

# INSPECTION REPORT

**HORWOOD AND NEWTON TRACEY  
COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Lovacott, Barnstaple

LEA area: Devon

Unique reference number: 113154

Headteacher: Mr Ian Dickerson

Reporting inspector: Mr D. Collard  
OFSTED Inspector Number: 11122

Dates of inspection: 28<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup> January 2002

Inspection number: 193836

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

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Lovacott  
Barnstaple  
Devon

Postcode: EX31 3PU

Telephone number: 01271 858373

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Appropriate authority: governing body

Name of chair of governors: Stephen Clarke

Date of previous inspection: 21<sup>st</sup> April 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
11122	Mr D. Collard	Registered inspector	mathematics information and communication technology geography physical education special educational needs	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils or students taught?
13450	Mrs J. Madden	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?
18344	Mr D. Earley	Team inspector	science art and design design and technology religious education equal opportunities	How well is the school led and managed?
17969	Mr P. Brock	Team inspector	English history music Foundation Stage	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils or students?

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Horwood and Newton Tracey Community Primary School is situated in Lovacott, near Barnstaple, Devon. There are 81 full time pupils in the main school and 17 part-time pupils in the nursery. This is smaller than the average primary school. There are 4 classes with pupils ranging in age from three to eleven years old. Pupils are arranged into classes that contain mixed ages and these alter each year in light of the numbers in each yeargroup. The nursery classroom is situated in a village hall away from the main site and there is also a room within this building that is used as a hall for physical education. Pupils transfer into the main school during the year that they are five. Pupils come from a variety of social backgrounds. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals (2.25 per cent) is very low compared to the national average. No pupils come from a minority ethnic background or are identified as being at an early stage of learning English. This is very low when compared nationally. Twelve per cent of pupils are on the special educational needs register, which is below the national average. No pupils have a statement of special educational need, which is well below the national average. Attainment on entry to the nursery class at three years is average overall. The attainment of pupils at the end of the Foundation Stage (at six years old) is variable but, at present, is above average.

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

This is a very effective school that is continuing to improve. Standards overall are above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and pupils achieve well in their time at the school. This is because the quality of teaching is excellent in the nursery and very good throughout the rest of the school. The opportunities offered through the well-balanced curriculum are having a positive effect on the progress that is being made. The leadership and management provided by the headteacher and governing body is very good. It is based on close teamwork for which all members of the school community have joint responsibility. The school provides very good value for money.

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

- The good standards achieved in English, mathematics, science in Year 6, information and communication technology, design and technology, art and design and geography and the good level of progress that pupils make throughout the school.
- The excellent teaching and provision in the nursery
- The consistently high quality of teaching throughout the school
- The very good quality of leadership and management by the headteacher and governing body
- The very good attitudes, behaviour, relationships and personal development of pupils
- The very good links with parents

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

- The consistent use of good quality marking through Years 1 to 6

*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. Since that time there has been a very good improvement against the issues identified and from new issues that have arisen in the interim. Schemes of work are now in place for all subjects and these, along with the monitoring of teaching, have made a significant impact on the achievement of pupils. There has been a substantial improvement in the quality of provision for nursery children and in the use of assessment data. This is enabling the school to closely identify particular strengths and weaknesses at an early stage. Pupils now have full access to all aspects of the curriculum.

## 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	B	B	C	D
mathematics	D	B	B	C
science	E	E	B	C

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

Comparisons with national data should be treated with caution, as the numbers of pupils in each yeargroup are small. Fluctuations between all schools and schools that are similar appear misleading because each pupil represents a high percentage figure. More importantly, the trend since 1998 in English, mathematics and science has been upward from a very low base. Pupils in the present Year 6 have standards that are above average in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology, design and technology, art and design and geography. In all other subjects, standards are average. Over time, pupils in the juniors have achieved well and this is substantiated by the results of internal tests and from the scrutiny of pupils' work. Particularly good progress has been made in the use of investigation, research and experimentation in science, mathematics and geography. This is partially due to the much better use of computers and to the focusing of teachers upon applying and using knowledge so that pupils will develop better understanding.

Children learn extremely quickly in the nursery and reception classes. By the time they enter Year 1, pupils now have standards that are above average. Pupils in Year 2 have standards overall that are above average in reading, writing and mathematics, which is similar to the National Curriculum test results of 2001. They are also above that expected nationally in information and communication technology, art and design and geography. Standards are in line with national expectations in all other subjects. The standards are improving because these pupils have gained the full benefit of the high quality provision in the Foundation Stage and from the more highly focused teaching in Years 1 and 2. The impact of better provision through all years means that these pupils should continue to achieve well through the school.

Pupils with special educational needs make good progress against their own individual targets. These are primarily concerned with literacy, numeracy and behavioural issues but they also include specific skills that need to be developed in other subjects such as in information and communication technology.

The impact of the improvement can be noted from the challenging targets set for Year 6 pupils in 2002. These are likely to be achieved with the possibility of some pupils exceeding what is expected of them.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils work with enthusiasm and have a strong commitment to succeed. The pride they show is demonstrated by the large numbers who become involved in after-school clubs, visits and competitive teams.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. The inappropriate behaviour mentioned in the last report has been fully eradicated and the school environment is calm and orderly.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Relationships between pupils and staff are excellent because pupils are fully involved in the commitment to improve.
Attendance	Above average. There are no issues relating to poor attendance or lateness.

The school places a very high emphasis on ensuring that all pupils become fully involved in all that is offered to them.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching is the major contributory factor in the very good learning that takes place through the school. All teachers are conscientious in planning lessons and providing good opportunities to ensure that all pupils progress at a fast rate. As a result, pupils are stretched to their potential. This has had a positive effect on improving the standards that are achieved.

An excellent start is made in the nursery from an experienced team. Work is planned to closely follow the national Early Learning Goals. Due consideration is taken of the need to allow time for children to play and to gain new experiences. This is done through visits, discussions and other appropriate tasks. Work is carefully monitored and assessed and any concerns are followed up. The nursery is extremely well organised and this is why pupils progress at a fast rate.

In Years 1 to 6 teachers plan work to build upon knowledge that has already been gained. This ensures that learning is kept at a high level. The teaching of English and mathematics is very good. Both these subjects follow the national strategies although it is tailored to meet the needs of mixed age classes. Consequently, work is set at different levels to ensure that both higher and lower attaining pupils achieve at the correct pace. Literacy and numeracy skills are transferred well into other subjects. Pupils have the opportunity to undertake word-processing and to build graphs as part of their geography work. Older pupils learn about the use of note taking in literacy and use this when collecting information in history. All these experiences improve the quality of learning in a range of subjects.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant and improvements since the last inspection have been considerable.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils are identified quickly and appropriate tasks are set to help them improve. Learning assistants are briefed well and provide good support for the teaching staff.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	This is good overall. Provision for pupils' moral and social development is particularly strong and provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Procedures for assessing pupils' work are good.

The school provides good curricular opportunities both in the classroom and through other activities such as visits, visitors and events. Many of these provide the starting point for further study. Planning actively encourages links to all subjects so that pupils understand the relevance of what they are learning. With the introduction of national guidelines for schemes of work a new emphasis is being placed on adapting these to the particular need of the pupils in this school. Pupils are looked after well. Any concerns, either from school or from home, are acted upon where possible and there are adequate procedures in place to ensure the well-being of all.

The school ensures that good links with the parents are maintained. There are many opportunities to meet with teachers both on a formal basis through parents meetings and informally should there be any concerns. Parents value the connections with the school and feel that all is being done to make them feel welcome.

## 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 management, supported by a committed team of co-ordinators. The headteacher has an extremely clear vision and a belief in openness and shared responsibility.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body has a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and operates very well as a critical friend to the school, raising issues where necessary. It meets all its statutory duties and very effectively plays a part in shaping the direction of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school's systems for monitoring children's achievements and the quality of teaching and learning are very good and lead to priorities for raising attainment.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes very good use of its resources and applies efficient financial controls very effectively. Very good financial planning supports the school's priorities and is closely linked to the school's detailed development plan. The principles of best value are applied very well.

The school is staffed adequately and there are a good number of learning assistants to support the teaching staff. The accommodation, although small, is used well and the addition of extra classrooms, the use of the village hall and the purchase of a house next door have alleviated many of the problems that face a small school site. Resources are at least adequate for all subjects and are stored efficiently so that they are easily accessible. The school is well staffed by committed and conscientious teachers and classroom support assistants. Good levels of learning resources are used very well. The school makes good use of the accommodation in order to enhance learning.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children make good progress and like coming to school</li> <li>• Teaching is good and pupils behave well</li> <li>• There is a close liaison between the school and home and parents feel comfortable about coming in with any concerns and suggestions</li> <li>• The leadership of the school is strong.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents have no significant areas of concern</li> </ul>

The inspection team agrees with the views of parents

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. On entry to the school, children in the nursery have average ability in language, numeracy and social development although there are a significant proportion who are less confident in language and have social skills below that which might be expected. Because of the excellent teaching, children in the Foundation Stage get off to a very good start and they achieve very well. By the time pupils are six years old they are all ready to start work on the National Curriculum. Those presently in Year 1 have levels of attainment above that which might be expected for their age. The number of pupils in each year group is small and there are clear variations in the range of ability. In addition, the high quality of the provision in the nursery has only been evident for the last two years resulting in pupils in Years 1 and 2 benefiting more fully from this experience.
2. Pupils achieve mostly good standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. There has been improvement in many subjects since the time of the last inspection. Issues relating to work in information and communication technology have been fully addressed and the trend in National Curriculum tests for English, mathematics and science have steadily risen both in Year 2 and Year 6. This is because the teaching that is now taking place is of a consistently higher standard than was apparent at the last inspection and the curriculum offered has been more carefully thought through.
3. Standards in reading and writing for pupils in the present Year 2 are above average although the school has rightly focused on improving the standards in writing. This development has been highlighted by the results attained in National Curriculum tests over a number of years. In 2001, for instance, writing in tests was well below the national average. In contrast, reading results were close to average for the number of pupils gaining, at least the expected level, although a larger than average number of pupils obtained the higher level. This would indicate that literacy skills in writing should be higher. The results have been carefully monitored to assess the action that needed to be taken. Through different teaching methods and a reappraisal of the marking of tests, success is beginning to happen. Pupils in the present Year 2 show good ability in language, sentence construction, spelling and handwriting.
4. Pupils in the present Year 6 have good skills in English and are on line to achieve above average results in the National Curriculum tests. This is better than last year when pupils only gained average levels. The small number of pupils in this year mean that comparisons are difficult. However, the trend since 1998, when standards were well below average, has improved because of the good introduction of the National Literacy Strategy and by the school's attention to concentrating on developing appropriate understanding. Results from internal tests suggest that progress has been better than average over the last three years. Much more emphasis has been placed upon pupils' learning how to use the good reading skills that they already had. Consequently, writing contains good structure and descriptions make a significant impact in stories. A wide range of different styles is developed including reports, letters, plays and poetry. All of these have helped improve the achievement that pupils make year on year. Literacy is used well in other subjects. In history and geography accounts and reports are clear. Older pupils make good use of bullet points to take notes and are able to draw out salient facts from research.

5. Above average standards are being achieved in mathematics by pupils in the present Year 2 and Year 6. The National Numeracy Strategy has been used to good effect and has made a particular impact in the mental agility of pupils. Even pupils who are lower attainers are able to use number facts efficiently. For instance, in Year 6 two pupils could explain clearly how they had arrived at an answer but could also think of different ways they could have achieved the same result. They were able to write their working out in a good mathematical way suggesting that they understood what they were doing. Results in National Curriculum tests, particularly in 2001 substantiate the improvement. As in English, the trend has been upward since 1999. Pupils use of data-handling has substantially improved with the better links made to information and communication technology and to the use of mathematics in other subjects such as geography and science. This development has been particularly successful for those pupils with higher ability as it enabled them to develop their knowledge and skills into a deeper understanding.
6. Attainment in science follows a similar pattern to English and mathematics. Pupils throughout the school achieve well because of the good quality teaching evident in the planning and through lessons. Particularly good links are made to other subjects and to the use of first hand observation and experimentation. Time is given to discuss what has been found out and to help build up a hypothesis about why things happen when experiments take place. All pupils are expected to think for themselves and by the careful structuring of themes pupils get used to experimentation. By the time pupils are in Years 5 and 6 they are able to compile their own experiment to test a theory. Discussions that took place after a science lesson on circuits demonstrated that pupils were considering their findings in a mature and thoughtful way.
7. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, attainment is above that expected nationally in geography, information and communication technology and art and design. It is above the national expectation in design and technology by the end of Year 6. It is in line with national expectations in all other subjects. Good links are made between different subjects whilst pupils learn about specific facts within each. A good example is the way that older pupils understand the difference between human and physical geography. In a lesson used to find out about different regions of the world pupils were asked to discover features of the land as well as the social structure. In this way they had to filter the information they had into sections about rivers and mountains as well as the reasons why people lived in a particular area. Since the last inspection computers have been used much more regularly. The new suite enables all pupils to work on computers for at least one hour per week. They have quickly assimilated new skills and are beginning to recognise the impact that different programs can have on making their work in other subjects more effective. In this subject there has been a rapid improvement in the progress of pupils.
8. The achievement that pupils make is good in all yeargroups. The targets set for 2002 are sufficiently challenging and are likely to be achieved. There are no significant differences in the mixed age classes and all pupils are able to fulfil their potential. Lessons are challenging, questions are thoughtful and written work reflects a deeper understanding. Pupils with special educational needs also make good progress against their own individual targets. Results from both internal and national tests suggest that their improvement is linked to good support and careful identification at an early stage.

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

9. This area of school life has seen very good improvement since the last inspection and is now a strength of the school. All parents are in agreement that their children like the school. Pupils seen during the inspection thoroughly enjoyed their time in school both in the classroom and during break times. In lessons, they quickly become involved in the learning, working with enthusiasm, and showing a strong commitment to succeed. Their sustained concentration and eagerness to improve makes a major contribution to the very good learning in the infants and juniors and the excellent learning made by Foundation Stage pupils. This enthusiasm begins with the under fives where the excellent management of children through the range of activities makes them feel secure and confident. Pupils with special needs take a full and active roll in school life, including school productions and the choir.
10. Behaviour is very good in and around the school. Parents are very happy with this situation, an improvement on the last inspection when there was a small minority of pupils indulging in inappropriate behaviour. This is no longer the case, with pupils behaving well, both in classes, where they are interested in the teaching, and in the playground, where good supervision, games and play equipment make a major contribution. There was no evidence of rough or oppressive behaviour during the inspection; parents say there is no bullying, and any small incidents are dealt with immediately they occur or are reported. The school council was given an opportunity to comment on the recent anti-bullying policy before it was introduced. There have been no exclusions in the last academic year.
11. Relationships in the school are excellent. Pupils are set an example by the staff in their relationships and they follow this lead. This was well illustrated during a Year 6 design and technology lesson, where pupils collaborated extremely well in the design and making session when they were clear about expectations and their relationships with peers and adults were very good. All pupils in school work and play well together making allowances for differing opinions and personalities. Children from the nursery visit the main school weekly where they are adopted by an older pupil who takes care of them. Similarly, Year 6 pupils ensure that no pupil is left out of games or has no one to play with at break times. Pupils are put into family groups for one session a week when they discuss the pastoral and personal side of their life in school; this is instrumental in ensuring those pupils form relationships across age groups through the school. Pupils with special needs are fully included in these excellent relationships and there are many examples of friendships across gender.
12. Pupils are encouraged to work and think independently, assemble their equipment and tidy away from their first experience of the Foundation Stage. Pupils are each given a set of targets with differing time scales and these are reviewed at regular intervals; pupils observed and spoken to were very aware of what these entail. In Year 6, the teacher reviews learning at intervals through the week giving pupils the opportunity to say whether they have reached their lesson target and if not what they need to do to achieve this.
13. Personal development is very good. Pupils gain in confidence as they move through the school and, for example, the school council has representatives from each age group who have an equal say in its decisions. They all enjoy the responsibility and canvas their peers for suggestions before meetings. Recent initiatives include better soap in the girls' toilet and new play equipment.
14. Attendance in the school during 2000/2001 was good and above the national average whilst the rate of unauthorised absence was broadly in line with the national average. However, there has been a drop of one per cent in attendance since the previous academic year, said to be the result of the foot and mouth outbreak.

## HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

15. The quality of teaching overall is very good. It is excellent in the nursery and very good for pupils in Years 1 to 6. Only a small number of lessons (24) were seen but none of these were unsatisfactory and the majority were either good, very good or excellent. This represents a substantial improvement from the last inspection when teaching, although variable, was good overall. There is particularly effective teaching of the basic skills of language and numeracy. Good efforts are made to incorporate the use of information and communication technology into all areas of work. The very good teaching is the reason why pupils learn very well and make the progress that they do.
16. Children in the nursery benefit from very focused and closely monitored work from an experienced and very competent teacher. The environment is highly organised. Due account is taken of the Early Learning Goals and the need to ensure that pupils make a smooth transition into the main school. Individual lesson plans are followed closely. There is a calm and efficient air within the classroom and parents are kept fully informed about what is happening. New children are assimilated without any stress and it was noted how quickly a new child had settled into the daily routines. The nursery assistant provides very valuable support. All staff are particularly good at using effective questioning techniques to ensure that children continue to learn well during their independent activities. Progress in learning is excellent.
17. Pupils in the reception group, Year 1 and Year 2 have all benefited fully from the good start made in the nursery environment. As a consequence, their progress in learning is very good. Good account is taken of the differing needs. Reception children are given a mixture of work linked to both Early Learning Goals and to the National Curriculum. At various times during a lesson these children are taken separately and given work, allied to the theme for the rest of the class but taking into account the lower ability in language, writing and numeracy. A good example was seen in a mathematics lesson. The class were learning about two-dimensional shapes. A whole-class discussion started the exercise and when the class split to do their individual work a classroom assistant then worked on numbers to 10 with the younger, less confident children. However, a small number already had sufficient understanding and their work developed around cutting out shapes and counting the corners and sides. Meanwhile, the rest of the pupils in Years 1 and 2 were working on halving and quartering shapes with different folding techniques.
18. The teacher expects pupils to work hard and to gain as much as possible from each lesson. She has high expectations about good behaviour. In all the lessons seen there were no instances of misbehaviour, calling out or disruption. Any materials that are needed are carefully prepared and ready on tables for when they are needed. Consequently, lessons move at a good pace and a lot is achieved. Pupils work well together and help each other with any difficulties. They ask for help but are not fussy. They understand the classroom rules and wait for the teacher or assistant to finish before asking a question. This is because good methods have been used to instil firm discipline. This was evident in a physical education lesson where good use was made of a tambour to start and stop tasks. During whole class discussions even the youngest pupils put up their hand and wait for the previous person to finish. During independent work, pupils have high levels of concentration and show great interest in what they are doing. This is aided by the good interaction by the teacher as in an art lesson where she offered suggestions and welcomed the contributions made by each individual.

19. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 also learn very well because the teaching is very good overall. For the older pupils especially this has not been the case during their whole time in the juniors. Nevertheless, any shortcomings have been fully addressed so that they are now making very good progress. Teaching for these pupils ranges from excellent to satisfactory. In the best lessons such as an English lesson in Year 5/6 the teacher started with a high level discussion about the characters in a war story. Ideas were developed carefully and questions challenged pupils to think. The tasks given helped develop a deeper understanding about the context of the piece and about the feelings of an escapee. Due account was taken of the ability and maturity of this mixed age class and its success was seen in the high levels of interest that were shown. Planning throughout the juniors is highly structured. It allows teachers to focus on specific steps in learning and gives an indication when these have been achieved. In this way pupils have developed a good sense of their own strengths and where they need to improve. These are enhanced by writing a clear statement at the start of each piece of work and by attaching learning targets to new units of work.
20. Very good lessons were seen in all classes. This is a tribute to the improvement of the team structure within the school, which is central to the way that teachers work. Planning, assessment and the monitoring of teaching are a shared responsibility and this has helped improve the quality of what goes on. In a Year 3/4 science lesson, the teacher explained the target for the day prior to work starting. Work was highly challenging for all levels of ability and there was a good mix of practical work and evaluation. The teacher ensured that materials were laid out ready and the classroom assistant was given specific work to do with the higher attaining pupils. This allowed them to think about the key questions when undertaking experiments and gave them the extra challenge that they needed.
21. Throughout the school, teachers assess the work that is going on. This sometimes involves individual discussions or working alongside a group. In this way, all teachers have a good view about what pupils have achieved and how learning needs to move on. Thorough assessment records are kept that help provide valuable information. As these become more comprehensive they are also allowing the school to closely monitor its own performance. However, these records are not always backed up by consistent marking practices. This is partly because the school marking policy, although revised, does not give sufficient guidance about what is expected. In the best cases as seen in Year 3/4, marking is thorough, offers praise appropriately and gives guidance on what to do next. At other times, such as in some of the marking in Year 1, 2, 5 and 6 it is cursory and too much reliance is placed on the teacher intrinsically knowing the ability of a pupil. In these cases the process is not shared, it undervalues hard work and pupils are not always clear about what they have achieved.
22. Parents and pupils clearly understand the reasons and expectations about homework. It is set regularly and most pupils enjoy what they are given. In discussion, they say that teachers always check that it is done and use it to add to the work in lessons. For older pupils, the systems are more regular and provide good preparation for work at the next school.
23. Pupils with special educational needs are given high levels of support. Learning assistants are given specific roles and keep regular records. The individual education plans are well constructed and targets are given for literacy, numeracy and behavioural problems. Teachers are fully involved in drawing up these plans and expertise is provided by the co-ordinator and some outside agencies. In the nursery, the pupils with special needs are identified at a very early stage and the planning and intervention are carefully planned to improve their opportunities. As a result, these pupils learn very well. Parents rightly feel the support is good and are able to

give instances about the improvement that has taken place. In the lessons seen during the inspection support was never less than good and was often very good.

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

24. The quality and range of learning opportunities is good overall. Statutory requirements are fully met including the teaching of religious education, and personal, health and sex education as well as the dangers of misuse of drugs. Regular opportunities are provided for pupils to discuss various issues of importance to them within family groups in fifteen-minute sessions once per week and the school council is a positive experience for a number of pupils. As well as giving due priority to the teaching of English and mathematics, curricular breadth is achieved by the provision of an appropriate balance of the other subjects. The school's strategies for the teaching of numeracy and literacy are good. There has been recognition of the need to focus on the development of writing skills over the past three years and this is beginning to improve the quality of work achieved.
25. Pupils with special educational needs are given a broad and balanced curriculum. They make good progress because the individual education plans are well considered and give small steps in learning. This allows learning assistants and teachers to measure how successful the provision has been and whether targets have been achieved. Pupils are assessed to ensure that plans can be re-visited if necessary. The issue regarding the withdrawal for music tuition, identified within the last report, has been fully addressed. The action taken at that time is now ensuring that pupils do not miss the same lessons each week.
26. Curriculum planning has improved markedly since the last inspection when there were only schemes of work for some of the subjects other than English, mathematics and science and the programme of study for information and communication technology was incomplete. There are now good schemes of work for all subjects of the curriculum and this is having a positive effect on the way in which pupils' learning is continuous and progressive. Apart from the strong development of the planning for English and mathematics, the medium term plans for the other subjects are focused and to the point. In particular, they make clear what pupils are expected to learn by the end of a particular unit of study. They also make suitable provision for assessment to be carried out in order that teachers may ascertain the degree of learning that has occurred. Criticisms from the last report relating to withdrawal of pupils from music and for special national test training have been suitably addressed. Timetables have been adjusted to ensure that no pupil misses more than a short period of any one type of lesson on a regular basis.
27. The provision that the school makes for extra-curricular activities is very good. A wide range of programmes is arranged that ensure pupils of all abilities have equal opportunities to enjoy and learn. These include art, pottery, recorder and drama clubs as well as appropriate opportunities for pupils to play football and netball plus extra chances for younger pupils in the infants to develop their ball skills. Recent whole school productions include *'Joseph and his Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat'* and it is commendable that virtually all pupils in the school opt to join one or more clubs or activities during the course of the year. The school's African Drum Club is a particular strength with pupils developing high level skills on these instruments and producing work that verges on the professional.
28. The contribution that the community makes towards the quality of pupils' learning is also good. In physical terms, this includes the use that the school is permitted to make of the nursery and

the village hall. Parents are involved with various activity clubs, help to look after the library and respond positively to questionnaires sent to them by the school. They are actively involved with open days and evenings and give strong support to consultations about the children in both the autumn and spring terms.

29. The school has good links with other institutions. The link between the nursery and the main school is very strong indeed and extremely effective. Nursery children attend the main school once per week on a regular basis and this does much to ensure that their confidence and awareness of what is to come is solidly developed in a very positive manner. The school also works closely with other local schools to develop policies that affect the learning of all of their pupils corporately as the school prepares them for the next stage of their education at the secondary level.
30. The provision made for pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. The opportunities for pupils to gain insight into values and beliefs in order to further their spiritual awareness are satisfactory. These develop both from regular assemblies and from religious education lessons. In assemblies, pupils enter quietly and are encouraged to listen carefully to music from various areas and cultures of the world. Pupils are encouraged to consider their feelings about how good or bad their weekend has been, for example, and the sensitive response to their thoughts helps them to become confident enough to express how they feel to those around them knowing that their thoughts will be received sympathetically by all.
31. The school's approach to pupils' moral development is very good. Teachers focus on clear values and pupils respond positively to the expectation of high standards of behaviour and acceptable conduct. This approach leads to pupils developing a clear awareness of the difference between right and wrong. They are generally self-disciplined and, by their actions, help to create an orderly school. Staff provide good role models and their positive approach is evident in the way they deal with pupils. Pupils are treated as equals by all. All teachers follow a consistent approach when they explain to pupils how they are expected to behave.
32. The provision for pupils' social development is very good. There is a strong sense of community spirit within the school with a firm focus on developing kind, thoughtful and helpful relationships with each other. The family grouping approach followed does much to ensure that pupils of all abilities learn to respect differences of opinion and to rally to the support of those who need help most. In the classroom there are numerous opportunities provided for pupils to work together in pairs or groups and pupils are encouraged, and willing, to undertake various tasks appropriate for their age.
33. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. They have opportunities to learn about their own culture through literacy, history, art and music as with their recent studies of life in Victorian times with particular reference to their own school. Visits have been made to various places of interest such as field trips in geography and a number of visitors to the school help to ensure that pupils' interests and knowledge of aspects of their own culture are developed well. These include a puppet theatre, an archaeologist, a storyteller and visiting artists, for example. Their knowledge and understanding of various aspects of other cultures is less effectively developed and library reference books available to support this aspect of pupils' cultural development are limited.
34. The school places a very high emphasis on ensuring that all pupils are offered a wide range of opportunities both within the classroom and in out of school activities. The success of this is demonstrated by the number of pupils who are involved in after school clubs, visits and social

events. This, combined with the active involvement of parents and friends, is the reason why the school is fully involved within the community.

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

35. The overall care of pupils in the school is good, as was the case in the previous inspection. In the school's family atmosphere, pupils are well known to their teachers in particular and more generally to the adults in the school. Pupils with individual needs are well catered for by the use of appropriate outside agencies such as speech therapists and educational psychologists. Classroom support assistants are very well used to support groups in the classroom. This will vary from working with high ability pupils who are helped to improve the depth of their understanding, supporting children with special needs in their learning and helping the younger pupils in a class understand new concepts. Legal requirements are met in the provision of individual education plans and many are already incorporating the new requirements regarding the recent legislative changes to the Code of Practice.
36. Health and safety around the school is good. It was audited by teaching staff with responsibility for particular areas of the school and any problems dealt with at the time. This was then collated into a risk assessment document, which is regularly monitored by the headteacher and two governors. Pupils are well supervised in school, as are the nursery pupils who walk up and down the road on visits to the main school buildings and older pupils visiting the village hall for physical education. Child protection is based on guidance from the local authority and is satisfactory, the named person has received good training but discussion with staff revealed a lack of training and guidelines, which should be addressed as a matter of urgency.
37. The promotion and monitoring of attendance is satisfactory but some registers are irregularly marked and totalled.
38. The school has very good strategies in place to support the very good behaviour of pupils. Since their introduction, behaviour has improved to such an extent that sanctions for poor behaviour are rarely used. Procedures are now regulated by very good classroom management and interesting lessons taught by very good teachers. Pupils are well supervised at playtimes where the family grouping and occasional intervention of Year 6 pupils ensure that pupils play and socialise well. The anti-bullying strategy and the few school rules, based on respect and care for others, eliminate all but the rarest oppressive behaviour. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting agreed that any occurrence of inappropriate behaviour is dealt with promptly and effectively.
39. The school's procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good overall. Although this is similar to the findings of the last inspection, there has been considerable improvement in developing assessment strategies for subjects other than English, mathematics and science in particular. Medium term plans now have three levels of assessment written into them so that, at the end of each unit of study, provision is made for pupils to be assessed on how well they have achieved with their knowledge and understanding of a particular unit. They are assessed as low, average or high and this information is recorded by teachers to be passed on when pupils move to their next class. In English and mathematics, teachers make use of the local authority assessment sheets that accompany the teaching framework and list the key objectives to be achieved. The system used is clear and efficient.

40. The use that teachers make of the assessment information to guide the future planning of their work is also good. Co-ordinators monitor what is happening within their own subject responsibilities and then whole staff discussions follow to agree on changes as required. An example of the effectiveness of this approach is seen in the recent decision to concentrate more on the development of pupils' research skills.
41. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress, including those for special educational needs, are good. The school has a system in place whereby co-ordinators follow a monitoring cycle that varies from subject to subject. Co-ordinators have time out of class specifically to do this and generally have a specific area to focus on such as spelling, for example. These checking activities are then followed by a report written by the co-ordinators who feed back findings to staff so that the next stage of the monitoring progress can be decided upon. Assessment procedures in general are now considered by staff to be more consistent than at the time of the last inspection
42. Pupils' personal development is actively promoted from the Nursery upwards. New pupils settle quickly because of the excellent management and the care they receive from the more established pupils. The weekly visit to the main school builds their confidence in working and speaking with their helpful friend. The teacher uses questioning very well to ensure the inclusion of the whole class firmly insisting that they take turns. In the main school pupils are encouraged to think independently, set their own targets as well as working on those set by their teacher. In Year 6, pupils observed in a science lesson, through an ongoing dialogue with the teacher, were confident to learn from their mistakes. The school, however, keeps few permanent records of pupils' personal skills to add depth and balance to those of their academic achievements.

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

43. Parents feel that this is a very good school. In response to the questionnaire, parents all agree that their children like the school and that the behaviour is good. They also say that their children make good progress in a well-managed school where the teaching is good and children become mature and responsible. They, as parents, are comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem and are well informed about progress. They say the school expects children to work hard and achieve their best and that the school provides a range of interesting activities outside lessons. There is less agreement that children get the right amount of work to do at home. The inspection team feel that parents have a good knowledge of the school and that the use of homework in the school is good.
44. The effectiveness of parents' links with the school is very good and in line with those at the last inspection. These good links begin with the home visit, which proceeds children's start at the school. The school brochure is well written and informative, parents receive weekly newsletters, which combine to inform parents about all aspects of school. They also receive an outline plan of the term's work. Written reports are variable with the better reports giving clear guidance on areas for improvement. Parents and pupils are given the opportunity to comment on reports and there is a follow up meeting. The school holds two other meetings a year with parents for the discussion and setting of pupils' targets, and in addition, informal access to teachers and the headteacher ensure parents feel well informed. Parents of pupils with special needs are very pleased with the care they receive and have received individual education plans for their children. However, the new policy is beginning to improve liaison with parents and should shortly ensure they take a much higher profile in the education of their children. The

school holds annual consultations with parents through a questionnaire on such matters as behaviour, homework and the role of governors.

45. Parents help in the Nursery and in the library but many parents find it difficult to find time to give a commitment to do more in the school because of younger children or work commitments. Parents do however also help in the running of after school clubs for football and netball. The Friends of the School organisation raises amounts of money to help improve resources in the school. Parents say they know what is expected in terms of homework, which is set weekly and regularly marked and commented on by the teachers.
46. The parents of pupils with special educational needs are generally happy with the information they receive. Whilst there are no statutory reviews needed at the moment the school has regular interviews with parents to address any concerns. Pupils with special educational needs are given very full support to allay any fears or misconceptions. The new COP doesn't have a register.

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

47. The headteacher provides very strong leadership and has a very clear understanding of how the school is to move forward and how to raise standards. He makes a very prominent contribution to the quality of education provided and the good progress made by children. The educational direction he provides for the school very clearly reflects its aims and priorities. He ensures, for example that the school's aims are clear aspects in the planning of the subjects of the curriculum. His energetic and committed leadership, supported by the senior management team, is a significant feature in the development of a very strong sense of purpose and commitment to improvement shared by governors and staff.
48. Responsibilities are shared between all staff and co-ordinators are very clearly aware of their roles. They provide very good leadership in helping to organise their subjects and departments, to support staff and help to raise standards. The headteacher and co-ordinators play a significant role in monitoring teaching and learning and this has helped raise quality in these areas and to establish the correct priorities. For example, the need to improve children's writing came as a result of the school's analysis of assessment results and its evaluation of teaching. Since his arrival, the headteacher has established amongst staff a very strong tradition of teamwork, discussion and the sharing of ideas. This leads to high expectations and consistency of approach to teaching and learning. For example, staff spent a considerable amount of time in helping to formulate the school aims and relate these closely to the daily life of the school. Co-ordinators, including special educational needs, have successfully developed high quality planning for each subject and have devised good systems for assessing children's attainment and recording their progress.
49. Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities very well. They are enthusiastic and very committed to supporting the life and work of the school. Some governors help out in the school and in this way are able to keep an informal check on the quality of teaching and standards of behaviour and attainment. They frequently visit the school and have regular meetings in order to keep well informed of the school's activities. Governors have established a rota where each member comes into school in order to look at different aspects of its work. In one such visit a governor recently focused on history. Impressions gained on this and the extent to which the school was meeting its aim of treating each child as an individual were reported back to the full governing body. This helps to give them a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and is an improvement on the monitoring and evaluation systems in use during the previous inspection. Because governors are very well informed and because there is a very strong sense of openness and shared commitment between staff and governors they are confident to question and challenge decisions made in school and to act as a critical friend in helping the school to move forward. For example, following considerations by the headteacher and governors, suggested initiatives in the development of information and communication technology are undergoing further evaluation before final decisions are reached. Governors played a significant role in helping to devise the aims of the school. They make very well informed contributions towards shaping the direction of the school, for example through their involvement in development planning and in the clear overview they have of the school. They have successfully addressed a criticism from the previous inspection and the prospectus and annual report to parents now comply with statutory requirements.
50. The school has an appropriate number of experienced and qualified teachers to teach all subjects of the National Curriculum, the Foundation Stage and religious education. Teachers are very well supported by a very experienced team of teaching assistants and nursery nurse who make an important contribution to the raising of standards. They work with individuals or groups

who may need extra help with their work or support groups in extension work. For example, a teaching assistant helped a group of higher ability Year 4 children extend their skills in scientific investigation when she worked closely with them challenging them to deepen their understanding. Staff development and appraisal through performance management, and the induction of teachers new to the school are very efficiently organised and contribute to the very high quality of teaching.

51. The school is generally well resourced although aspects of geography are in need of improvement. The school makes good use of the extended storage space it has created in the former attic. Resources are well organised and accessible and the school makes good use of its new computer room. The school buildings are well maintained and classrooms are generally of an adequate size.
52. The school makes good use of the accommodation available to it and has worked hard to make improvements and extensions to the accommodation. Although the school does not have a room suitable for physical education, the local village hall is used extensively. Whilst this provides for small apparatus there is little that can be done to work with larger equipment. The village hall also houses the nursery, which is a short distance from the school. The nursery has a limited area for outside play but there is no outside covered area. Plans are at an early stage to rectify this.
53. Priorities in the school development plan are very clear and closely linked to the school's finances. It sets out very clear priorities and initiatives in all aspects of the school's work. These are regularly monitored and evaluated by staff and governors so that it is very much a working document and initiatives are evaluated to ensure that they help in raising standards. For example, following a governor visit and headteacher report governors were able to assess the contribution to children's learning made by the new computer suite.
54. Financial planning is very good and establishes a strategy for costs ahead for three years. Grants and funds for such purposes as special educational needs and building extensions are used to very good effect. The school has a very good understanding of "best value for money". This not only includes financial consideration but also how best to use the available teaching and non-teaching staff and to balance the use of restricted facilities. A feature of the school's spending is its astute financial management. Financial and school administration is very good. Office routines are well organised and appropriate financial controls are in place. This efficiency enables the staff to concentrate on the central purpose of teaching children and raising standards. Computers are well used in supporting administration and in enhancing children's learning.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

55. In order to improve the standards further, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

Improve the consistency of marking by:

- Reviewing and improving the marking policy
- Evaluating the quality of each teacher's marking and sharing the best practice
- Monitoring the effectiveness of any new procedures put in place

*(See particularly paragraphs 21, 74, 84, 90 and 105 of the main report)*

When formulating an action plan the governors may wish to consider the following minor points for inclusion:

- Updating the training of staff about child protection (*Para. 36*)
- Ensuring registers are fully completed (*Para. 37*)
- Improving the factual knowledge of pupils in history and the progress of higher ability pupils by setting better targets (*Para. 111*)
- Refining the Internet safety policy (*Para. 116*)
- The knowledge of pupils about different composers and styles of music (*Para. 119*)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	24
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	20

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	4	13	4	3	0	0	0
Percentage	17	54	17	12	0	0	0

*Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than 4 percentage points.*

### *Information about the school's pupils*

#### **Pupils on the school's roll**

	Nursery	YR - Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	8.5	81
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	2

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

#### **Special educational needs**

	Nursery	YR - Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	11

#### **English as an additional language**

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

#### **Pupil mobility in the last school year**

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	1
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	0

### *Attendance*

#### **Authorised absence**

	%
School data	4.78
National comparative data	5.6

#### **Unauthorised absence**

	%
School data	0.17
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	5	6	11

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	4	3	5
	Girls	5	5	6
	Total	9	8	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (92)	73 (92)	100 (100)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	3	3	3
	Girls	5	5	5
	Total	8	8	8
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	73 (92)	73 (100)	73 (92)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

*Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year. Care should be taken with the figures as each pupil represents approximately 10 per cent.*

### ***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	7	11	18

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	6	6	6
	Girls	10	10	11
	Total	16	16	17
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	89 (87)	89 (80)	94 (87)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	6	5	6
	Girls	10	10	10
	Total	16	15	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	89 (80)	83 (80)	94 (87)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

*Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year. Care should be taken with the figures as each pupil represents approximately 7 per cent.*

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

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	0
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)	4.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.29
Average class size	27

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

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	94

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	16.25
Number of pupils per FTE adult	11.33

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Recruitment of teachers***

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

### ***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	2000/2001
	£
Total income	216212
Total expenditure	224910
Expenditure per pupil	2570
Balance brought forward from previous year	16895
Balance carried forward to next year	8197

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## ***Results of the survey of parents and carers***

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	73
Number of questionnaires returned	47

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	70	30	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	60	38	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	38	62	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	26	49	17	0	9
The teaching is good.	60	38	0	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	47	51	2	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	66	32	0	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	43	53	2	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	38	51	6	2	2
The school is well led and managed.	62	36	0	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	53	45	0	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	60	32	2	0	6

## **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**

56. The school makes very good provision for Foundation Stage children with some excellent features. This is evident both in the nursery class situated a short distance from the main school building, and in the infant class in the main school. Children enter the nursery class, on a part time basis, in the term after their third birthday and transfer to the reception class, full-time, in the term before their fifth birthday. When children start in the nursery they bring with them a variety of experiences and knowledge. However, attainment is generally in line with what you would expect at this age although many children are below what would be expected in their social and language skills. When they reach reception age the attainment of most children is above what would be expected for their age. Most children are well on the way to achieving the early learning goals and the faster learning children work at the early stages of the National Curriculum.
57. There is a good balance of different types of work for those in the nursery to those in the reception class. Younger pupils have work that prepares them well for all the areas of learning but they also spend some time in the main school reception class. This allows them to become familiar with school routines in preparation for their move into the older class. Despite these older children being with Year 1 and 2 pupils they are given an appropriate mix of experiences that allows them to be prepared well for work within the National Curriculum. By the end of the reception year many are already working at a level above that expected for their age.
58. The quality of teaching overall at the Foundation Stage is excellent. This is a significant improvement on the findings of the previous inspection. The quality of teaching is a major factor in the good progress these children make generally and the very good progress they make in personal, social and emotional development and in communication, language and literacy. Teachers are very well supported by the nursery nurse and the learning support staff in the infant class. Whatever their age or ability, children in the Foundation Stage have equal opportunities to make progress and to achieve success. Teachers complete the baseline assessments during the first term of the Reception Stage and very good use is made of this information and the information gained when children enter the Nursery in order to help teachers' planning and set targets for improvement. Teachers regularly and thoroughly assess children's work and this enables them to ensure that work is suited to their abilities. It is also used very well in order to identify at an early stage any children who may have special educational needs. The excellent quality of teachers' planning ensures that children receive a very broad, balanced and rich curriculum. The nursery teacher has an excellent knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and makes a major contribution to the very high standard of nursery provision.

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

59. Most children make very good progress in personal, social, and emotional development and achieve beyond the early learning goals by the time they move into Year 1. It is a strength of the provision and features prominently in all the activities planned. Teachers and support staff provide a very secure, warm and welcoming environment. Staff make home visits before children come to the nursery and they know children very well. They maintain very good contact with parents and are always available to discuss any concerns parents might have. Parents are very well informed about the work of the nursery. With the excellent support and

guidance provided by staff children very quickly settle into the nursery's routines and begin to develop relationships with adults and other children. For example, a child new to the school at the time of the inspection quickly learned to listen when the teacher was speaking and knew to put his painting on the tray when it was completed. Reception children are confident to contribute to discussions about their homes because the teacher welcomes their contributions.

60. Because materials and equipment are attractively presented children are very interested in their work and enjoy their activities. A younger child sustained his concentration for a short period of time when playing with toy vehicles and then moved on to the water tray. Older children played together in the puppet theatre for a longer period, learning to take turns and to speak confidently. Staff are very patient and understanding and their management of children is excellent. Children behave very well and become increasingly independent. For example, when they walk up to the main school they put their coats on and listen carefully to the teacher's instructions about road safety.
61. There is usually a very calm and purposeful working atmosphere in the nursery and in the class for reception children. Teachers very carefully explain the high expectations they have of children's behaviour and monitor this very carefully when children are working independently. Children are encouraged to work together, help each other and share equipment. For example children play alongside each other very well in the role-play area set up as a bakery. When the teacher thanks children for moving out of the way for her they learn about care and kindness, so that an older child willingly helps a younger child to put an apron on. Younger children help staff to tidy work areas whilst older children do this independently. Teachers are very careful to ensure that the transition from nursery to the school is a very smooth one. They visit the infant class regularly and work with reception and older children. This helps children to feel confident and enthusiastic when they join reception and increases their self-esteem.

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

62. Most children make very good progress in their communication, language and literacy skills because staff promote the development of language in every thing they do. Children achieve beyond the early learning goals by the time they move into Year 1. Staff ensure that children have many opportunities to join in conversations. For example, when a group of children were baking the nursery nurse extended their vocabularies by using such words as, *recipe*, and invited children to talk about how they are mixing the ingredients. The teacher showed the children the how to use the equipment and materials in the role-play area and discussed with them how they might be used. This improved the quality of their role-play and encouraged them to listen carefully and to speak clearly and confidently.
63. The teaching of basic skills in reading and writing is excellent. Books are attractively displayed and accessible and, because teachers clearly value books, children enjoy looking at them in the library area and understand how books are organised. Teachers present stories such as *The Ginger Bread Man* in lively and interesting ways so that children's interest is stimulated. This is enhanced when the teacher works with focus groups so that, for example, children hear and say initial and final sounds in words. Older children begin to read a range of familiar words and simple sentences independently and higher achieving reception children begin to bring some expression and fluency to their reading because the teachers provide good models in their own reading of stories and rhymes. Teachers write for the whole class, individuals and groups so that most children understand how writing works. For example, using words from a familiar story the teacher supports children so that letters are legibly formed and children read

the words back. Children new to the school are attracted to the well-presented letter shapes so that they are eager to write round the outline. Children in reception are eager to improve their writing because their efforts are valued by the teacher and they begin to write simple words accurately.

### **Mathematical development**

64. The very careful organisation of equipment and materials and the very well planned activities which provide opportunities to count and use mathematical language help children to make good progress in recognising numbers, counting and in adding and taking away. This is enhanced by teachers' excellent skills in teaching basic mathematical understanding both in more formal situations and by using appropriately planned opportunities throughout the day. For example, the children work on a range of activities such as sand and water play, sorting and threading. Because the activities were well prepared and the learning support assistant moved the group along at a brisk pace reception children begin to count on to 20 and count back from 10. They know and sequence numbers to 10. Children's interest is aroused when they produce simple block graphs showing favourite crisps and spreads. In their role-play children buy and sell ginger bread men using coins accurately. They know when they have weighed enough ingredients for the baking. They extend their understanding of dice and sequencing when a grandmother provides additional support. The teachers ensure that children learn the appropriate mathematical language such as bigger, shorter and that they learn the names for common shapes. Consequently children achieve beyond the early learning goals by the time they move into Year 1.

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

65. Most children make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world because teachers plan a very good range of activities. Consequently, they achieve beyond the early learning goals by the time they move into Year 1. A good example of this was when children put salt on an ice balloon and listened to the cracking noise it made. They then asked if ice floats. Children's skills and knowledge are enhanced because teachers make excellent use of assessment. For example, children have good mouse control and learn to drag and print because teachers assess and record their progress so that they know to intervene at the appropriate stage in order to extend their computer skills. Staff make very good use of the local community in order to increase children's knowledge and experience. For example, they go on visits to the local bakery and farm and take a train journey. Reception children confidently discuss why people like to go to the beach because the teacher presents them with well-prepared resources. They receive visits from such people as the postman, police, nurse, cook and fire brigade in order to extend and enrich the curriculum. Staff ensure that children begin to understand about celebrations and the wider world. They learn about Christmas, Divali and the Chinese New Year and hold sponsored events for people less fortunate than themselves. On their "bug hunt" they begin to observe mini-beasts closely and by planting their own seeds children begin to learn about growth.

### **Physical development**

66. When children first come to the Nursery many find it hard to control pencils scissors and other small tools. Because teachers carefully plan and prepare a wide range of activities aimed at improving these skills and because they know the children very well and intervene in order to support their development most children make good progress as they move through the Foundation Stage and achieve beyond the early learning goals by the time they move into Year

1. For example, a child who had recently entered the Nursery found difficulty in using a paint dispenser and poured water clumsily. Older children shape dough carefully, make constructions from kits and mix paints and baking ingredients.
67. Although few examples of larger, more robust movements were seen in the nursery during the inspection, photographs show that children have many opportunities to engage in a variety of such activities. These show that they develop control and co-ordination in such activities as running, jumping, balancing on beams unaided, pedalling tricycles. Because the teacher has very good control and makes good use of demonstrations, children are able to perform simple exercises such as hopping easily on both feet, move in different directions and make good use of space. The school is aware that provision for outdoor play in the Nursery is limited because the area is not suitable for such activities as working on climbing frames because of the shape and surface of the small space available. The school has acquired additional equipment in order to improve provision. Nursery children make regular use of the village hall for more robust activity although this was not seen during the inspection.

### **Creative development**

68. Children make good progress in creative development because teachers provide a wide range of opportunities for them to explore colour, texture, sound, and music. They achieve beyond the early learning goals by the time they move into Year 1. They are introduced to percussion instruments and learn to distinguish between fast and slow and loud and quiet sounds. They take part in African dance and see African paintings. They produce paintings inspired by Mondrian. The organisation and management of children and equipment in the nursery is excellent. Such resources as paints, tools, varieties of paper, glues and construction kits are readily available. This enhances their attainment and the very good behaviour and growing independence shown as children move through the Foundation Stage. Children handle tools and equipment sensibly and know that for certain activities they should wear aprons and that they should help to clear away and store work when they have finished with it. The attractive display of children's artwork on *The Enormous Turnip* gives children a sense of achievement. By the time they are in Reception children are able to build on these experiences and use careful observational and crayon control skills when they produce well-finished self-portraits using mirrors.

### **ENGLISH**

69. By the time that current pupils are seven and eleven years of age, their standards in English are above average. This is a considerable improvement on the standards reported at the last inspection when they were average at both seven and eleven. This is a direct result of the good quality of teaching overall that has enabled pupils of all levels of ability to make good progress with their learning. Since then, standards have continued to strengthen in reading but have been more variable in writing in the infants. The school is fully aware of this and is currently focussing on the development of writing skills in particular. The National Curriculum test results for the 2001 group of pupils at seven years of age show that, compared with all schools, their reading was above average but average compared with similar schools. For writing, they were well below average both compared with all schools and with similar schools. However, caution is needed when considering the yearly results of such small groups of pupils. The National Curriculum test results for the 2001 group of pupils at eleven years of age showed that, compared with all schools, their English was average but below average when compared with similar schools.

70. Pupils make good progress with their ability to speak clearly and precisely about a number of topics as they move through the school. The good start made in the nursery and reception class ensures that the youngest pupils are able to participate fully. Early on in their school life, they learn to listen carefully to what is being said and to respond with enthusiasm in lessons. This is due to the level of expectation that all teachers have that pupils should concentrate on what is being taught and respond accordingly. In Class 1, for example, although pupils speak clearly, they are reticent to express their views with confidence as with their descriptions of story settings. However, by the time that they are in Class 2, the majority of pupils are ready and willing to offer their own opinions about various aspects of the English language. For example, they know and say why certain adjectives might not be used in the same sentence. By this stage, pupils talk and listen confidently and do well at exploring and communicating various ideas about how certain parts of speech may be used effectively in their writing. Their knowledge and understanding of the use of language is enhanced by the teacher's frequent use of formal English terms, as is the case with all teachers in the school. By the time that pupils are in Class 3, they are listening and responding at a considerably higher level. They talk about connecting clauses with confidence and discuss the possible types of characters that might be written into their stories. They understand and give examples of adverbs and adjectives as part of their normal discussions. They are stretched to the limit of their ability by the high level of questioning by their teacher that expects the most from pupils whatever their level of ability. Good questioning techniques are a strong point of the teaching of English throughout the school.
71. Pupils make good progress with the development of their reading because of the care and attention given to developing this aspect of language by their teachers who ensure that pupils of all abilities are carefully monitored, taught and improved as they move through the school. The excellent start in the nursery is built upon by teachers in the infant class. Younger pupils read simple text with understanding and learn to use more than one approach to solve unknown words. They are quick to grasp the main points of a story and begin to understand some of the simple rules of spelling. Higher attaining pupils know the purpose of exclamation marks and give examples through the ways in which they read their texts. Older pupils develop their knowledge of books and stories, discuss their favourite authors and begin to become aware of some of the deeper meanings behind some of the stories they read. Lower attaining pupils continue to read with some hesitancy but most become reasonably proficient in breaking down unfamiliar words in order to work out their meaning. By Year 6, most pupils are clear about significant themes and ideas in a text and can describe the various attributes of characters in their stories. They refer to the text easily when explaining their views and know how to use a dictionary correctly for a variety of purposes.
72. Progress in writing has been more variable over time but is now beginning to show clear signs of steady growth in standards due, to a large extent, because of the school's awareness of the need to focus on this aspect in particular. Furthermore, because of the successful way in which all teachers are using the literacy hour, pupils' learning is enhanced. Lessons always start with learning objectives that are explained clearly to pupils so that they know exactly what they are expected to achieve. Teachers plan their lessons carefully and set different levels of work for pupils of various abilities so that all make good progress with their writing at a level that is appropriate for them.
73. By the time they are seven, pupils are beginning to communicate what they mean reasonably in a simple sentence form. They are aware of the use of full stops and capital letters and are beginning to make regular use of these in their work. They begin to write for a limited variety of purposes as with their descriptive writing in creative work like *The Underwater Treasure Hunt*, for example. Their letter shapes are generally accurately formed and reasonably consistent in

size and higher attaining pupils are beginning to be successful at developing the first stages of a joined style of writing. However, a considerable number of pupils do not hold their pencils correctly and this detracts from their ability to produce writing of a consistently high standard. Most pupils spell simple monosyllabic words correctly as they write and virtually all pupils settle down quickly to enjoy their written work.

74. By the time they are eleven, pupils have mastered the ability to write effectively in a number of styles to suit a particular purpose as with their work in the style of a poet. They have a solid understanding of the use of complex sentences to make their writing more interesting for the reader. They know how to write a short character story with fluency and sequence and how to make the appropriate use of paragraphing to make their meaning clear. Their handwriting style is generally fluent, joined and legible and adapted to suit the purpose as, for example, with a lesser degree of quality when writing in a spelling test. Through careful planning, teachers make sure that pupils of all abilities work at levels appropriate to their individual skills. However there are areas for improvement. Once pupils have been given work at the appropriate level, few teachers set them clear targets to stretch their learning to the limit by the end of the lesson. Furthermore, few teachers mark at a consistently high enough standard and this detracts from the level and value of oral guidance given to pupils in lessons. Where marking is particularly good, as seen in books in Year 3, the teacher's comments not only praise pupils for what they do well but also suggest ways in which the work can be improved further. At worst, as seen in some books in Year 2, there was little or no evidence of marking of work at all.
75. Pupils use their knowledge of English to support their work in other subjects effectively. For example, in a Class 2 lesson with a focus on adjectives, there were good connections with aspects of science as pupils discussed the speed of sound and words relative to this aspect. In Year 6, in religious education books, there is clear evidence of the use of speech marks to support writing about God and, in history, developing skills of setting out appropriate headings with their work on the Vikings. Pupils make satisfactory use of information and communication technology to support their language development.
76. Pupils with special educational needs in language and literacy are given good support and this is enabling them to confidently meet the targets set for them. Assessment of these pupils over a number of years suggest that they make at least as good, and often better, progress in reading and writing as other pupils.
77. The co-ordinator for English has a clear understanding of what the role involves and takes an effective lead with her work in this subject. She has been responsible for raising the profile of the teaching of reading through the involvement of parents and reading logs, has introduced the writing progress books, has clarified the use of the reading schemes and achieved some training in reading recovery methods.

## **MATHEMATICS**

78. Pupils are attaining standards above average at both the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is an improvement since the last inspection when standards were in line with those nationally. Attainment has improved because there is now consistently good teaching throughout each year and teachers use the newly introduced National Numeracy Strategy to good effect. Additionally, pupils with special educational needs are set good mathematical targets that are closely monitored, and this ensures that their progress is equally as good as other children.

79. In the 2001 National Curriculum tests for seven year olds pupils achieved standards that were at the national average although they were well below average when measured against similar schools. This was because of the small numbers in this yeargroup and the significant number of pupils with some form of special educational need. This judgement is based upon the number of pupils who achieved grades above that expected (Level 3) which was in line with other schools. The progress of these pupils has, however been variable, as they entered the school in the nursery class with below average capability in number but did not benefit from the very good and excellent teaching presently taking place in the nursery. Pupils in the present Year 2 have had the benefit of consistently good teaching from the time that they entered the school. They are achieving well and this is why they now have above average standards.
80. The teaching of pupils in the infant class is always good and often very good. As a consequence, pupils achieve well both over the short and the longer term. Work is planned carefully to ensure that all ages and abilities are stretched and challenged appropriately. The younger Reception children are given work that combines the recognised Early Learning Goals and work within the National Curriculum. At the start of sessions a classroom assistant is assigned to develop the basic skills of number, shape and measuring. In a lesson seen, all pupils were able to talk about different two-dimensional shapes and were being given direction to enable them to start looking at the properties of these such as the number of corners. In the planning the teacher had laid out specific tasks that needed to be learnt. This showed a good emphasis on the teaching of these basic skills. As a result, pupils were learning quickly and, because the discussion was focused well, were able to achieve at a fast rate. Pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 are grouped primarily by ability and this enables pupils to have work set that is challenging whilst still being interesting. During written work, pupils concentrated very well. The lesson seen was quiet and orderly and had a sense of purpose. The teacher told the group what would be learnt during the lesson and what she hoped they would be able to do by the end. This allowed pupils to start to build up an understanding of their own learning potential and to judge whether they had fulfilled what was expected. Relationships between the whole class are very good and discussions between pairs of children are about the work in hand.
81. Pupils in the present Year 6 have made good progress and are on line to achieve above average standards in the National Curriculum tests. Again, this year group is small and comparisons with national data are difficult. However, since 1999 the trend has been continuously upward. There is a significant number of pupils with high levels of ability in this year and their progress is particularly good. Results of testing for this year group over a number of years indicates that they have continued to improve year on year. Again, this is the result of high quality teaching especially in Years 5 and 6. There are no significant differences between the performance of different year groups even when they are in mixed age classes. This was a point correctly noted by parents.
82. Teaching ranges from good to very good. Overall, during the inspection it was very good. From discussions with pupils and teachers and from the scrutiny of work it has not always been at this very high level. This is the reason why pupils now progress very rapidly but over the longer term, and especially for pupils in Years 5 and 6, their achievement over their time in the juniors has only been good and not very good.
83. Planning is closely linked to work within the National Numeracy Strategy and is being adapted to link this to other subjects such as information and communication technology, geography and science. The school has been successful in making real and positive links to these subjects. This allows pupils to understand the role of numeracy within our everyday lives. There are good links to the use of computers. All teachers explore the basic techniques of number well. This

results in pupils having a good understanding of mental processes. In lessons, individuals are able to use different strategies to add up, take away, multiply and divide. They are then able to transfer this knowledge when working in their books. Pupils with special educational needs have ability above that which might be expected and make good progress against their own individual targets. Different methods are used to interest, excite and stimulate interest in a topic. Much of this technique is developed through the use of real-life examples and this helps make sure that all levels of ability are stimulated to do well. An example of this was where pupils were being asked to buy resources for the classroom. They were working out ways in which this could be done using certain restrictions. All pupils, whatever their ability, achieved the outcome set for them. The teacher cleverly altered these outcomes depending on the ability. This meant that there were easier and harder computations that had to be made. As pupils finished there was also extension work to further extend them. The lesson moved at a fast pace and much was achieved.

84. The school has developed a very good strategic plan to develop mathematics. This has been monitored each year, both by the co-ordinator and the governors. Regular assessment of teaching, planning and standards take place and new developments take place in light of the findings. Much of this is co-ordinated as a whole staff but other outside agencies within the local education authority have also been involved. Resources are good and always made easily accessible during lessons. This ensures that little time is lost. Marking is somewhat variable and ranges from satisfactory to very good. Where it is very good, such as in some of the work in Years 5 and 6 and in Years 3 and 4 it provides opportunity for pupils to understand how well they have done as well as setting challenges for the next lesson. In some instances this is not as thorough and provides pupils with little help. A useful addition in all classes is the use of targets to be achieved within each unit of work. Pupils understand why these are written in books but are not fully aware of their importance.

## **SCIENCE**

85. During the inspection it was not possible to see any science lessons in the infant class. However, evidence from the scrutiny of children's work and teachers' planning, discussions with teachers and children indicate that by the end of the Infant Stage attainment is in line with what would be expected for children of that age. This is in line with the findings of the previous inspection and an improvement on the 2001 National Curriculum teacher assessments. By the end of the Junior Stage attainment is above national expectations. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection and in line with the 2001 National Curriculum test results.
86. Because no lessons were seen in the infant class it is not possible to give an overall judgement on the quality of teaching. However, teachers ensure that children's work covers the National Curriculum programmes of study and that they make satisfactory progress. As they move through the Infant Stage children develop a sound knowledge and understanding of parts of the human body. They make detailed, labelled sketches of the eye and make simple descriptions of various organs in the body. Most children know about the relationship between exercise, diet and a healthy lifestyle. They know what plants need to sustain life and name parts of plants accurately. Most children distinguish between liquids and solids and describe how the baking of a cake produces irreversible changes. They know how to set up a circuit using batteries, wires and bulbs and know about the sources of electricity in the home. In the mixed age class younger and lower achieving children generally produce less and their work is less well presented. The sketches of more able children are clearer and their descriptions and explanations are more detailed.

87. The quality of teaching in the junior stage is very good. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection. It helps children to make good progress and achieve well. Teachers usually have a very thorough subject knowledge that they use to challenge children to deepen their understanding. For example, in Year 6 the teacher discussed with children how wires of different thickness and length might affect an electric circuit. He then asked them to work in pairs independently of the teacher in order to investigate this and set-up circuits in series and parallel. As a result children learned that circuits work in many ways. Because he has very high expectations relating to their investigative and recording skills children choose their own equipment and produce well finished diagrams with accurate use of symbols.
88. Teachers manage children very well and prepare work that is suited to their abilities so that they move on from their existing knowledge. In the lesson on electric circuits in Year 6 the teacher ensured that lower achieving children were supported by the classroom support assistant. Because she knew the lesson objectives and used questions very well, these children made good progress. Similarly, in a Year 4 lesson on the changes which occur when solids are added to water, the very well prepared classroom support assistant enabled a group of higher achieving children to extend their knowledge and understanding of fair tests. As they move through the school most children show in their work that they understand the need for fair tests. This is helped because there is an expectation that it will feature in their investigations as a matter of course.
89. One of the strengths of the teaching is that teachers constantly emphasise the need to use accurate technical terms. This is extremely important in reinforcing understanding. For example, the teacher in Year 4 insists that children use language such as, dissolve and prediction. In their work on skeletons Year 3 children confidently use words such as internal and external. Lower achieving children are familiar with the idea of habitats. Teachers generally have high expectations about children's measurement skills. This is why, for example, Year 5 children produce accurate measurements of time and temperature in their investigations into the cooling rate of iced water. Year 6 children create their own accurate line graphs about the rate at which salt might dissolve.
90. Teachers are good at assessing what children know. On a day-to-day basis they do this through careful questioning. For example, in Year 5 the teacher constantly moves round the groups of children as they create their own circuits. He engages them in conversation so that, for example, when he asks, "How can you check why the bulb is not working?" children are challenged to think hard and reflect on their work so that they see that circuits can be constructed in different ways. Children's work is marked regularly and this is often used to help children to make progress. For example, the teacher in Year 3 wrote in the child's book, "Do you think sand would find its own level?" This helped the child to increase her understanding of the properties of different materials. However, marking in this way is used inconsistently round the school. Children also have more formal assessments at the end of each topic and the National Curriculum tests at the end of the infant and junior stages. Teachers use this in order to plan work which is suitable for children's levels of understanding, particularly in their investigative work.
91. Teachers expect children to behave very well. This allows children to work hard and because relationships are very good to collaborate very well. For example, in Year 4 work on comparing how different solids behave when they are mixed with water, children handle the equipment and materials sensibly and collaborate well in producing their results. Because they know that the

teacher values their contributions they are confident to describe their investigations to the rest of the class. This helps to clarify their understanding.

92. Since the previous inspection the school has improved the range and quality of its resources. These are well organised and accessible. Computers are used much more widely and this helps improve the progress both in science and in information and communication technology. The co-ordinator has only very recently taken up her post. However, she supports staff well and has a clear understanding of how the subject is to develop in order to raise standards.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

93. During the inspection a limited amount of work was seen at both Infant and Junior Stages. However, the standards in the work seen at both stages are above what would be expected. . Good use of computers is made to add a further dimension to the work. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection. Teachers ensure that children are taught the appropriate programmes of study as they move through the school. In the one lesson seen at each stage the quality of teaching was very good and this enabled children to achieve highly
94. Teachers ensure that children have a wide variety of opportunities for producing work after the styles of different artists. This enables children in Year 2 to produce pleasing paintings after the style of Matisse. Year 6 children improve their understanding of how light and shade might be introduced into their still life pencil work when the teacher draws their attention to the techniques use by Victorian artists. Other than a variety of well-finished clay figures and plaques produced by children in the art club, very little three-dimensional work was seen during the inspection. However teachers' planning indicates that this is included at other times.
95. Children in Years 5 and 6 engage in a continuous discussion with their teacher about how their work might be improved. This friendly but rigorous approach gives them the confidence to solve the problems presented by the still life sketch. Because teachers have very high expectations children generally work hard and enthusiastically and produce sketches of a good standard. Teachers generally organise children and materials very well. This allows lessons to run smoothly and helps children to sustain their concentration. For example, in Year 2 the teacher explains very clearly what she would like different groups of children to do. She makes sure that paper, paints, pencils, crayons are readily at hand so that children move from their discussion on the carpet and begin their self-portraits without any delay. She and the classroom support assistant move around groups assessing children's progress so that they can question them to reflect on how they might improve. This helps children to produce well-finished portraits and increases children's skills in the application of colour and tone.
96. In the lessons seen teachers demonstrated very good subject knowledge. They used this for example, to draw the children's attention to close scrutiny of their work. This helped children to improve their observation skills and produce a good standard of detail in their portraits. It enabled older children to include their own interpretations and expression as they worked on still-life sketches. They teach the basic techniques such as colour mixing very well. This enables children to concentrate on the quality of their paintings. Older children are confident to explore their approaches and exchange ideas on how they might improve their work. This is because relationships are very good and they readily collaborate with others. Teachers have very high expectations of children's behaviour so that children generally behave very well and use tools and materials sensibly.

97. The school provides children with a variety of opportunities to work with artists. This helps them to understand how artists approach their work and together they produce some pleasing sculptures, tapestries, prints and mosaics. Teachers also encourage children to use their artistic skills in other subjects of the curriculum. For example in their detailed pictures of Roman soldiers children in Years 3 and 4 improved their observational and sketching skills and this enhanced their understanding of how Romans were armed. Children in Year 2 use a computer program in order to extend their portrait skills.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

98. During the inspection there was insufficient evidence to allow judgements to be made on children's attainment and progress at the Infant Stage. Scrutiny of teachers' planning and discussions with teachers and children indicate that children are taught the appropriate programmes of study. Scrutiny of the limited amount of work available and evidence from the two lessons seen in the Junior Stage indicate that attainment by the end of the junior stage is above what would be expected. The quality of teaching in the lessons seen was very good and excellent. The use of information and communication technology is at an early stage of development. It supports some work well, such as in word-processing but is not yet allied well to work using control technology. The school is in the process of obtaining more equipment to help pupils discover how they can control moving objects with the use of computers.
99. In photographs seen of previous work Year 6 children made well-finished models of playground rides with cogs and pulleys. They produced well thought out detailed designs for the production of pop-up toys using pneumatics. In discussions with children they refer eagerly to the design and construction of model boats using electric motors. As they move through the school most children develop a clear understanding of the designing and making process because teachers provide them with an interesting variety of opportunities to use their ideas. This is also why many children become accomplished with a wide range of materials, techniques and tools.
100. In the lessons seen teachers organised resources and children very efficiently. This enabled the lessons to run smoothly and helped children to sustain their concentration. For example, in Year 6 children were provided with an abundant supply of readily available paper spills so that they were really engrossed in the exploration of designs for building structures. In Year 4 the teacher shared her lesson objectives with the children so that they knew exactly what was expected of them as they explored different approaches to the production of pop - ups, flaps and slits.
101. In Year 6 the teacher's excellent interaction with children enabled him to move from group to group engaging children in conversations so that he could assess their skills and understanding of structures. He used questions in order to challenge them to reflect on and improve them. This enabled children to produce some interesting and very well made constructions and helped to reinforce their understanding of stability and shape. He provided the children with examples of willow *withies* and engaged their enthusiasm because they were looking forward to working with real examples in the school grounds. In Year 4 the teacher clearly shared her very good knowledge about scoring and joining so that children improved their skills and extended their vocabularies. Both teachers have very high expectations of children's behaviour. This helps to sustain their concentration and encourages them to work collaboratively.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

102. By the end of both Year 2 and Year 6, pupils attain standards that are above those expected nationally. They make good progress through the school because teachers plan work carefully and try to link it to other subjects whilst, at the same time, ensuring that specific geographical knowledge is learnt. This represents an improvement since the last inspection when standards were at average levels.
103. In the one lesson seen in the infants pupils were explaining why people went to the seaside. This followed a visit to a local beach and was associated with work in science and geography. The accounts being drawn or written showed that the pupils had a good understanding about the facilities available in different tourist reports and why they were there. They could discriminate between features that might be fun or were manmade. The majority of those in Year 2 used bullet points to list their preferences and could equally talk confidently about what they were finding out. The teaching here was good because the teacher ensured that there were easily accessible and appropriate resources that would aid pupils to get on without any fuss. Time was used well throughout the session and the classroom assistant gave regular support to the younger children. Their activity was allied but aimed at a level that enabled them to understand the concept more easily.
104. One lesson was seen in Years 3 to 6 but from the scrutiny of work and from discussions with pupils it is clear that attainment is above average and good progress has been made. Older pupils are able to explain the specific physical geographical features of erosion and deposition. They can explain why sand piles up on one side of a beach and why it is necessary for groynes to be built to stop the beach wearing away. They understand the relationship between physical and human features. This was demonstrated in a lesson about different areas of the world. Using a collection of e-mails from different countries Year 5/6 pupils were asked to list the weather, the social conditions and the type of countryside that would be seen. Pupils with better ability were beginning to draw their own conclusions. These included how its distance from the equator might affect the climate of an area or how close it was to the sea. In this lesson the teacher had very high expectations about what should be achieved. He encouraged pupils to think for themselves and to use the information they had available. This included atlases, the Internet and secondary sources such as description in the e-mails.
105. Pupils throughout the school achieve well, both in individual lessons and over time. Many older pupils have a wide general knowledge and this is improved by the specific opportunities offered through the work in the classroom. Information and communication technology is used widely to enhance the work that takes place. Planning is good for each lesson and this is linked very well to a series of half-termly planning documents. These are clear in their intentions about what will be learnt and show links to other subjects. Clear statements are made about how they relate to the school aims. These provide teachers with a very good structure within which to work. As a consequence, pupils are also clear about whether they have achieved what is expected. Marking is less structured and more variable. It ranges from very good to satisfactory. In the best cases written comments encourage a higher level of understanding and praise good work. Where it is not as good marking is cursory and does little to improve standards. Assessment is better in lessons where teachers talk through difficulties and ensure that all pupils develop appropriate skills.
106. Visits are used well to give pupils first hand experience. In discussion sessions pupils refer to what they have seen and this is helping to build better understanding from the knowledge that has been gained. There are some links to mathematics but these are not as good as they might be for pupils in Years 5 and 6. Pupils use tallying for surveys and are able to draw graphs.

There is little work done to develop a hypothesis such as from a traffic survey and then test whether it is true.

## **HISTORY**

107. Pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress with their learning of history. By the age of seven and eleven, the quality of their knowledge, skills and understanding of the subject is at a level expected for pupils of this age. This quality has been maintained since the last inspection.
108. Younger pupils have a reasonable understanding of where various events in history fit in terms of time. For example, they know about dinosaurs, Romans, Vikings and Guy Fawkes and can place these aspects broadly in a correct chronological order. They are able to say how their own lives vary from those of people living in the past as with the use of candles, television and compact discs. However, although they are aware of various events and peoples from the past, they find it difficult to remember much about their way of life as with, for example, the ways in which their grandparents may have lived compared to the way in which they live today.
109. By the time that pupils are in Year 4, they have increased their knowledge and understanding of various aspects of life in Roman times considerably. They use subject specific words such as amphitheatre and forum with reasonable confidence and know about aqueducts and their purpose. Higher attaining pupils are able to make links with some of the effects that the invasion have had on their current lives as with the retention of town halls, for example. They know how to find out more about their topic as they use books effectively to track down information relevant to their particular interest as with the way in which Roman roads were made and how theatres functioned during that period.
110. Older pupils develop a limited wider base of understanding of historical events as they study the Vikings and Victorian Britain. Although they have good access to various time lines around the school, their knowledge and perception of times in terms of dates is not strong so, for example, a group of pupils interviewed decided that the Viking raids began around 1789. They know where to turn to research further information as they talk about the use of books, Internet, school trips and videos, but their knowledge of how the Viking influence has left its impact on the British way of life is limited. On life in Victorian Britain, pupils are more forthcoming and successfully connect similarities and differences between then and now with studies of their own school during this period.
111. It was not possible to see sufficient lessons in history to make a judgement about the quality of teaching overall. However, discussions with pupils and teachers about their work, and observations of teachers' documentation and pupils' history, indicates this subject is taught appropriately throughout the school. In the two lessons seen, the quality of teaching was good. Lessons were planned effectively with objectives made clear to pupils so that they all knew what they were expected to achieve. Introductions and questions were clear and positive so that pupils worked together with enthusiasm and enjoyment. In the lessons observed, pupils of different abilities were given the same tasks to achieve. Greater progress would have been made by higher attaining pupils in particular had they been set more advanced targets to achieve than their fellow pupils.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

112. Standards in information and communication technology at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are above those expected nationally. This represents a very good improvement since the last inspection. At that time not all aspects of the subject were being covered. Since then, the school has developed a very good action plan, including the building of a small computer suite, and these developments have helped raise the profile of the subject considerably. There is now a good balance of work, linked to other subjects that allows pupils to realise their full potential.
113. Over the last two years children in the nursery class have been given regular access to machines and this has started to have an impact in work further through the school. Pupils in the present reception class are already achieving standards expected by Year 1 pupils. They show confidence in using a mouse, know that they can print work they have done and, with help, are able to save this to the hard drive of the computer. By Year 2, pupils have undertaken some basic data-handling using graphing programs and have drawn pictures using a painting program. This is work that would be expected during Years 3 and 4 and demonstrates that pupils make good progress in their learning through to Year 2. The teachers are careful to plan tasks that will extend the understanding of all abilities. Planning is often correctly linked to work in other subjects and this gives pupils an understanding of the role of technology in our everyday lives. Classroom assistants are regularly used to supervise the work and are sometimes solely responsible for small groups in the computer suite. These assistants have good knowledge and are able to solve most problems that occur. As a result, pupils are achieving well. More particularly, they have had the benefit of these good experiences throughout their time at the school.
114. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 also make good progress. Whilst the older pupils in Years 5 and 6 have not had the benefit of these experiences throughout their schooling they have caught up quickly and are now able to talk with confidence about the work that they are doing. They are beginning to understand that computers can be used as an intrinsic part of learning. An example of this was in a Year 5/6 class where the pupils were learning about the conditions in different parts of the world. They had used e-mail to write letters to acquaintances and had received some replies. The teacher was asking the pupils to find out about specific references. A group of two pupils then went onto the Internet to locate a city in America. They showed good understanding about why they were using a particular type of search. Although they did not find out the piece of information they wanted they were able to infer from the information on screen that the city was close to a particular point in North America. This was at a level above that expected for their age. Pupils throughout the juniors have had experience of presenting information. The more able pupils can draw simple flow charts. In discussion, one group of pupils managed to show how they could control a sequence of traffic lights. In addition, they then went onto use the sequence that they had made to control the opposing lights. Thus, when one was red the other was green. Whilst this was above the level expected it was not well above because they have yet to understand how similar events can be repeated with time delays. Pupils are now learning at a very fast rate but this has only happened since the introduction of more formal lessons including using the computer suite.
115. All the teaching seen, both in specific lessons and as part of other subjects, was very good. Teachers and classroom assistants prepare work carefully using a balance between whole class instruction and individual or group work. Pupils behave very well and even the younger ones concentrate for long periods. Teachers expect everybody to work hard and to complete their task to the best of their ability. A good feature of the lessons is the way that pupils are given time to experiment and to gain confidence with the program that they are using. The combination of these factors is the reason why pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well.

116. The school rightly recognised the poor facilities some years ago and the need to train teachers to a higher standard. Substantial funding was put aside to improve the opportunities, including monies from the National Grid for Learning (NGfL) and teacher training through a lottery grant from the New Opportunity Fund (NOF). Whilst the latter has not yet been completed these have been used well and the impact is regularly monitored both by the co-ordinator and by the governors. Adjustments in provision have been made in light of the findings. The school has developed a safety policy for Internet use but this is in need of refining to take account of recent developments and the improved ability of pupils.

## **MUSIC**

117. It was not possible to see sufficient music lessons during the course of the inspection in order to make a clear judgement on the quality of teaching. As a result, comments are made on the basis of interviews with a sample group of pupils aged eleven, from a discussion with the co-ordinator about her work and from observations of video recordings of past performances. The progress that pupils of all abilities make is satisfactory. By the time they leave the school, the quality of their playing, composition and listening is at a level expected for pupils of this age. This is similar to the standards reached at the last inspection. The quality of their drum playing is a particular strength and is a credit to those who are involved with the development of this particular aspect of pupils' music.
118. Younger pupils know how to clap simple rhythms together in sequence and have a reasonable grasp of the general shape of the melody of the songs that they sing. They are able to recognise when to stop and start with a degree of precision when clapping to a particular tune. They enjoy singing and are willing to sing on their own as part of whole-class song, *Down by the River*, for example.
119. Older pupils experience opportunities to develop music of their own on a particular theme such as spooky, space or factory sounds. They have some experience of recording music on staves using their own limited knowledge of notation. Pupils in the group interviewed spoke of performing their own compositions to their peers and then listening to comments about how their work might be improved such as fading out at the end. They know a secure range of songs that they can sing at least parts of from memory and know how to hold their own part securely when singing in a round. However, their knowledge of various composers and their music is limited, as is their awareness of different types of music such as pop, jazz and folk.
120. A video of the recent whole-school production of *Joseph and his Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat* shows how much pupils of all abilities enjoy their singing and acting as they join in with excitement and enthusiasm. They perform rhythmically and maintain their own parts successfully with a full awareness of how the different parts fit together in order to achieve the desired effect for their audience. They demonstrate clear diction, sound control of pitch, a sense of phrasing and musical expression to suit the moods of their various songs. Last year, pupils took part in the North Devon Choral Festival and won.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

121. Standards in physical education are at a level expected nationally. Improvement has been maintained since the last inspection. Although the school site is small, innovative facilities for the

subject have been acquired locally. These include the use of a local field for team games and the village hall for gymnastics. These have helped ensure that most aspects can be covered adequately. There are limitations in the development of large apparatus in gymnastics and for younger children in the nursery to use outdoor play equipment. The school is aware of these shortfalls and is working hard to improve the situation.

122. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 play a range of team games and learn how to make sequences of movements. In a lesson with reception and Year 1 and 2, the pupils were able to perform simple routines both individually and in small groups. They were able to improve these by looking at others and by the way that the teacher encouraged better movement. They showed a good use of space, concentrated hard and enjoyed the finished results. They were happy to demonstrate what they had done and were not afraid to make mistakes. Their achievements were suitable for their age.
123. During the inspection, pupils in the juniors showed an increased understanding of gymnastic routines. Their movements were more fluid and some showed good skill in forward rolls. During the lesson the performance improved and the objectives set were achieved. Pupils learnt more about controlling their bodies and used different directions before demonstrating their final performance. Again, these pupils were happy to help and encourage each other and were confident in their relationships. This is because the teachers encourage both success and failure as a way to improve. Lessons are planned using a local scheme of work and this helps ensure that a balanced programme of activities is pursued each year. Classroom assistants are used particularly well to support pupils with special educational needs. Teachers have sufficient knowledge to teach most aspects although there is a heavy reliance on the teaching manuals provided with the scheme of work. Overall, teaching throughout the school is sound and pupils achieve at a suitable level.
124. Pupils are able to take swimming lessons using a local pool and, until recently, took part each year in some adventurous activities such as orienteering. This latter has, unfortunately, been suspended. The school is hoping to provide an alternative opportunity. The vast majority of pupils are able to swim 25 metres by the time they leave in Year 6. The subject is enhanced by dance lessons, some of which allow pupils to sample different types of non-western culture. A sports day is held each year to which parents are invited. The school also has a number of sports teams and has gained success in local competitions. Pupils talk with pride about what they have achieved.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

125. During the inspection only a limited amount of work was seen at both Infant and Junior stages. The only lesson seen was at the Infant stage. However, evidence from talking to children and teachers, from the scrutiny of work and teachers' planning indicates that attainment at the end of the infant and junior stages is in line with what would be expected for children at these ages. Some use is made of computers to enhance the work in the subject. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection.
126. In the one lesson seen the quality of teaching was very good and the quality of children's learning was correspondingly very good. Because relationships are very good children were confident to discuss their homes and families. The teacher dealt very sensitively with children's comments and ensured that the discussion was not intrusive. This helped them to understand the differing nature of houses and homes. The teacher very clearly explained what they were

going to do during the lesson so that when the time came for children to move from the carpet to work on their booklets they did this smoothly and no time was lost. The teacher and classroom support assistant moved around the groups of children assessing their work so that they could help to clarify their understanding. This helped them to understand how different family members live together.

127. Teachers ensure that children begin to cover the attainment targets in the recently produced locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Children in Years 4 and 5 have a sound knowledge of religious symbols and identify these in the story of Noah's Ark. They know about the Christmas story and explain the Christian view that John the Baptist prepared the way for Jesus. As they move through the school children learn that Christians believe that in the bible parables, miracles, biographies are different ways of explaining meaning. In Years 5 and 6 children learn about Hindu beliefs and begin to compare this with the Christian view of God. They know about Christian, Jewish and Hindu stories and forms of worship.