate simple problems involving addition, subtraction, multiplication or division. Lower attaining pupils at this stage add two-digit numbers with the aid of apparatus or by counting objects. Pupils develop skills of simple data handling and can construct and interpret graphs. They learn to tell the time. Year 1 pupils use analogue clocks and record the time in hours and half hours. Year 2 pupils are able to convert analogue to digital time. Pupils have a secure understanding of common shapes and use non-standard units to measure length and mass. Higher attainers measure length and mass using standard measures such as grams and centimetres. Pupils make good progress, and attainment by the age of seven has improved since the previous inspection.

90 From Year 3 onwards, pupils continue to develop good mental strategies and to examine a variety of ways of arriving at solutions to problems. Year 3 pupils calculate fractions of shapes and number. Year 4 pupils make effective use of co-ordinates to plot positions on a grid. Year 5 pupils identify number sequences and patterns including square numbers. By the age of eleven, pupils of all abilities have a good understanding of the value of each digit in numbers up to a thousand. They use the four basic operations competently, have a sound grasp of spatial concepts and can use a variety of methods to collate and represent data they have collected. The higher attaining pupils have a good understanding of percentages and probability, can use fractions and decimals accurately and are competent in long multiplication and division. Pupils accurately measure areas and perimeters of regular and irregular shapes. They draw angles accurately and recognise and name properties of three-dimensional shapes. They use a variety of methods to collate and represent data they have collected. The majority have a good knowledge of number facts and multiplication tables. The lower attaining pupils can apply the four rules of number effectively and use a wide range of units of measure competently. Higher attaining pupils in Year 6 quickly and accurately round numbers up or down and calculate to two or three decimal places. They use a calculator or inverse operations to check their answers. Standards of numeracy across the school are good and pupils have a good understanding of the number system. Their skills in mental arithmetic are very good. The previous inspection reported that pupils in Years 3 to 6 made good progress and that attainment was above the national expectation. This has been maintained.

91 The progress made by pupils with special educational needs has improved since the previous inspection when it was described as satisfactory. They now make good progress in relation to their abilities due to the effective support offered by both class teachers and support staff. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are also well supported and make good progress.

92 Pupils approach mathematics with confidence and enthusiasm. They co-operate well with their teachers, sustain concentration well and take pride in their work, which is well presented. When required, they collaborate well with other pupils, sharing ideas and equipment sensibly.

93 The quality of teaching is good overall and is often very good. Very good lessons are characterised by the thorough preparation of resources, allowing teaching to proceed at a brisk pace. Teaching is imaginative and includes challenging activities which build well on what pupils already know. In a Year 6 lesson, for example, the teacher had high expectations of her class and they responded accordingly. A very effective mental session involved the rapid conversion of kilometres, metres and centimetres using decimals. This well-paced opening provided an ideal introduction for work on the addition and subtraction of decimal numbers. Teachers throughout the school make good use of the framework provided by the National Numeracy Strategy and this is having a significant effect on the standards pupils are achieving. Lessons usually begin with a lively session of oral work that effectively develops pupils' mental recall skills and promotes their use of different strategies to answer questions. In a Year 5 lesson, for example, pupils responded well to the pace and high expectations when investigating and identifying number patterns. The teacher skilfully created opportunities for pupils of all abilities to contribute. Group or individual tasks are then completed and lessons usually have a lively pace to which pupils respond well. Lessons end with a session which is used to review and reinforce learning.

94 Classroom management skills are good, and this enables teachers to use a range of teaching styles including whole-class, group and individual tuition. Teachers also make good use of a range of mathematical apparatus to help pupils gain knowledge and understanding. There are good displays of mathematics around the school, which enhance work in the subject. A range of well-planned activities is used to provide a broad and balanced mathematical curriculum which motivates pupils' interest. Teachers successfully promote the use of numeracy skills across the curriculum, for instance in science and design and technology lessons where pupils have to measure accurately.

95 Teachers make good use of questioning to assess and develop pupils' understanding and provide support as necessary. Pupils receive good feedback on their work through verbal comments and written marking. There are regular assessments of pupils' attainment and progress. These are used by teachers to ensure that work is well matched to pupils' needs and abilities. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress. Teaching assistants provide helpful support for those who need it and they make a valuable contribution to learning.

96 The co-ordinator manages this curriculum area very well. There is a good range of resources to support learning and these are used well. The National Numeracy Strategy is used as an effective framework for planning and is having a beneficial effect on standards, especially in mental work and the development of mathematical language. The subject fully meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Pupils' work and assessment results are monitored regularly to ensure that standards of attainment are maintained or improved. There are effective systems in place to monitor the quality of planning, teaching and learning. The co-ordinator provides support and advice as necessary. Clear targets have been agreed for the National Curriculum tests. The target set for 2001 was surpassed. There is an effective

system of target setting for individuals and groups, placing the school in a strong position to raise standards further.

SCIENCE

97 Standards are good throughout the school. Attainment is higher than usual at the end of Year 2. This is borne out by teacher assessments which, in 2001, showed all pupils to have reached the expected level 2 and over 20 percent to have achieved the higher level 3. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when standards were in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2.

98 The results of the 2001 National Curriculum tests for science at the end of Year 6 were well above the national average and higher than in similar schools. All pupils achieved at least the expected level 4 and over 40 percent went on to level 5, many more than in most schools. In the previous two years, results had fallen to average levels, having been higher earlier. This decline was largely due to changes to the school's intake and to the extra emphasis given to English and mathematics as the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy were introduced. It has now been turned round dramatically and standards of work in younger classes indicate that good performance should be maintained.

99 Pupils make a good start with their science in the early years because they are encouraged to notice their surroundings and suggest simple experimenting skills. For example, in their water play in the reception class they are challenged to fill containers exactly to a line and then transfer the water to a differently shaped vessel, estimating where the new level will be. They make good progress through Year 1, developing their knowledge of science and beginning to realise the importance of testing their ideas. By the time they are finishing Year 2 they have a good understanding of what animals and plants need to live, and they know the basic properties of materials such as metals and plastics and that water can be solid or liquid. From their work on physical processes they know that forces tend to make things move and that light can pass through some materials and not others, using the correct vocabulary to describe this. They know that tests must be fair and can recognise when one is unfair, even if they cannot always say how the fault could be corrected.

100 Good progress is maintained in the older classes and pupils continue to be encouraged to think about the subject and not just accept what they are told. In a Year 4 lesson, for example, the teacher helped to get the pupils thinking about the way the earth moves in space by using her own experience of living on the equator and contrasting the seasons and length of day with the children's own experience in this country. As a result of good questioning they were able to think of the differences to the inclination of the Earth's axis. The open approach also helped pupils to raise questions and come to realisations of their own such as 'so the sea just fills up the low parts'. By the time they are in Year 6, pupils have a good understanding across the various aspects of science. They know about photosynthesis, appreciate its vital role in producing food and realise how the reduction in the amount of photosynthesis caused by the destruction of rain forest can effect climate. They understand forces well and recognise how gravity operates on Earth, even though they are not clear about its role in keeping the solar system together. The importance of fair testing is understood well and pupils explain how they have set up investigations carefully so that only one variable is changed.

101 As a result of the school's approach to the subject, pupils have very positive attitudes. They are very receptive to new ideas and keen to explore things. They work hard in lessons and are proud of the progress they make.

102 Teaching is good. Lessons are planned well, with clear and appropriate objectives, and teachers are confident enough to follow interesting lines of inquiry suggested by pupils which support the purpose of the lesson. Pupils are encouraged to ask questions by the teachers' positive responses and by the sensitive way their ideas are accepted. If they are wrong, then the correction is handled carefully and properly explained so that the pupil's self-confidence is not shaken. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress.

103 The subject is managed effectively. The school is currently reviewing its planning for science and moving more towards the nationally recommended scheme of work. As it does so it will be appropriate to include more opportunities to use ICT, for example in recording results and producing graphs. Resources for science are generally good and accessible to staff.

ART AND DESIGN

104 In addition to the lessons observed, judgements were also made based on pupils' work and teachers' planning. Standards in art and design are similar to those found in most schools.

105 Teachers' planning indicates a range of media, including drawing materials, paint, printing, textiles and collage work, is provided during the year. Pupils also have opportunities to study the work of well-known artists.

106 Pupils develop an understanding of colour mixing, and the selection of appropriate materials. They express themselves through drawing, painting and modelling, and use simple techniques with developing control. Displayed work on self-portraits shows that pupils have sound drawing skills and good control of drawing media such as pastels. Year 1 work shows good maturity in the attention given to detail in, for example, the eyes and hair. In Year 2 good opportunities are provided for pupils to produce creative, three-dimensional 'faces' based on a portrait by Picasso. Good investigations into paper sculpture enable them to add decorative detail imaginatively. Pupils also experimented with line using pencil, and made close observation of line and shape in shells.

107 Drawing skills are further developed as pupils move through the school. Pupils in Years 4 produce carefully observed portraits and pupils in Year 5 create charcoal sketches using light and shade to convey three-dimensional figures. Year 3 pupils use cut paper work to study warm and cold colours and also create paintings based on their interpretation of the mood inspired by listening to music. Year 6 pupils explore pattern and line as they arrange a selection of materials on photo-sensitive paper.

108 The quality of teaching observed was satisfactory overall. Lessons are enjoyable and praise is used well to enable pupils to have the confidence to participate. Some good learning opportunities are planned by teachers, which help pupils to develop their skills. However, activities are often unrelated and, consequently do not provide opportunities for pupils to extend their knowledge and understanding of the purposes and nature of art. For example, Year 1 pupils made detailed, small scale drawings of the shapes, lines, patterns and colours observed in stimulus materials, but this good work was not developed in subsequent lessons. In a Year 6 lesson, the teacher's discussion of the visual elements of line and pattern, seen in a Van Gogh landscape, inspired pupils to create imaginative arrangements with natural materials to convey an illusion of movement. However, other work undertaken on the theme of printing – marbling and unit printing – is unrelated.

109 Art has had a low priority recently as the school has concentrated on the implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies. The co-ordinator is fairly new to the

post and other prioritised responsibilities have taken precedence. Consequently, co-ordination of the subject is at an early stage. The school has recently adopted the national guidance on planning but this is not yet used consistently to provide for the progressive development of skills or to help teachers plan progressively more challenging tasks.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

110 Standards in design and technology are at the expected levels by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is much as it was at the time of the last inspection.

111 In their first years in the school pupils learn to use tools carefully and safely. From the earliest stages they are encouraged to talk about what they are making and how they would like it to appear. This acts as a firm foundation for their later design work, and by Year 1 they are already sketching their ideas and adding notes about what they are going to do. By Year 2 they understand the importance of producing a design and of evaluating what they have made. In their work on puppets pupils have produced imaginative designs, carried out the making stage carefully and then commented thoughtfully on how successful they have been and how they could improve in the future.

112 Pupils continue to make progress in the older classes, broadening their experience of materials and techniques as they move through the school. Construction kits continue to be used, particularly in Year 3, but not as extensively as in the earlier years. Pupils would benefit from having more opportunity to use these kits to try out ideas and to investigate the way mechanisms and structures work. By Year 6, pupils are producing clear, well-annotated design sketches for their work. Some pupils realise that a single sketch is often not enough to show how the article is to be made and include additional views. Construction is carried out carefully and most pupils achieve very presentable outcomes. They make use of their previous experience in the subject to modify their design, for example deciding to use a gusset in a stuffed toy to achieve a better three-dimensional shape, and evaluate their work effectively, picking up lessons for the future.

113 Pupils respond well to the subject and take a pride in producing good work. Teaching is good, particularly in the younger classes and in Year 6, although some teachers do not yet feel confident in tackling the full range of the subject. Teachers are very effective in encouraging pupils to use their imaginations. Most teachers have a clear understanding of the range of techniques that they need to introduce and are careful to teach pupils the correct way to use tools and work with different materials. Practical activities are managed well and pupils are encouraged to co-operate with each other. They respond well, exchanging ideas purposefully and helping each other during construction.

114 The subject is well managed. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and has produced useful guidance for the subject. She has made very effective use of links with firms in the community to develop a range of playground facilities. Pupils have been closely involved in designing the items and seeing their ideas being professionally manufactured and then coming into daily use in the school has provided a powerful boost for the subject.

GEOGRAPHY

115 Standards are at the expected levels at the end of Year 2, and above for the oldest pupils in the school, with many pupils in Year 6 working at level 5. This is better than it was at the time of the last inspection.

116 During their first years at the school pupils are encouraged to take a close interest in their surroundings and to notice, for example, the different purposes for local buildings, such as the shop, garage and houses. By the end of Year 2 they have developed a sound understanding of how their environment is made up of a combination of physical landscape and features made by humans. They use the correct technical vocabulary to describe things and understand how a map is used to represent an area, such as their classroom or the route they take to school.

117 Pupils continue to make sound progress throughout the older classes as a result of the well-planned programme and effective teaching. In Year 3 they develop a broader understanding of places in the world by tracing the migration route of the swallow. This knowledge is extended in later classes and pupils have a good knowledge of countries and oceans through frequent use of globes by the time they are in Year 6. Although they use maps on a number of occasions, they are not part of the regular display material in most classrooms and pupils in Year 6 did not immediately recognise the locality of the school on an Ordnance Survey map. They do, however, understand how to use maps well, and quickly deduce what symbols mean and why roads are shown in different colours. Pupils know how the water cycle works and understand some of the complexity involved in deciding where to site a new road.

118 Pupils have a positive attitude to the subject and play an active part in lessons, listening well, responding to questions and asking questions of their own, particularly in older classes.

119 Geography is taught well. Teachers know the subject and make it interesting for pupils through the material they choose and by their lively approach. Pupils are encouraged to think about the subject and raise questions, rather than simply learn a set of facts. As a result they develop a good grasp of the subject and are prepared well for the next stages of education. Teachers often make links between geography and other subjects and make effective use of skills that pupils have learnt elsewhere. For example, in one lesson the teacher built very successfully on the pupils' knowledge of number lines to help them understand how to divide up a grid square on a map to give a six-figure grid reference.

120 The subject is co-ordinated well and there are good plans to ensure that the work is covered progressively throughout the school. Resources are good, but at the moment, too little use is made of ICT to support the subject. There are plans for this to be extended when the new ICT suite comes into use.

HISTORY

121 During the inspection, only three lessons were observed. Judgements are based on those observations, plus evidence from previous work and discussions with teachers and pupils. Standards are in line with those expected for the age group throughout the school.

122 Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are introduced to the subject through stories which help them to develop concepts of time and place. Teachers also arrange visits to places of interest to enable pupils to appreciate the difference between then and now. Pupils in Year 2 are developing their knowledge and understanding of the past, for example through asking appropriate questions of a pupil in the role of a poor Victorian child about her life. They understand that life for poor children was different and often very hard. In their writing, higher achieving pupils empathise well with poor, Victorian children.

123 In Years 3 to 6, through visits, books, videos, photograph and the handling of artefacts, pupils are able to gather evidence on how people lived during various periods of history. By the time they leave school, pupils have an understanding of some major historical events and of chronology. They make use of a variety of sources to seek information. Pupils in Year 4, for example, begin to use reference books independently to find information on life in ancient Egypt. They are aware of the importance of Egyptologists in developing an understanding of the past from examining buildings and tombs. Year 6 pupils are developing their sense of chronology by completing time-lines and know from earlier studies of different periods of history that, for example, people in ancient Greece lived at a time long before the Vikings and before the birth of Christ. They have a sound knowledge of key events, myths and legends of ancient Greece. A good feature of such work is the opportunity for different kinds of writing, such as eye-witness accounts of the flight of Daedalus and Icarus. This helps to develop literacy as well as historical skills. Higher attaining pupils compare Greek beliefs to their own and understand that the creation of different gods were ways of explaining phenomena such as the seasons, weather and the creation.

124 In the lessons seen, the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. It was very good in a Year 2 lesson where the teacher's use of drama techniques caught the pupils' imagination and enabled them to formulate simple questions about the daily life of a Victorian child. Other lessons observed were satisfactory. Teachers plan good opportunities for speaking and listening in lessons. Evidence of different kinds of writing is seen, although marking often relates to writing skills rather than how well pupils acquire the knowledge, skills and understanding in history.

125 The subject is co-ordinated well. There is a clear whole-school plan based on the national planning guidance. There is a satisfactory range of resources to support learning. These are well organised and easily accessible.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

126 Standards in ICT are broadly in line with expectations at the end of Year 2 but below expectations in Year 6. The school has made progress since the last inspection in developing its ICT provision and has recently produced a good policy and scheme of work for the subject. This has not yet had time to raise standards sufficiently. The school also has well-developed plans to establish a computer suite for an extra 15 machines. This should greatly increase the amount of time pupils are able to spend using computers and also make it easier to teach them to use the range of applications that they need.

127 Pupils become confident in using the computer in their early years at the school and take advantage of having ready access to the classroom computer in a number of lessons. In the Foundation Stage they are helped to make productive use of the equipment by well-chosen programs which include spoken messages and by a roller ball which they find easier to use than the more conventional mouse. By Year 2 most pupils use the keyboard reasonably proficiently and control programs effectively through drop-down menus. In a lesson on using a graphics package, pupils chose shapes from the menu and varied colour and brush widths according to the effect they wanted to achieve.

128 Pupils make progress in the older classes, but their limited access to equipment has an increasing effect. They remain confident with computers, appreciate their advantages and drawbacks and realise their importance in the modern world. Much of the work they have done on computers involves word processing and by Year 6 they know how to change the appearance of text for different purposes, using the correct technical vocabulary, such as 'font', to describe what they are doing. However, many enter text by deleting rather than

moving words. Similarly they know how to use spreadsheets to store data but not how to set up calculations to manipulate the information in the cells. They have used the Internet to find information, using web addresses provided for them, but have not used search engines to track down answers to questions of their own.

129 Several teachers have extended their own ICT skills well, by attending courses and through their own development work. Other staff have not yet been able to take advantage of the national training programme, but all have at least adequate basic skills. Lessons in ICT are taught well, particularly considering the limitations imposed by using a single computer. Teachers have clear aims for lessons and make effective use of the knowledge that some pupils bring to school from their use of computers at home. Pupils are encouraged to help each other and they respond well by supporting each other without taking over. There are well-established routines in all classes for pupils to use the computer in turn. This use is recorded so that the teacher knows what work has been covered by each pupil, but the standard they have reached is not measured.

130 The subject is managed well and the co-ordinator has adapted national guidelines very successfully to match the school's needs. When it has had time to work through the school, this will provide a good range of activities, ensuring that pupils make progress and cover all aspects of the subject. At the moment plans for older pupils have to be adapted because they have not covered the required work in earlier years. The school's arrangements for sharing a technician with other schools are good and will be even more important when the network is installed. Software resources have been chosen carefully, covering a good range of work across many subjects and they are made accessible for staff to use.

MUSIC

131 At the ages of seven and eleven years, standards are similar to those found in most schools. Standards of attainment have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress alongside their peers. Throughout the school, pupils enjoy making music. They respond particularly well to the practical hands-on approach to composing and performing, although no evidence was seen of pupils writing down their own work using either symbols or notation. This is an area for further development.

132 In Year 1, pupils use percussion instruments very effectively to accompany the story of Little Red Riding Hood. They demonstrate a good knowledge of the instruments and the sounds they make. They are able to maintain a rhythm and also use the instruments to create loud and soft sounds. Year 3 pupils clap simple rhythms and are able to maintain different rhythms clapped by different groups and carefully follow the teacher as she conducts them. Year 4 pupils repeat increasingly complex rhythms from the teacher. They also make very good use of percussion instruments to provide accompaniment to a poem. Working very well in groups, they develop interesting pieces of music as they change the poem to a song. Higher attainers compose introductions and make effective use of repeat phrases and quiet or loud passages to add interest. Pupils have opportunities to listen to a variety of music in both music and dance lessons. Year 6 pupils listen carefully and interpret music well to reflect the mood and movement of river.

133 The great majority of pupils enjoy musical activities, particularly where high standards are expected and pupils gain a sense of achievement. They have a clear appreciation of the power of music, the feelings that it arouses and the pleasure that it gives them. This is shown in the manner in which they listen to pieces of music, their keenness to offer

contributions in lessons and their willingness to join in singing and playing. However, at times a minority of pupils responds with silly and inappropriate behaviour, which detracts from their own and others' learning.

134 The curriculum is considerably enhanced by weekly singing sessions for Years 1 and 2 and for Years 3 to 6. A parent volunteer, who is a music specialist, leads these sessions supported by class teachers. They are well led and organised. Pupils show real enjoyment and the quality of singing is good.

135 The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. It is now good overall. The teachers' enthusiastic, lively approach motivates the pupils to do their best. In the best lessons, teachers use their good subject knowledge to use and explain appropriate musical terms and to provide clear objectives for their lessons. Very good relationships give pupils confidence to explore the media and to perform for others. The teachers' good management and organisational skills ensure that pupils collaborate very well together and concentrate all their energies on the task in hand. Opportunities are provided for pupils to improve their performance by evaluating their own work and that of others.

136 The music curriculum provides good opportunities to practise literacy and numeracy skills. Speaking and listening skills are provided and promoted very well when pupils carefully evaluate each other's work. They also extend their vocabulary through musical terms like 'crescendo' and 'ensemble'. Counting beats supports mathematical development for younger pupils. There is no evidence of ICT being used to extend learning in music. Music also supports pupils' social and cultural development. They learn the importance of working together to compose music and have opportunities to hear a range of different musical styles in assemblies and lessons.

137 The subject is well organised. The school makes use of a commercially produced scheme in conjunction with the national guidance. Lessons are well planned to provide for the development of skills over time. The subject is temporarily managed by the headteacher, although there are plans to appoint a new co-ordinator next year. There is a satisfactory range of instruments and music tapes and compact discs to support work in music. Pupils have some opportunities to listen to performances by visiting musicians. There is a school choir and a recorder group. Peripatetic tuition is available and some pupils are learning the guitar. Opportunities to join other schools in music festivals are enjoyed by older pupils, and concerts and assemblies also provide opportunities for pupils to perform for an audience.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

138 Pupils throughout the school achieve standards that are above the national expectation. Attainment in Years 1 and 2 has improved since the previous inspection, whilst the good level of attainment in Years 3 to 6 has been maintained. The school provides a well-balanced programme of physical activities throughout the year which meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Pupils learn to play games, participate in gymnastic activities and respond to music through dance. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 also have swimming lessons and, by the time they leave school, pupils are competent swimmers. Year 6 pupils take part in a range of outdoor and adventurous activities during their residential visit to an outdoor education centre.

139 In Years 1 and 2, pupils develop control, co-ordination and balance and have an awareness of space and the need to use it well as part of their physical education activities. They develop skills in the use of small apparatus, including catching, throwing and hitting a ball. They participate in gymnastics and respond to music through dance. Pupils in Year 2 make good use of large apparatus when developing simple sequences of movement and

balance. They develop a good understanding of the benefits of vigorous exercise and the effects of exercise on the body.

140 In Years 3 to 6, skills are further developed and pupils perform with increasing competence. They learn to play games and develop athletic techniques. The opportunities provided for teamwork and a sense of fair play support the development of pupils' social skills. Pupils in Year 3 respond well when asked to move as astronauts. They listen carefully and move well as they interpret the music, showing a good awareness of body shape and movement. Year 6 pupils demonstrate good dance skills as they represent the movement of a river as it moves from its source to the sea. They collaborate very well in small groups and their movement reflects an awareness of the need to work at differing heights and speeds.

141 The quality of teaching observed was very good overall. It is never less than good. All lessons begin and end in an orderly manner and contain appropriate warm-up activities. Teachers set appropriate challenges, provide clear instructions and explanations and encourage pupils to develop skills. Teachers regularly ask good performers to demonstrate their skills to the rest of the class and consistently offer praise where it is deserved. This has the effect of encouraging everyone to do better and nearly always improves standards. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate their own and others' performances to help them to improve. Relationships and class management are very good. This results in safe, controlled lessons where pupils listen carefully and follow their teachers' instructions. Teaching is enthusiastic and this is reflected in the pupils' response.

142 Pupils' attitudes to the subject are good. They dress appropriately for physical activity and behaviour is good. They work hard to improve skills, are well motivated and show good concentration. They clearly enjoy lessons. They are very co-operative when working in groups and are reliable and sensible when putting out or storing equipment.

143 A good range of extra-curricular physical and sporting activities is planned throughout the year and supports the physical education curriculum. The school takes part in inter-school activities in a range of sports, including football, netball, rugby league and cricket. Effective use is made of outside coaches to develop pupils' interest and skills in sports such as football and rugby league. The school has achieved the Football Association Charter Standard for its work in conjunction with a local junior football club.

144 The co-ordinator provides effective leadership for the subject. He monitors the quality of planning and provides guidance for colleagues. There is a useful policy and clear scheme of work in place. There is a good selection of apparatus and equipment to support learning. The school has a hall where gymnastics, dance and indoor games take place. The school has the use of outdoor facilities which include a large playing field and playgrounds. There is a good range of large outdoor apparatus set on a safety surface. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

145 Pupils' attainment in religious education is in line with expectations stated in the locally agreed syllabus for pupils at seven and eleven.

146 Year 2 pupils learn about the Christian religion and other world faiths. In a lesson based on Hanukkah, pupils demonstrated their knowledge and understanding of the significance of light in Jewish and Hindu festivals. High attaining pupils in particular recall previous work on Divali well – "You light candles to lead the way home" and, in relation to Hanukkah, know that lighted candles in the Menorah represent the 'eternal flame', "It never

goes out.” Year 6 pupils explore the meanings of Christian symbolism with thoughtfulness and describe the lighted candle as a symbol of “the light of the world... peace... calm...new life...hope.” Speaking, listening, writing and presentation skills are of a good standard.

147 Teaching and learning is good overall and occasionally excellent. The range of work shows that pupils have sound knowledge of both Old and New Testament Bible stories. The study of Christianity and other world faiths is covered well. Teaching is sensitive and enables pupils to express their thoughts and ask questions in an open atmosphere, such as in a Year 1 lesson about the Christmas story where one pupil asked, “Did a God make God?” Pupils responded well to the teacher’s discussion of presents at Christmas, linked to gifts from Jesus, using words such as “love”, “forgiveness” and “kindness”. Learning is made interesting and more meaningful for pupils through visits to places of worship, such as a synagogue and local church. Displays of writing, pictures and objects of special religious significance enhance pupils’ learning. A visiting theatre group added an interesting dimension to the learning of the story of Rama and Sita in Year 3. Good opportunities are created by teachers to involve visiting speakers, such as a member of the Jewish faith who explained and demonstrated the traditions and significance of Hanukkah to Year 2 pupils. There are many opportunities where teachers help pupils to understand the spiritual dimension of religion, such as the work in Year 6 on the theme of objects special to them in preparation for their visit to the local church. Spirituality is often reflected in pupils’ writing and poetry.

148 Subject co-ordination is satisfactory. Planning corresponds to the locally agreed syllabus and also draws on national planning guidance. The resources available are used well.