

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **MARSHLANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Hailsham

LEA area: East Sussex

Unique reference number: 114442

Headteacher: Mrs Margaret Coleman

Reporting inspector: David Welsh  
10992

Dates of inspection: 15 - 18 April 2002

Inspection number: 207217

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Marshfoot Lane Hailsham East Sussex
Postcode:	BN27 2PH
Telephone number:	01323 841420
Fax number:	01323 440139
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Janet Olesen
Date of previous inspection:	2 June 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
10992	David Welsh	Registered inspector	Information and communication technology Mathematics Physical education	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? a) The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
16718	Marvyn Moore	Lay inspector		How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
28200	Paul Stevens	Team inspector	Geography History Religious education Science	
20615	Ann Mason	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Art Design and technology Music	
16773	Raminder Arora	Team inspector	English as an additional language Equal opportunities Special educational needs English	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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London WC2B 6SE

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The school is situated to the east of Hailsham. The school has a nursery with 50 places; 11 children attend part-time in the morning and 23 attend part-time in the afternoon. The number of pupils on roll aged 4 to 11 is 175. This is slightly smaller than most other primary schools. There are 78 boys and 94 girls. Nearly all the pupils come from the immediate neighbourhood. They come from much less favourable socio-economic conditions than the national average. Many pupils join and leave the school in the course of the year. Six pupils are learning English as an additional language of whom two are in the early stages, higher than most schools. The main languages, other than English, are Bengali and Portuguese. Four pupils are travellers and this is a higher number than is found in most schools. Sixty-two pupils are on the special needs register, which is above the national average. Three pupils have statements of special educational need, which is close to the national average. The main categories of special educational needs are specific learning difficulties and emotional and behavioural disorders. The school has a register of pupils who are talented and gifted and has identified one pupil in this category. The school is finding it difficult to recruit and retain teachers of good quality. Over the past two years, nine teachers have left the school and eight have been appointed. There is currently one temporary teacher employed at the school.

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

Marshlands Primary School is an increasingly effective school as a result of the very good leadership and management since the appointment of the current headteacher. The school is improving in all aspects of its work and gives satisfactory value for money. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. Teaching is satisfactory overall with some considerable strengths. Although standards are not high enough, pupils with special educational needs, those who learn English as an additional language and travellers achieve well and other pupils make satisfactory progress.

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

- The headteacher, supported by the governing body and staff, provides very good leadership and management of the school.
- Pupils' attitudes to school, behaviour and relationships are good.
- The school provides an inclusive education for all its pupils.
- Moral and social development are promoted very well.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs, those who learn English as an additional language and travellers is good.
- The procedures for promoting pupils' personal development, including monitoring and promoting good behaviour and monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour are very good.
- Parents' views of the school are good.

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

- Standards in English, mathematics and science (identified by the school).
- Attainment in art, geography, history, music, physical education and religious education.
- Teaching, to be consistently good across the school (identified by the school).
- Attendance.
- The multi-cultural aspects of pupils' cultural development.

*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 previously inspected in June 1997. It has made very good progress since the appointment of the current headteacher but prior to that improvement was unsatisfactory. All of the key issues from the last inspection are being addressed effectively. The school is implementing strategies to improve standards and other important aspects, such as teaching and learning, pupils' behaviour and communications with parents. The capacity for improvement is good.

## 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	E*	E	E*	E*
Mathematics	E*	E	E*	E*
Science	E*	E	E*	E*

**Key**

well above average    A

above average        B

average                C

below average        D

well below average    E

- In 2001, only a third of the pupils attained the expected level 4 in English and science tests. Only a sixth of the pupils attained the expected level 4 in mathematics. As a result, the school's results were in the lowest five per cent nationally in English, mathematics and science. No pupils attained the higher level 5 in English, mathematics and science. These standards are not high enough.
- From 1997 to 2001, the overall trend in the school's results in Year 6 has been below that found nationally and is therefore unsatisfactory. There has been an upward trend in the school's results in reading and mathematics in Year 2 from 1997 to 2001, which is indicative of the improvements seen during the inspection.
- From 1999 to 2002, the school was set targets by the local education authority. These were unattainable as they were too high and not based on the prior attainment of pupils. From 2003, targets are more realistically based upon pupils' previous attainment. They are appropriate and challenging.
- Inspection evidence confirms that pupils attain standards well below those expected at the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science. The factors that contribute to this are:
  - Children's attainment on entry to the school in the reception classes is very low.
  - More pupils have special educational needs than in most schools. The main categories of special educational need are specific learning difficulties, emotional and behavioural problems and speech and language disorders. In some classes, including Year 6 in 2001, half the pupils were on the register for pupils with special educational needs.
  - Turnover of pupils; analysis of results show that pupils who have attended the school from Year 3 to Year 6 have achieved well and made good progress in English and mathematics.
  - Teaching and learning have not been as good as they are now.
  - Attendance by a small proportion of pupils is poor and has a detrimental effect on their attainment.
- By the end of Year 6, attainment in art, geography, history, music, physical education and religious education is below that expected of pupils aged 11 whilst attainment in information and communication technology (ICT) and design and technology is close to the levels expected.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Most pupils are interested in their lessons and concentrate well.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Most pupils behave well in class and around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships between pupils and pupils and staff are good. From the nursery to Year 6, pupils like to take responsibility and to carry out meaningful tasks.

Attendance	Poor. Too many pupils arrive late for school or take days off which has a detrimental effect on their attainment.
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## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

*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.*

- Following the appointment of the headteacher, a programme of monitoring lessons, pupils' work and teachers' planning has been in place in order that teachers can be supported to improve their teaching. The quality of teaching has improved since the programme has been implemented.
- Nearly all of the lessons seen were satisfactory or better. A significant proportion were good, very good or excellent. Just three lessons seen were unsatisfactory and one was poor.
- Teachers are well supported by teaching assistants. They work well together and provide pupils with good role models. As a consequence, pupils, and particularly those with special educational needs, those who learn English as an additional language and travellers make good progress in their learning.
- Teaching in English lessons is satisfactory overall but other subjects are not used enough to promote the learning of literacy skills.
- In mathematics lessons, teaching is satisfactory overall. However, other subjects are not used enough to promote basic numeracy skills.
- Teachers use ICT in the suite to promote learning in most other subjects but they do not make sufficient use of computers in classrooms to extend pupils' skills.
- Progress through the school is not consistent. Children's achievements are better in the nursery because of the overall good teaching. Pupils in the mixed Year1/2 class and Years 4 and 6 make good progress as a result of the overall good teaching.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is planned to provide pupils with a wide range of interesting and relevant experiences. It is not yet sufficiently well planned to ensure pupils develop skills in all areas of the curriculum. It meets statutory requirements except with regard to swimming where pupils have insufficient opportunities to attain the minimum standard of 25 metres unaided.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils receive considerable support from teachers and teaching assistants.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. The school has considerable resources on site for those pupils who are in the early stages of learning English and makes good use of them.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school promotes moral and social development very well. Spiritual development is satisfactorily promoted and is better in assemblies than in lessons. Pupils' understanding of their own culture and that of other European cultures is satisfactory but the multi-cultural dimension is unsatisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Staff know the pupils well. There are very good procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' good behaviour and personal development, for

	eliminating oppressive behaviour and for promoting racial harmony.
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Parents expressed the view that Marshlands is a good school and improving. Parents are made to feel welcome and the information they receive is very good, particularly about their children's progress. The proportion of parents who are supporting the school in a variety of ways is increasing.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher has made a significant impact since her appointment. Staff and governors are clear about the educational direction of the school, which is managed well. Key staff and the governing body are increasingly effective in carrying out their roles.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory and improving. The governing body has carried out a review of its functions to ensure it is effective in meeting its statutory obligations.
The school's evaluation of its performance	All aspects of the school's work are monitored and evaluated well, including the quality of teaching, with the aim of improving pupils' academic standards and their personal development.
The strategic use of resources	The school has very good systems for analysing its priorities and allocating funds to meet the needs of all its pupils. The principles of best value for money are adhered to.

The school currently has sufficient staff but as a result of difficulties in recruitment there are gaps in expertise, such as early years. The school has sufficient space for the number of pupils although the small size of some classrooms limits teaching strategies. Most of the school is clean and in very good order although some parts have not been re-decorated for some time as a result of possible re-development to the building. The library is poorly positioned and there are not enough books.

### PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The school expects children to work hard and achieve their best.</li> <li>The teaching is good.</li> <li>They are kept well informed about how their children are getting on.</li> <li>The school is helping their children to become mature and responsible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A consistent implementation of the school's policy concerning work to do at home and more detailed knowledge of what to expect of their children.</li> <li>A more interesting range of activities outside lessons.</li> </ul>

Inspectors support most of the parents' views. The number and range of extra-curricular activities is improving but the number of pupils who benefit from the weekly activities is below that usually found. The school has introduced a new policy for homework but not all parents are clear about the detail of what and how much pupils should complete and by when. Some of the teaching is good or better but overall it is satisfactory.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Standards throughout the school are not high enough, especially by the end of Year 6. In 2001 in the national tests, the school's performance in English, mathematics and science was in the lowest five per cent of schools across the country. Attainment falls well short of what is expected of pupils aged eleven in almost all subjects. However, there are mitigating factors for this:
  - Children's attainment on entry to the school in the reception classes is very low.
  - More pupils have special educational needs than in most schools. The main categories of special educational need are specific learning difficulties, emotional and behavioural problems and speech and language disorders. In some classes, including Year 6 in 2001, half the pupils were on the register for pupils with special educational needs.
  - Turnover of pupils; analysis of results show that pupils who have attended the school from Year 3 to Year 6 have achieved well and made good progress in English and mathematics.
  - Teaching and learning have not been as good as they are now.
  - Attendance by a small proportion of pupils is poor and has a detrimental effect on their attainment.
2. Attainment is improving, and particularly in the infant classes, but this is only since the appointment of the new headteacher. Prior to that, standards had not improved enough. The school is concerned to improve standards as quickly as possible and has implemented strategies to achieve this. The headteacher, with the support of staff, has introduced individual targets for all pupils each term. Where pupils do not meet their targets, they are referred to the co-ordinator for pupils with special educational needs and an appropriate programme of intervention is planned. This strategy of target setting is already making a difference with nearly all pupils improving their attainment in reading over the last term, sometimes by as much as one year in reading age. The school's data analysis also shows that most pupils in Years 5 and 6, including those with special educational needs, those who are learning English as an additional language and travellers, have made good progress since the end of Year 2. Despite their low start, many of the pupils have made progress equivalent to that expected of pupils in Years 3 to 6. (The school has insufficient data to make judgements about progress of these pupils since they entered the school in the reception class.)
3. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as a result of early identification of their needs, effective management of provision for them, including carefully targeted work, and good support by teachers and teaching assistants. This is also true of those pupils who are learning English as an additional language and travellers. The school's aim is to support pupils sufficiently well so that they can be taken off the register of special educational needs. No significant differences were noted between the attainment of boys and girls during the inspection and there were no significant variations in the attainment or progress of pupils from different groups. The school has identified only one pupil as being talented or gifted. Teachers are aware of that particular pupil's needs and make every effort to meet them.
4. Children achieve better in the nursery than in the reception class as a result of the good teaching and more interesting curriculum. When the children enter the nursery the levels of attainment are well below average. In the reception class, they are very low because the children who are higher attainers move to other schools, leaving only the average and below average attainers. Children make good progress in the nursery and by the end of the year the higher attaining children are on track to attain the Early Learning Goals in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development. They are on track to achieve the green early stepping-stones in creative development, one level below that expected of children at the end of the reception year. Children make satisfactory progress in the reception class. By the end of the reception year, a few children are on track to achieve the Early Learning Goals in physical development. In the other areas of learning, very few children are on track to achieve the Early Learning Goals. Most children are working at the level of the green stepping stones, a level below that expected at the end of the reception year in personal, social and emotional development,

communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. A few children are still working at the blue stepping stone level, two levels below that expected of children at the end of the reception year.

5. In English and literacy, pupils achieve well and make broadly average progress over time, but standards in reading, writing and speaking and listening remain well below those found in most schools for both seven and eleven-year-olds. Pupils' listening skills are better developed than their speaking skills. By Year 2 in reading, pupils acquire adequate knowledge of letters and sounds to read words and to establish meaning. A few higher attaining pupils read accurately and predict what might happen next but the lower attaining pupils wait for help rather than try and sound out unknown words for themselves. By Year 6, pupils read with increasing fluency and accuracy. Pupils' ability to skim and scan and make meaningful notes is limited by insufficient use of reading skills to find information in other subjects. In writing, in Years 1 and 2, pupils learn to form their letters correctly and write simple words and phrases but only higher-attaining pupils are able to write more than a few sentences without support. Few pupils, including the more able, spell well. By the end of Year 6, pupils' extended writing is limited. Many still make basic errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar. Presentation is poor and most pupils do not consistently use a joined script.
6. In mathematics, standards are improving throughout the school but they are still well below average at the end of Year 2 and at the end of Year 6. By the end of Year 2, place value is not well understood and so the pupils' ability to use known number facts and place value to carry out mentally simple multiplications and divisions is not well developed. Only the highest attaining pupils are able to choose and use appropriate operations and efficient calculation strategies to solve problems. Not enough pupils are working towards level 3. By the end of Year 6, there are many weaknesses and few strengths. Only the highest attaining pupils have quick mental recall. Pupils of all abilities lack strategies to make mental calculations. The higher attaining pupils have a sound knowledge of fractions and decimals but others do not. Knowledge of perimeter, area and volume is weak as is their understanding of triangles and their properties. Pupils do not yet have sound strategies for solving written problems. There are too few pupils working towards level 5.
7. In science, by the age of seven, pupils' attainment is well below average because they find it difficult to retain knowledge. This affects their ability to solve problems. They lack the literacy skills to communicate their findings in writing and they cannot plan, obtain and present evidence. By the age of eleven, pupils' attainment is well below average. Although they can make predictions and they recognise that thorough evidence is needed in investigations their problems are very similar to those experienced by pupils aged seven. They cannot generate their own ideas for solving problems or plan their own investigations. They do not recognise where 'fair testing' is required.
8. In religious education, attainment by the end of Year 2 is well below the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus. Pupils have a basic knowledge of religious festivals but do not have a basic understanding of the principles upon which Christianity is based. By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment is still well below expectations. Pupils have a better understanding of the Christian religion and the principles upon which it is based but they have little knowledge of other religions.
9. By the end of Year 2, attainment in art, design and technology, information and communication technology (ICT), music and physical education is close to the levels expected of pupils aged seven. Attainment in geography and history is well below the levels expected.
10. Attainment in design and technology and ICT is close to the levels expected at the end of Year 6 when pupils are aged eleven although attainment is sometimes affected by the pupils' poor literacy skills when written work is involved. Attainment in art, music and physical education is below the levels expected at the age of 11. Pupils do not build on skills previously acquired in art and so there is a lack of progression in pupils' work. Pupils sing well but their skills in listening, appraising and composing are weak. Pupils have appropriate games skills but attainment in dance and swimming is not high enough. Attainment in geography and history is well below the levels expected of pupils aged eleven. Pupils' knowledge of their own locality is very limited and

they are not aware of how the landscape affects peoples' lives. They find difficulty in communicating their observations and findings in writing. Their ability to recall historical facts is generally weak and their research rarely involves explaining or interpreting what they have found.

11. Children make good progress in the nursery and satisfactory progress in the reception year. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall in the infant and junior classes although pupils do not progress consistently through the school as a result of the inconsistent quality of teaching. However, this is much less of a factor than in the past and the achievement by Year 6 pupils is that most affected by the inconsistent quality of teaching.

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

12. Pupils' attitudes to the school are good and this is a significant improvement upon the findings of the last inspection. Younger children in nursery and reception classes make a positive start and quickly understand the school routines and adhere to them. The school promotes their personal and social skills well. Children are able to work independently, relate well to adults and work and play together well. Most children in the nursery and reception class are able to follow instructions and concentrate well. They display good behaviour both in the classroom and play areas and their sense of right and wrong is being developed.
13. In the infant and junior classes pupils show interest in their lessons and their activities and stay on task. Most pupils are keen to work, behave well and help each other. They give sensible answers and are able to contribute to discussions and listen to questions. In a Year 1 science lesson observed during the inspection week, pupils worked extremely well together and demonstrated good attitudes and behaviour. They were able to investigate and discuss together their perception of the properties of materials and articulated well to the teacher what they had discovered during the lesson. In a Year 4 ICT lesson, pupils worked well together to predict the path of a 'roamer', a programmable toy; they discussed how to work out and record what instructions to feed into a computer to enable it to predict a path. They worked collaboratively and displayed mature and sensible attitudes to their work. In the main, pupils take a very active interest in their lessons and are enthusiastic and keen to show what they can achieve in group work.
14. The overwhelming majority of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire said that they felt behaviour in the school was good and had improved since the last inspection. This is confirmed by the inspection findings. In the majority of lessons seen during the inspection week, pupils' behaviour was good. They responded well to teachers, interacted with them and showed respect for views of fellow pupils. In a small minority of lessons where teaching was less focused, pupils displayed irritable behaviour, were not on task and lacked concentration. Last year there were 21 exclusions for a fixed period and two permanent exclusions. There have been no exclusions in the current year, which is indicative of the improvement.
15. Most pupils behave in a sensible, quiet and mature manner and display confidence and politeness when talking to visitors. The inspection team were very impressed with the courtesy and friendliness shown by the majority of pupils during their visit.
16. Pupils behave well at lunchtime with good supervision and enjoy the period as pleasant, social occasions. Older pupils act as 'buddies' and sit with younger pupils and help them. Pupils are given opportunity to take responsibility, such as helping in assemblies, clearing away equipment and membership of the school council. In the classrooms, pupils are not given enough opportunities to use their initiative.
17. The school has recently introduced a school council where two pupils from each class (with the exception of children in the nursery) meet regularly to discuss any matters that they feel could improve the school. In a council meeting observed during the inspection week, pupils were beginning to understand the concepts of democracy and understood the responsibilities and duties of council secretary and chairperson. Pupils become self-assured and develop a sense of maturity and independence as a result of this innovation by the school.

18. Pupils have a good understanding of the impact of their actions on others and have a good respect for feelings, values and beliefs. Bullying at the school is minimal and pupils are keen to respond to the few school rules and earn gold stars for good work or behaviour. The school's property is treated by most pupils with great care; in the computer suite pupils are keen to ensure that computers are switched off correctly and are treated with respect. The school is graffiti and litter free and in the library pupils treat books with respect and care.
19. Attendance in the current year at a little over 86 per cent is poor. The main reason for this is the absence of five pupils who have left the school but who accumulated over 700 authorised absences before notifying the school that they registered at another school. The school is taking measures to improve attendance but some parents do not have the perception that good attendance is vital to ensure pupils achieve good standards and make progress. A small number of pupils arrive late and this has an impact on the work of the school as lessons are sometimes temporarily disrupted and assemblies sometimes do not start on time.
20. Relationships in the school are good. All teaching and non-teaching staff at the school have extremely good relationships with pupils who are, in the main, polite to them and approach them with confidence. During the inspection week it was noted that pupils were constantly supporting and helping each other; for example, a seriously ill child who has recently returned to school was immediately befriended by her peer group and greeted with affection and care. Pupils were extremely enthusiastic and keen to talk to the inspection team about their work and their views of the school. In the main, pupils are proud of their school and are keen to tell others.

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

21. The school has encountered difficulties in recruiting and retaining teachers in recent times. The school has had little choice in the appointment of teachers over the past two years and is fortunate to have appointed and retained a significant proportion of teachers who are committed to the school and who are working hard to improve their skills.
22. The headteacher is aware that because of the rather special nature of the school with attainment upon entry so low and with many pupils on the register of special educational needs, including a significant number with emotional and behavioural difficulties, the quality of teaching needs to be consistently good throughout the school. To this end, the headteacher, with the support of the governing body, has implemented a programme of monitoring and supporting teaching to improve the overall quality. The programme has included observations of lessons by the headteacher and other key staff with appropriate feedback and, where necessary, programmes of support. Planning has been monitored and scrutinies of pupils' work have also been included in the process. This programme has been made possible through the effective use of a support teacher. The overall result is that the quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection. There is less unsatisfactory teaching and rather more very good and excellent teaching.
23. In the lessons observed, about two-tenths of the lessons were excellent or very good. Nearly three tenths were good and almost five-tenths satisfactory. About one lesson in twenty-five was unsatisfactory and there was just one poor lesson. Teaching in the nursery is good overall with a significant proportion of lessons which are very good. This accounts for the good progress made by pupils in the nursery. Teaching in the reception year ranges from unsatisfactory to good and is satisfactory overall ensuring that pupils' learning is at least satisfactory. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 ranges from unsatisfactory to excellent. It is satisfactory overall and ensures that pupils make at least satisfactory progress in these year groups. In the mixed age class, where pupils are in Year 1 and Year 2, teaching is very good overall and pupils are making very good progress overall in lessons. In Years 3 to 6, teaching ranges from poor to excellent. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed in Years 4 and 6. In Year 4, the overall quality of teaching is very good and in Year 6, it is good. As a consequence, pupils' learning overall is very good in Year 4 and good in Year 6 and this is making a significant difference to pupils' learning over time. Teaching in Years 3 and 5 is only just satisfactory overall and needs to improve if pupils' attainment is to improve significantly by the end of Year 6.

24. Teachers and teaching assistants work very well together. They have a good knowledge of pupils with special educational needs and they use this knowledge well to plan lessons so that tasks and resources are matched to pupils' needs. Teachers provide group teaching or individual support in the classroom based on targets in the individual education plans, which are realistic and generally achievable. Teachers, teaching assistants and the co-ordinator for pupils with special educational needs, monitor pupils' progress. Individual education plans are reviewed regularly. Teaching assistants are well trained to support pupils with special educational needs and they are consistently well deployed to support individuals as part of a group or as individuals. The co-ordinator for pupils with special educational needs works closely with specialist support services and teachers to ensure effective teaching strategies are employed. She also works with individuals and groups of pupils to provide an 'anger management' course of five weeks. This initiative is successful in making a difference to the learning of the pupils involved. Teachers have specific targets for individual pupils with individual education plans but daily plans, however, do not always mention organisation of the support for identified pupils in the class. Teachers have their group targets ready for each lesson and teaching assistants liaise well with teachers regarding progress of individuals in their care. The result of all this support is that pupils with special educational needs make good progress in their learning. Pupils with English as an additional language are also well supported and make good progress. The school makes very good use of the expertise to be found in the school for those pupils who are in the early stages of language acquisition.
25. Teaching in the nursery is good. The curriculum is based on the stepping stones and Early Learning Goals in the six areas of learning. Planning is good and all adults work very well together in a well-organised manner. Children are given opportunities to make independent choices about the activities in which they participate as well as those directed by the teacher. Teaching in the reception year is satisfactory overall. Children are given many fewer opportunities to make independent choices. Nearly all the activities are dominated by the teacher and this restricts the opportunities children have for developing their independence. However, all adults interact with children at every opportunity in order to develop the children's language.
26. Teaching in English is based on the literacy hour and is satisfactory overall. It ranges from satisfactory to excellent. In the best lessons, planning ensures that the pupils' differing needs are met, resources are well used and teachers encourage pupils by praising them for their efforts. Minor weaknesses in the satisfactory lessons include expectations of pupils, which are too low and result in teachers talking to pupils rather than questioning them and making them think. Lessons in other subjects are not sufficiently well used to develop pupils' literacy skills.
27. Teaching in mathematics is inconsistent and ranges from poor to excellent, but is satisfactory overall. Teaching is based on the national numeracy initiative and this has helped to raise standards. In the best lessons, planning is very good. Pupils understand what they are expected to learn. In the unsatisfactory/poor lessons, teachers have insufficient control to contain pupils' misbehaviour and pupils do not learn enough. Lessons in other subjects are not sufficiently well used to develop pupils' numeracy skills.
28. In science, teaching is satisfactory overall. It ranges from satisfactory to excellent. Strengths include well paced-discussions between the teacher and pupils based on well-planned lessons. Teachers have good expertise and use this to advantage when effectively questioning pupils but overall expectations of presentation and written work are too low. Marking is not consistent through the school to help pupils improve.
29. In ICT, teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Teachers make good use of the computer suite to develop pupils' skills across the curriculum but they do not make enough use of the computers in classrooms to extend those skills. On some occasions, tasks are not demonstrated sufficiently well for pupils to understand what they are expected to do. Teachers use correct vocabulary and this assists the pupils' literacy skills.
30. Lessons observed during the inspection in art, design and technology, geography, history, music, physical education, religious education and personal, social and health education were satisfactory overall and pupils made satisfactory progress in their learning. However, teaching is not consistent through the school and has not always been as good as it is now, so, by the end

of Year 6, attainment is not as high as one might expect from the teaching seen during the inspection.

31. In teaching and learning seen during the inspection there were strengths and weaknesses:

### **Strengths**

In the best lessons:

- Teachers plan thoroughly and share the objectives of the lesson with the pupils in a manner they understand so that at the end of the lesson the pupils can make their own assessments of how well they have learned;
- Teachers make reference to the previous lesson and the learning that took place so that pupils remember before moving to the next stage of learning;
- Teachers demonstrate effectively; for example, how to play a musical instrument which enables pupils to 'have a go';
- Teachers make good use of resources, such as the interactive white board, to reinforce learning; for example, pupils work on calculations to reinforce the understanding of place value by challenging their partners to 'shoot' the digits. The result is enthusiasm and excellent learning;
- Teachers have an excellent rapport with their pupils and this encourages pupils to volunteer to demonstrate their methods of calculation;
- The pace of the lesson is excellent as a result of strict time limits to complete tasks;
- The lesson concludes with a discussion related to the learning objectives. Pupils are given the opportunity to state whether they have understood what they were expected to learn and have the confidence to do so;
- The teacher and teaching assistant work very well together to meet the needs of all pupils, especially those with special educational needs, those who are learning English as an additional language and travellers;
- Teachers and teaching assistants work very well and with remarkable sensitivity with pupils who have emotional and behavioural difficulties enabling them to make good progress in the lesson;
- Teachers use questioning effectively to include pupils of all abilities and to make them think. They clearly know their pupils well and can pitch the question at the right level;
- Teachers have very good subject knowledge which they use to bring alive the subject for their pupils; for example, when they explore the purpose of skeletons;
- Teachers use the appropriate vocabulary, such as 'icon', 'home page' and 'website' in an ICT lesson;
- Teachers effectively use praise to encourage pupils in their learning;
- Teachers organise activities in pairs or groups, which promotes the pupils' social development.

### **Weaknesses**

Where teaching is unsatisfactory:

- The work is pitched at an inappropriate level resulting in most pupils learning far too little;
- Planning is unsatisfactory. The teacher is not clear of learning objectives and activities are not appropriately matched to the abilities of the pupils resulting in unsatisfactory learning;
- Pupils are not concentrating on their task and the teacher takes no action to ensure they carry out the tasks set;
- Expertise is insufficient to engage pupils in the activity; for example, when leading a question and answer session with demonstrations on throwing a ball, pupils became more confused as the discussion proceeded.

Where teaching is poor:

- The management of pupils is inadequate resulting in too much noise and too little work;
- Planning is unsatisfactory leading to an unbalanced lesson with far too long for the introduction and insufficient time for pupils to carry out tasks;
- Pupils receive inappropriate explanations;
- Expertise is insufficient, resulting in low expectations.

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

32. Except for swimming, the school meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and those of the local Agreed Syllabus for religious education. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection when it was reported that there were some imbalances in the curriculum. One major contribution to achieving this has been the school's overall curriculum plan or 'map'. The curriculum is inclusive in meeting the needs of all its pupils. Its quality and range is satisfactory. The school's main strengths are the opportunities it gives to extend learning through visits, visitors and extra-curricular activities, provision for personal and social development and the use it makes of links with the local community and educational institutions. Areas for development, which are already recognised, are:
- planning in the medium and short term for the broad and balanced curriculum;
  - ensuring skills in all subjects are progressively developed;
  - using literacy, numeracy and computers across the curriculum;
  - supporting the breadth of experiences with interesting displays.
33. The school regularly reviews its curriculum. It has appropriately placed great emphasis on developing the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The school's curriculum plan ensures pupils revisit aspects of each subject in increasing depth. However, not all pupils have the opportunity to develop independence in learning, to be creative or to produce long pieces of writing. One recent and appropriate plan is to develop those subjects that particularly contribute to pupils' personal development, such as the arts.
34. Overall, the curriculum delivered to pupils is satisfactory. The curriculum plan provides opportunities to challenge the more able while at the same time catering for pupils with special educational needs. These are not always used to good effect. There are a number of inconsistencies in teachers' planning which affect pupils' learning. There is not always a good balance of teacher input and pupil activity. End-of-lesson discussions are usually purposeful in consolidating what has been learnt. The same attention to developing skills in English and mathematics is not always applied to other subjects. The school uses homework satisfactorily to develop learning but according to parents, it is not yet consistent and parents are unclear about the detail of what and how much pupils should complete and by when. The school invites a good number of visitors. These include Antony Caro for a workshop before visiting his exhibition, theatre groups, puppet shows, and others who provide poetry and singing workshops. There is scope for developing the range of outside visits for pupils in Years 1 to 5, in order to bring subjects like science, history and geography to life.
35. For pupils aged eight to eleven the day is short in comparison with schools nationally. However, it is mostly used efficiently and effectively. The school is reviewing the length of time pupils work in the morning without a break, so that they more easily concentrate on their learning. The current arrangement was introduced to reduce the effects on behaviour of repeated movements in and out of the school and this has been successful.
36. The school has adopted the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies as the basis for English and mathematics lessons. Teachers have received effective training in these strategies and are applying them to good effect. However, there is not sufficient emphasis given to developing literacy and numeracy skills through other subjects.
37. The range of extra-curricular activities is good. This includes a breakfast club, a choir, instrumental teaching, various sporting activities, a French club, a computer club, a literacy club and a mathematics club. While all pupils have access to these clubs they are not always well attended, even though they enrich pupils' learning.
38. The school offers all pupils equal access to the curriculum. Teachers plan to take account of the range of ability and competence in English in their pupils although teachers' planning is not consistent across the school in ensuring short term plans provide sufficient detail of activities in all subjects to meet the needs of different groups of pupils. Teachers make good use of the in-

class support provided for pupils with special educational needs, those learning English as an additional language and travellers.

39. Curriculum provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and supports the learning targets identified in individual education plans. There are good procedures in place for identifying special needs. A comprehensive policy provides guidance for staff but is currently in draft form. The school is waiting to incorporate changes to the national Code of Practice. Suitable training has been provided for teachers to write individual educational plans with targets that are specific and easily achievable. Withdrawal arrangements are only sometimes applied, based on individual needs for intensive work. The school is aware of providing balance of support. There are no pupils for whom the curriculum is disapplied. The school's systems and planning ensure that the provision fully meets the staged approach required. Only one pupil has been assessed being as talented or gifted and the school is aware of the need to meet this pupil's needs. Curriculum provision for travellers and pupils with English as an additional language is good. The school has access to appropriate resources and expertise and makes good use of these when pupils are in the early stages of learning English.
40. There is a very good coherent approach to provision for personal, social, and health education, as well as to preparation for citizenship. This is based on a thorough programme of work, which is an integral part of the school's curriculum plan. It covers all the necessary aspects of personal development including education about sex, drugs, smoking and alcohol. The school takes every opportunity within lessons to develop pupils' self-esteem and attends to their emotional difficulties with great conscientiousness. This includes providing support in anger management for those pupils who need it. Pupils undertake daily responsibilities, including participating in a 'buddy' system which appropriately encourages them to care for each other. In lessons, the school provides many opportunities for pupils to collaborate with one another in pairs or groups. Although it arranges that pupils develop social awareness through drama, there is scope for further work. Teachers make good use of 'circle time', when pupils come together and take turns to discuss personal, social and world issues. In all lessons involving potentially hazardous activities, teachers are conscientious in drawing pupils' attention to safety matters. Personal, social and health education has been a major factor contributing to improvement in the pupils' behaviour.
41. The community makes a very good contribution to pupils' learning. 'BLITZ' involves a workshop to support parents in helping their children to develop their reading. Another group called ECAT has run a computer workshop. A local church works with children under the name 'LINK Kids' and members of the church community take assemblies. Members of Bengali and Portuguese communities have worked with pupils and have developed their interest in language. A very important future project is to develop a community arts centre, which the school plans to use to make links between subjects across the curriculum.
42. There are very good links with local educational institutions which help pupils in their learning. The school liaises with the other local nursery to establish a collaborative approach to provision. The school takes action to ease the transition from Year 6 to Year 7 in the secondary school. Hailsham Community College makes links with the school to develop continuity in literacy, numeracy, computer work and provision for personal, social and health education. It has supported the school's provision for physical education, including involving pupils in both schools in a dance project.
43. There is good provision overall for developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. The ethos of the school is very positive in terms of its expressed aims and in its practice. It is founded upon the caring relationships evidenced at all levels in the school community. The school's philosophy, code of conduct and a series of experiences and activities effectively promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. The sense of family encourages pupils to reflect on their actions and those of others.
44. The provision for pupils' spiritual understanding is satisfactory. It is effectively linked to school assemblies and opportunities for pupils to engage in personal reflection. Time to reflect on pupils' own beliefs, values and experiences is provided in the daily assemblies. The talks in assemblies based on Christian beliefs are effectively explored for a spiritual thought or prayer, for example an

assembly taken by a visitor from the local church, gave a very clear message to pupils about being clean on both the inside and the outside. The preacher used a puppet effectively to tell the story and capture pupils' imagination. The assemblies are used well to promote a sense of community and shared values. The spiritual dimension of religious education and other curriculum areas such as art, music and poetry is explored in some lessons although there is a potential to extend this across all areas of curriculum. The collective worship meets statutory requirements. Some thoughtful periods of reflection effectively offer opportunities that relate to pupils' everyday experiences such as, 'celebrations', 'working hard' or 'co-operation'.

45. The provision for moral development of pupils is very good. The school effectively teaches the values that distinguish right from wrong. Due attention is given to the reinforcement of codes of behaviour and sharing of positive values. The pupils respond positively, enjoying their work and showing care for the school. Pupils are well disciplined and understand what facilitates an orderly school. Moral values are well taught through stories and fables, as well as hymns and discussions. Pupils are well rewarded for best work and good actions in the assemblies. Both teaching and support staff provide good role models and encourage pupils to relate well to each other and behave courteously. Pupils participate in a number of charities supported by the school.
46. Very good provision is made for pupils' social development through daily life, curriculum and local educational visits. The school has a secure environment in which pupils feel cared for. Pupils are encouraged to relate well to each other and act courteously. When provided with appropriate opportunities, pupils carry out responsibilities with confidence. There are monitors who are given responsibilities for different things at break times; for example, looking after younger pupils. Pupils are encouraged to show responsibility for their own environment and the area around school. Social interaction is also achieved through promoting equal opportunities and social inclusion within the school. The quality of relationships between adults and pupils is good.
47. The provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. It is promoted through opportunities to develop pupils' understanding of their own cultural traditions and practices and the key features of other groups in society. It is also developed through use of stories from other cultures in assemblies and visits and visitors to the school. Assemblies also highlight festivals, such as Chinese New Year, Hannukah or the Bodhi Day through stories. However, the opportunities to promote multicultural activities in art, dance, drama and music are limited. Pupils regularly visit the local church but visits to other places of worship such as the mosque, the gurdwara and the synagogue are not planned. The school promotes respect for cultural diversity reflected in society. However, there are insufficient opportunities to develop pupils' understanding of the central beliefs and practices of different faiths and to appreciate the way of life of people from other cultures. As a result, pupils' appreciation of the richness and diversity of culture in the wider world is less well developed. Displays around the school do not reflect the multicultural diversity of wider society. Provision of multicultural resources and social and cultural links with the wider community are also limited. Opportunities to involve parents and visitors from the local faith communities in order to contribute and enhance pupils understanding of a culturally diverse British society are limited.

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

48. The school provision for the care of its pupils is very good and this is an improvement upon the findings reported on at the last inspection. The school has a very comprehensive child protection policy, which is well understood by the headteacher who is the named child protection officer. She keeps immaculate records of referrals and concerns and liaises well with the appropriate agencies. The child protection officer and both teaching and non-teaching staff have received appropriate training in child protection matters.
49. The headteacher, who is also the school safety officer, together with a link governor, carries out annual health and safety audits. These are well recorded and any items of concern are fully documented and rectified. The school has put a very high priority on pupils' health, welfare and safety; for example, the Fire Brigade, at the request of the school, carried out a detailed survey of the school's fire prevention arrangements.

50. The school has three first aiders, two of whom have received appropriate training and arrangements are in hand to train the third. Accidents are well recorded and the school keeps good records for the administration of medicines.
51. The school procedures for the monitoring of pupils' academic performance are good. Staff know all pupils at the school well and they regularly meet on both formal and informal basis to assess pupils' personal development and exchange information regarding their progress. Pupils confirm that they feel confident in approaching staff and feel that the school provides an environment that enables them to feel happy and secure.
52. Education support and guidance to pupils provided by the school are good. Staff display a very high level of concern and commitment to pupils' welfare; for example, the school has arranged a breakfast club, which is available to all pupils to enable them to start the day with a hot and nourishing breakfast. The close relationship between all staff and pupils and the development of the personal, health and social education programme, provides a firm foundation on which to build acceptable behaviour patterns through self-confidence and the awareness of others.
53. The school has very good procedures to promote acceptable standards of behaviour by its pupils. The headteacher, midday supervisors and teaching assistants regularly meet to discuss and monitor pupils' behaviour. Verbal and physical bullying are not accepted or tolerated by the school. Pupils are well aware of the high expectation of behaviour that the school has of them. The few school rules are conspicuously displayed in both the entrance hall and each classroom. They are fully understood by pupils who, in the main, are keen to observe them and display good behaviour.
54. Pupils are encouraged to accept responsibility for their own actions. For good behaviour and good work, pupils are rewarded with golden stars. During the inspection week a very successful award assembly was observed where pupils from each year group were very proud to receive their golden stars for good work and behaviour and were well supported by other pupils and loudly applauded when they received their awards.
55. The school holds regular assemblies and has taken the opportunity to invite a range of visitors into the school to present diverse aspects of the Christian faith to pupils.
56. Procedures for the monitoring and promoting of attendance are satisfactory. The school has recently installed the 'SIMS' electronic registration system and attendance registers are marked manually each day and the attendance of each child is electronically recorded. Although first day absences are tracked by office staff they often have difficulties in contacting parents, which means that absences are sometimes not fully followed up and, as a result, attendance at the school is poor. The school receives limited and insufficient support from the Education Welfare Service, a representative of which only visits the school once per term. Many parents are unaware of the need for good attendance to ensure that their children make progress and the unauthorised absence of 0.9 per cent is above average.
57. The school has good procedures for assessing pupils' progress, including those who have special needs, those who are learning English as an additional language and those who are travellers. Consistent use is made of assessment data for setting individual targets. Teachers make regular assessments using annual and interim tests and pupils' strengths and weaknesses are carefully recorded. Teachers use the information gained to improve their planning to meet individual's needs. The recently appointed assessment co-ordinator liaises well with teachers who have an assessment folder with targets for each pupil. Baseline assessment is carried out for children in the reception class shortly after their arrival at school and ongoing tracking of their progress is made using the 'P' level scale.
58. The school has a very high proportion of pupils with special needs (approximately 30 per cent) and has good strategies for identifying their problems. It has a significant proportion of pupils who are learning English as an additional language and four pupils who are travellers. These pupils are supported well. Staff regularly meet and discuss the progress of pupils and information is fed into planning. Individual education plans contain much information and reviews of them are

well recorded, as are annual reviews of pupils with statements of special education needs. The advised Code of Practice for pupils with special education needs is well understood and implemented by the special education needs co-ordinator. Effective links have been established with the educational psychologist and other agencies such as the school health adviser, occupational therapist, and speech and language therapists who provide appropriate support when necessary.

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

59. The vast majority of parents, who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire, fully support the school. They feel that the school is well led and managed, feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems and feel that the information received from the school is good. Parents interviewed by the inspection team expressed confidence in the leadership provided by the headteacher and all staff at the school. They feel that the school provides a secure environment which promotes well their children's learning. The inspection findings completely concur with these views and this is at least as good as reported at the previous inspection.
60. A minority of parents, who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire, felt they were not kept fully informed about how their children were getting on and the school does not work closely with them. Inspectors do not agree with these views. The school has produced a brochure, which is easy to read and contains a substantial amount of information about school organisation, facilities provided by the school, rules and ethos. Monthly newsletters are produced, giving a wide variety of information about forthcoming events, proposed activities, pupils' progress and innovations, which the school wishes to introduce. These newsletters are produced in a manner suited to parents and are well received.
61. The school has provided its own questionnaire recently sent to parents and has used the information gained to evaluate its own procedures and how to further improve its liaison with parents. This is very good practice.
62. The school holds three parents' evenings each year where parents are given the opportunity to meet teachers to discuss with them their children's progress. In addition, parents with children with special needs have two separate open evenings where the co-ordinator for pupils with special educational needs and staff members are available to discuss and advise, if necessary, on individual education plans and discuss any difficulties that are being experienced. Parents of children who have a special needs statement are invited to annual reviews and are involved in target setting.
63. The school is very active in contacting parents if they have any concerns regarding pupils' pastoral or academic progress or if they wish to congratulate pupils for good work or behaviour. Parents are confident that the school has an open door policy and feel that they are able to see the headteacher or staff at any time, without an appointment, if they wish.
64. Annual reports provided by the school are very good. They are very well prepared and presented and contain spaces for pupil and parent comment. They give full information on a subject by subject basis on pupils' progress and abilities and offer comments on what pupils must further do to succeed.
65. The school makes every effort to involve parents in the life of the school and their children's education. Parents are actively encouraged to come into school to help and during the inspection week several parents (and grandparents) were observed working with pupils by hearing them read. They also help the school in a variety of other ways, such as supervision on school outings, helping with art and in the classroom. The school greatly values and appreciates their work.
66. Although the school does not at present have a parent teacher association, parents work very closely with the school secretarial staff who, of their own volition, arrange several successful fundraising events each year.
67. Induction procedures for children joining the nursery and pupils joining the school are very good. Members of staff carry out home visits prior to entering the nursery and parents are encouraged to come into school for a 'taster day' prior to their children joining the reception class. Parents are actively encouraged to enrol their children in the nursery, which, although at present is under subscribed, provides provision of a very high standard.

68. The school has provided a home school agreement, listing responsibilities of both parents and school but at the present time only approximately 20 per cent of parents have signed and returned the agreement.
69. The co-ordinator for pupils with special educational needs liaises very well with carers and parents of pupils with special education needs. They are fully involved in initiating and reviewing their child's individual educational plan and are kept fully informed on a regular basis of their children's progress. The school liaises well with external agencies and keeps good records.

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

70. The headteacher provides strong leadership and very good management of the school. This is an improvement upon the findings of the previous inspection. She has made a significant impact on all aspects of school life since her appointment. She has very high expectations of herself and she sets a very good example to other members of staff. Parents speak highly of her and the changes that she has introduced. They have welcomed the move of office from the first floor to the ground floor where the door is readily open to those who feel there is a need for information or to resolve difficulties. She is well supported by key members of staff. Curriculum leadership is very good in mathematics, science and special educational needs. It is good in design and technology and ICT. It is satisfactory at the Foundation Stage and in English, art, geography, history, music and religious education. It is unsatisfactory in physical education. An appointment has been made to the position of deputy headteacher but this will not be filled until September. As a consequence, the headteacher will not have had the support of somebody in that position for a full academic year.
71. There have been significant improvements in all aspects of school life since the appointment of the headteacher. Expectations have been raised amongst staff as to what pupils can achieve. Behaviour has improved considerably as a result of a whole school policy and its implementation across the school. Relationships within the school and pupils' personal development have improved as a result. This is enabling teachers and pupils to concentrate much more on academic performance. As a result, standards are beginning to rise. This is most noticeable in the nursery, reception and infant classes where the impact of new strategies has had the most effect. There has been a significant thrust to improve the quality of teaching across the school through a programme of monitoring and support. New teaching appointments to the school have assisted in this process. The curriculum has been reviewed and revised to ensure that pupils' learning builds on previous experiences.
72. The school is inclusive. The support for pupils with special educational needs is well managed. The co-ordinator for pupils with special educational needs has a clear understanding of her responsibilities and effectively supports pupils, colleagues and parents. She has an action plan as part of school improvement plan. Pupils on the register for children with special educational needs are well supported by designated support staff. Procedures for the identification of needs are effective. Information gathered from a range of national and standardised tests are used systematically to identify any lack of progress. There are good arrangements in place for annual reviews and all parties involved with the child normally attend these. Suitable resources are being developed. Computer resources have recently been added to support learning; for example the Numicon programme to develop numeracy skills. Resources, including staff, are managed effectively to support pupils and the quality of support provided by teaching assistant is very good. The funding for pupils with special educational needs is effectively used to enhance curricular access and progress. Pupils who are learning English as an additional language are also well supported by teachers and teaching assistants. The school makes very good use of resources on site for those pupils who are in the early stages of learning English. Travellers are well supported. All pupils are treated as individuals and the school promotes strongly racial harmony. A policy for promoting racial harmony is currently at the draft stage.
73. The school is increasingly effective in meeting its aims. Parents are welcomed to the school and they have been consulted on their views of the school through questionnaires. Pupils too have completed questionnaires stating what improvements they would like to see. Expectations of staff and children are being raised although they are not high enough yet. Praise and

encouragement are daily features in all classes with a positive effect on pupils' self-esteem and their learning. The school is being refurbished to create a more positive environment and the curriculum is being developed to provide pupils with a more interesting and relevant curriculum in an effort to increase their enthusiasm for learning. The pupils' personal development is being developed well and the newly formed school council is one of a number of strategies to provide pupils with more opportunities to take responsibility. The school has introduced effective measures to celebrate pupils' achievements.

74. The governing body, under the good leadership of the chairperson, is fulfilling its statutory duties and this is an improvement upon the findings reported at the last inspection. It had little part in devising the action plan following the previous inspection when it was found to be not meeting its statutory duties. Since the appointment of the new headteacher there has been a new partnership in which the governors and headteacher are working well together. The governing body is encouraged to be involved in the business of the school and, as a result of a review of its purpose, its structure has been changed. One additional committee (curriculum and achievement) has been agreed to focus on standards. Governors are more closely involved in agreeing school policies and monitoring developments within the school. The chair of governors visits the school almost weekly to provide support to the headteacher and to keep herself abreast of developments. The governing body has, in the past, been concerned about behaviour and the academic standards in the school and they are pleased with the actions taken so far by the new headteacher to address these. Governors are monitoring the situation closely although a programme of visits to the school has not yet been agreed. Many governors do visit the school and some regularly help in school. The governing body is involved directly in awards to pupils for good behaviour and improvement in academic work. It has embraced the new policy for performance management and it has agreed targets with the headteacher.
75. The school has adopted very good strategies for reviewing its strengths and weaknesses. It involves all members of staff in the process and uses all data that is available to identify what it does well and that which requires improvement. The school improvement plan is effectively based upon evidence from a range of sources which include staff discussions, observations of teaching, scrutiny of work, analysis of national and standardised test results, comparison of data with similar schools and observations by governors, parents and pupils. Priorities have been established and the most important have been rapidly implemented. All of the objectives are linked to the school aims and they have been effectively placed in order of priority. Action plans are in place for all subjects and there is a management action plan also which covers more general items such as the school's teaching and learning policy and homework policy. Improvements are judged against success criteria related to school aims and higher attainment. The headteacher regularly meets staff in key positions to discuss progress in implementing the action plans.
76. The school makes very good use of its resources. It manages the budget well and is aware that there will be a significant clawback by the local education authority as a result of a significant drop in numbers on roll in this academic year. It therefore has sufficient monies in contingency. Priorities are established after careful analysis and funds are targeted very specifically, for example:
- Staff are appointed for specific tasks, such as the teacher who supports other teachers effectively to enable them to visit other classes for observations or to support other members of staff;
  - Booster classes for those pupils who are on the border of achieving a higher grade in the national tests;
  - Springboard classes to support pupils who may not achieve the appropriate level in mathematics in Year 6;
  - Breakfast club to ensure pupils have a good start to the day;
  - Teaching assistants to ensure pupils with special educational need are given appropriate support.

Since the appointment of the headteacher, the school is confident that it applies the best value principles of comparison, challenge, consultation and competition in its decision making.

77. The school is effectively organised to ensure it works well from day to day. It has a well thought through management structure and the senior management team and teachers with key posts of responsibility carry out their duties effectively. The school administration is very good and parents comment on the warm and helpful welcome they receive. The school is using new technology well; for example, the system for keeping the school's finances, data on pupils' attainment including attendance and the new interactive whiteboards in classrooms.
78. The school is currently short of qualified staff. The number of teachers and teaching assistants is barely adequate for the number of pupils but this will be redressed when the appointment of staff, including the new deputy headteacher take up their appointments in September. Teachers and teaching assistants regularly update their skills through regular in-service training and other forms of professional development. The accommodation is spacious. A programme of redecoration is in place and those areas which have been refreshed are bright, clean and attractive to pupils, with interesting displays on the walls and in classrooms. Other parts of the school are looking worn but there has been speculation that new buildings will replace the oldest part of the school in return for major developments in the town and the governing body has wisely decided not to spend money on parts of the school that may be replaced. Teachers use the space effectively to interest and motivate their pupils with bright displays of pupils' work and artefacts related to learning, although there are few related to other cultures. There are good facilities for outdoor play throughout the school. Resources are satisfactory overall although the library is poorly positioned and has insufficient books, both in range and quantity.
79. There has been a significant improvement in the leadership and management of the school since the last inspection.

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

80. The school should:
- (1) raise standards in English, mathematics and science by:
    - improving the quality of teaching;
    - ensuring consistent application of the school's policies;
    - addressing the subject weaknesses identified in the report.
 (paragraphs 89-107) (identified by the school)
  - (2) raise attainment in art, geography, history, music, physical education and religious education by:
    - improving the quality of teaching;
    - ensuring consistent application of the school's policies;
    - addressing the subject weaknesses identified in the report.
 (paragraphs 108-112, 118-122, 123-127, 134-138, 139-144, 145-149)
  - (3) improve attendance by:
    - reviewing procedures to encourage full attendance by pupils;
    - reviewing procedures for those who are no longer on the register as a result of moving schools.
 (paragraph 19)
  - (4) improve teaching to be consistently good across the school by:
    - continuing the programme of monitoring and support with particular reference to the known weaknesses in subjects.
 (paragraphs 21-31) (identified by the school)
- provide pupils with more opportunities to learn about cultures other than their own.  
(paragraph 47)

## **Minor issues**

Use computers in classrooms more often to consolidate pupils' skills in all subjects.  
(paragraph 131)

Inform parents of what homework their children should do, how much time should be given to it and when it should be returned.  
(paragraph 34)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	69
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	42

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	5	9	20	31	3	1	0
Percentage	7	13	29	45	4	2	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	16	175
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	65

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	62

#### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	6

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	32
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	48

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.1
National comparative data	5.6

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.9
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)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	15	14	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	6	5	10
	Girls	11	9	12
	Total	17	14	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	59 (55)	48 (52)	76 (79)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	6	10	6
	Girls	11	12	11
	Total	17	22	17
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	59 (55)	76 (85)	59 (64)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2001	14	20	34

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	4	2	4
	Girls	8	3	9
	Total	12	5	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	35 (53)	15 (53)	38 (73)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	2	4	5
	Girls	1	3	4
	Total	3	7	9
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	10 (37)	22 (40)	29 (83)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	0
Indian	1
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	3
Chinese	0
White	151
Any other minority ethnic group	3

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

### **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	26	2
Other minority ethnic groups	1	0

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

### **Teachers and classes**

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18.22
Average class size	25

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

Total number of education support staff	16
Total aggregate hours worked per week	251

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	31
Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32
Number of pupils per FTE adult	10.3

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2001-02
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	£
Total income	622,423
Total expenditure	591,065
Expenditure per pupil	2,365
Balance brought forward from previous year	39,764
Balance carried forward to next year	71,122

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	9
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	8
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	192
Number of questionnaires returned	31

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	58	32	10	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	65	23	10	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	35	55	3	3	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	48	26	16	3	6
The teaching is good.	68	29	0	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	55	39	3	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	77	10	10	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	74	26	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	42	48	0	3	6
The school is well led and managed.	68	19	0	3	10
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	58	35	3	3	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	26	55	10	3	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**

81. There are three groups of Foundation Stage children at Marshlands; 23 three-year-olds in the afternoon nursery, 11 four-year-olds in the morning nursery and 17 four and five-year-olds in the Reception/Year 1 class. As they enter the main school the children's prior attainment is well below average as measured by the East Sussex Baseline Scheme (in the lowest 5%). This is confirmed by the language screening section of Surestart Baseline 2001. The group's attainment is again very low, with five out of six children below, well below or significantly delayed when compared with the norm. One further factor needs to be taken into account, namely that most, if not all, of the high ability nursery children do not transfer into the reception class. This situation is the same as reported at the time of the last inspection. Therefore, in spite of making satisfactory and, at times, good progress in the nursery, the majority of the under fives in reception will not achieve the Early Learning Goals of the foundation curriculum by the time they leave the reception class. Attainment overall, is therefore judged as being well below the levels expected, although children with special needs and those who are learning English as an additional language make good progress as they are very well supported in both classes.
82. The co-ordinator gives a satisfactory lead. She has taken over complete leadership of this subject instead of sharing the role as previously. There is no policy but the curriculum is planned according to the Foundation Stage document. The weakness in the delivery of the curriculum is that children in the reception class are not given sufficient time to explore and experiment, to choose and become independent in their learning. There are also weaknesses in the range of regularly offered creative activities. The nursery teacher has left and the nursery is currently very well led by the nursery nurse under the guidance of the co-ordinator (reception teacher). The nursery nurse is enthusiastic and shows total commitment in everything she does and the children respond positively to her. Planning is done jointly. The nursery curriculum is based on play activities in which the children have a degree of choice while that in reception is more based upon play type activities directed by the teacher. This restricts the opportunities for children to develop their skills of independence. Assessment is ongoing in both classes and teachers use their knowledge of the children to plan the following week's activities. In both classes all the adults make very positive relationships with all the children. They quickly build up trust and they ensure that at every available moment they interact with the children at work or at play, in order to develop children's language. Resources are good, well cared for and well used. Currently the co-ordinator does not monitor teaching.

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

83. Children in the nursery make good progress in this area of learning due largely to the good teaching and excellent relationships the adults have with each other and with the children. The adults model courtesy and helpfulness and this encourages the children to try to be like their teachers. Staff encourage independence by allowing children to take registers to the office, ensuring that they undress, and with help, dress themselves for physical activities or for going outside and also by providing a curriculum that gives them choice over their activities for most of the time. Children are motivated to persevere and concentrate by the interesting range of activities on offer; for example, making cakes, planting seeds and counting scoops of coloured water into different size containers. Good manners and social behaviour are the focus of the daily story and snack times when children sit to eat, put away their own rubbish and wash their hands when they are finished. Reception children continue to develop independence (they can dress and do up buttons) and the relationship between them and their teacher is such that their confidence continues to build enabling them to try hard with their learning. The planned curriculum gives many opportunities for them to play together and co-operate in tasks, such as when two girls play with doll's house furniture and are joined by two others who are welcomed in and given furniture to use. Children with special needs and those who are learning English as an additional language are fully included in all activities and are very well supported. They make good progress.

## **Communication, language and literacy**

84. Progress is satisfactory in this area and for those children with special needs and those who are learning English as an additional language, it is good. In both the nursery and reception, teaching is good and the adults extend children's language well. They talk with children at every opportunity, extending language through every activity and into all curriculum areas. Children are encouraged to listen carefully, to respond to adults' questions and to join in discussions. One example in the nursery was when fruit was given out at snack time and an assistant said, "I don't like oranges"; the child replied, "What do you like then?" "I like pears best" and the conversation continued for some time with all adults and children joining in. In reception, children listen well in music and physical education and enjoy joining in with rhymes and songs. Whilst making up a puzzle picture of houses one child was asked what he would like to live in. He replied, "A boat" and when asked why he said, "It's nice on a boat. You can jump in the water and move about". Structured activities in both classes enable children to practise writing skills and to start to recognise their names. The nursery has a writing table where children go by choice to write labels for things they have made, such as the seat for the teacher. In reception, children in the role-play area write labels for their café and are helped to sound out the words they want to write, learning about initial sounds as they play. Children read books at regular reading times in both classes and all adults support the children ensuring that they turn pages carefully. They help them to read from left to right and question their understanding of the story, using both pictures and sounds to work out the words. Children read to adults weekly in school and are encouraged to take books home. Although children are making satisfactory progress in reading and writing, only a few will achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of reception because of the low level from which they started; for example, the child with above average reading rating in Marshlands is only at the average level nationally.

## **Mathematical development**

85. Progress in mathematical understanding is satisfactory as a result of the overall satisfactory teaching. In both nursery and reception, teachers ask children to count at every opportunity; for example, when sorting beads in the nursery they count to 10 or 14 or 20+ according to ability; when scooping water into containers they count to 5 or 6. In the nursery, the teacher labelled the bikes with numbers to 6 and then organised numbered parking bays. The children parked their bikes unaided, showing number recognition to 6. Nursery children play with shapes and draw pictures of bikes and tricycles using these two-dimensional shapes. They can identify a square and circle. In reception, when building blocks of flats or putting pegs into pegboards, the small group of higher attaining children count and recognise the symbols to 20+. These children can also add numbers to 10 and take away from 10, 15 and 20. They know all the basic two-dimensional shapes by name and have a vocabulary of mathematical words such as bigger/smaller, taller/shorter. The majority of children however, are working at a much lower level; for example, instead of recognising all the basic two-dimensional shapes most children recognise only one or two and their understanding of comparatives is poor. Children with special needs and those who are learning English as an additional language are very well supported and join fully in all the activities. They make good progress. Mathematical development is supported by regular use of number rhymes, stories and matching and sorting games. Most children are not on track to attain the Early Learning Goals by the time they leave reception.

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

86. Children make satisfactory progress in this area when in lessons. Many activities are provided in school which are similar to those they experience outside school; for example, role-play in the house when one child rings an imaginary bell saying, "ding dong, ding dong". The other child opens the door and child 1 says, "Thank you." A focus on homes in reception enables children to compare different types of home and talk about their home and where they would like to live. In both nursery and reception, teachers ensure that children learn about time through a daily focus on the day of the week; "What do we do on Tuesday?"(nursery) and "Which day comes after Tuesday?"(reception). Nursery children discuss their knowledge of bikes and tricycles as they work on the various activities provided on the theme. Reception children show knowledge of shops as they open and close and stock shelves. Computers are well used in the nursery for number (matching and counting games). In reception, children are learning to input data and to

create pictograms. Mouse control is good by the time they are in reception. Both groups of children use the outside area and they have experience of the passing seasons and changing weather as teachers ask why they can't go out today (it is cold and wet). They also watch plants and flowers growing in the small garden, at times planting their own seeds and watering them to ensure they grow. They begin to understand a little about the science of cooking as they mix and weigh ingredients to make cakes and then see the difference the heat makes as the cakes cook. In all these activities the teachers and support staff in both classes ensure that they challenge children to think by asking questions and drawing children into discussions about everything they do. Children with special needs and those who are learning English as an additional language are fully included in everything that happens and are well supported by the teaching assistants. They make good progress. Interaction between adults and children is of a very high quality and gives the children the best possible chance of learning. In spite of teaching which is always satisfactory and at times very good, the majority of children are not on track to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the time they leave the reception class.

### **Physical development**

87. Children's physical development is good and most will achieve the Early Learning Goals by the time they leave the reception class. This development is supported both in class and outside by well planned activities and good adult interaction. Both nursery and reception children have regular use of the outside play area where they learn to control their own bodies (running/rolling up and down hill) and manipulate large equipment such as bicycles (parking in a specific bay), see-saws, tricycles and scooters. They develop hand control by using large balls as they throw and catch and they also play football, with an adult as goalkeeper, learning to kick in a particular direction. In physical education sessions, these skills are refined by games where they change direction, move in different ways at different speeds and learn to move in space without bumping into one another. Finer hand control is developed by many in class activities such as painting, drawing, threading beads, putting pegs into pegboards, manipulating dough to make wheels, building with small and large bricks to make buildings and mixing up cake mixture. As in all other areas of learning children with special needs and those who are learning English as an additional language work alongside their peers and make good progress.

### **Creative development**

88. Children's creative development is unsatisfactory overall as seen during the inspection. In the nursery, children have opportunities to draw and to paint but no large painting was observed and no regular painting tables or easels set out for children to choose. Collage, cutting and sticking and printing to make a picture of a bicycle was observed, as was flour and water paste modelling of bicycle wheels. Early close observational skills are encouraged as children are asked to draw the bicycle that is in the classroom. Teachers give good opportunities for children to act out life situations in the role-play area and they begin to play collaboratively when buying and selling shoes. In musical development children sing most days, learning simple songs and rhymes and joining in the snack time song with gusto. They begin to play on instruments in class music sessions and start to identify tempo (fast and slow). No music table was observed where children could choose to go to explore sounds. In reception, children continue to develop drawing skills, drawing twigs and 'flowers' from close observation. Little other art activity was seen during the inspection, no regular painting, colour mixing or experimenting with textures. Musical development in reception is sound. Children learn about untuned percussion instruments, what they are called and the sounds they make. They learn to identify loud and soft sounds and slow and fast music (dynamic and tempo). They begin to put sounds to stories to represent feelings or characters (early composition). They sing songs tunefully and learn about rhythm and beat. No teaching about composers or artists was observed. On the available evidence it is judged that many children will not achieve the Early Learning Goals for this area by the time they leave reception. Children with special needs and those who are learning English as an additional language are making satisfactory progress and are well supported.

## **ENGLISH**

89. From a low starting point, pupils achieve well and make broadly average progress over time but standards in reading, writing and speaking and listening remain well below those found in most schools for both seven and eleven-year-olds. There has been an upward trend in the results for reading particularly for the seven-year-olds. Since the arrival of the new headteacher, steady improvement has been noted in the number of pupils expected to achieve average levels, but many higher attaining pupils could achieve more. Pupils with special educational needs are identified early and embark on well-structured literacy programmes with realistic short-term targets. Most make good progress through skilfully organised and focused support by the designated staff. This good quality support boosts their self-esteem as well as enhancing their skills. Pupils who are learning English as an additional language are supported well and consequently, they make good progress in developing their vocabulary and skills in grammar. Improving standards in all aspects of English has been a major focus of the school. An intensive reading programme, 'Blitz', is a good example of some of the successful initiatives used to raise standards. The National Literacy Strategy is well established. Teachers understand the basic structure in detail and use the recommended pattern in most lessons.
90. Bearing in mind pupils' limited starting points, their progress in speaking and listening is generally satisfactory. Most pupils listen carefully to teachers and each other, follow instructions without fuss and contribute positively in discussions. Pupils' listening skills are better developed than their speaking skills. In a few lessons, speaking skills are well promoted but there are missed opportunities by most teachers to engage pupils in extended conversations. For younger pupils, small group work provides opportunities for adults to act as good language models and to encourage pupils to express themselves clearly. However, a restricted vocabulary means that many six and seven-year-olds are imprecise and hesitant in producing answers, which keeps the overall level of attainment well below that expected. In the juniors, pupils' vocabulary is extended further and they begin to use more complex and grammatically accurate sentences. Pupils' own reading, and the teachers' use of subject-related vocabulary in class discussions, plays an important part in this development. Pupils listen well to the teachers' advice and some demonstrate growing confidence to interact and make active contributions to class discussions, opinions and ideas about stories and poems. This was noted in a Year 6 lesson where pupils considered the style of a poet and investigated the use of dialect in a poem, 'The Masai Girls'. However, most pupils are hesitant when speaking to the class or in a formal situation. The teacher in this lesson encourages pupils to write in the style of the poet and tape record their recitations, to be shared and enjoyed by all. There are too few planned opportunities, such as drama or debate, to enable pupils to speak at length and to use a variety of expression and vocabulary.
91. Standards in reading are well below the expected levels. In Years 1 and 2, a few pupils have progressed beyond simple reading scheme books with very basic vocabulary and sentence structures. Pupils acquire adequate knowledge of letters and sounds to read words and to establish meaning. A few higher attaining pupils read accurately and predict what might happen next. They understand the structure of the books and know about the content page or the index. The lower attaining pupils are beginning to recognise some words in familiar texts but wait for help rather than try and sound out unknown words for themselves.
92. The range of reading material is extended as the children move into the juniors. Pupils read with increasing fluency and accuracy where teachers make regular checks and keep track of pupils' progress in reading. However, a few older pupils choose reading books that are often too hard for them. As a result they struggle and lose interest and this affects their progress. Pupils talk about favourite authors with interest but a lack of well-planned opportunities for the higher attaining pupils to read a challenging range of books in lessons limits their critical appreciation. While lower-attaining pupils still interpret their reading literally, a few average and higher attaining pupils show a growing understanding of more complex language. Most pupils find it difficult to identify underlying meanings or appreciate the subtleties of humour. They are able to explain the difference between fiction and non-fiction and how 'contents' and 'indices' can point the way to specific information but rarely study non-fiction text. Pupils' ability to skim and scan, and make meaningful notes, is limited by insufficient use of reading skills to find information in subjects such as history, geography, and religious education. The school library is currently in a developmental stage. The process of home school reading is well established and has a positive effect on pupils' interest and progress, particularly in the infant classes. Pupils are encouraged to

take reading books home and the reading record books serve as a useful home-school link. However, this system is not consistently used in the juniors and many pupils lose the habit of regular reading at home. The degree to which this is encouraged varies from class to class. Where guided reading sessions are skilfully structured, pupils enjoy reading and achieve well. They show growing understanding of what they read and are fast developing a range of strategies to decipher words they find difficult. However, these sessions are not a regular enough feature of the literacy hour. Careful monitoring records kept by most teachers include clear and relevant information about pupils' strengths and weaknesses and these are used effectively to set individual reading targets.

93. Standards of writing are well below the expected level. In Years 1 and 2, pupils learn to form their letters correctly and write simple words and phrases but only higher-attaining pupils are able to write more than a few sentences without support or attempt words of several syllables. These pupils show that they can link their ideas in a sequence and use capital letters and full stops with a reasonable consistency. Few pupils, including the more able, spell well.
94. At the start of Year 3, only a few pupils write more than a few simple sentences. Able pupils are beginning to use more ambitious vocabulary and sentence structures while the least able find it difficult to develop a sequence of sentences. In the upper years, the range of writing increases appropriately to include poetry, diary and story writing. In an excellent lesson, pupils in Year 4 were well guided to write poetry using rhyming couplets. Pupils in Year 5 and 6 develop their writing at more length. However, opportunities for more extended writing, for example, biographies, reports or plays, are limited. Pupils are encouraged to use dictionaries, but many still make basic errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar. With the exception of a few pupils, the work lacks good presentation. Most pupils do not consistently use a joined script. Teachers' marking varies considerably. The best indicates how the writing could be improved and helps pupils focus on mistakes. However, in their pursuit of giving encouragement to pupils, poor quality work is praised and there is no indication of how it could be improved. Pupils editing skills are improving slowly. They are becoming more adept at indicating where vocabulary could be more adventurous. There is insufficient use of computers for word processing by pupils.
95. The teaching of English is satisfactory overall, with some good features, and this promotes satisfactory learning in lessons. In the best lessons, work is planned to ensure pupils' differing needs are met. Teachers make good use of resources in the whole-class part of the lesson and this is generally lively and stimulating. For example, in some classes, the teacher made effective use of the interactive whiteboard and this enhanced their teaching skills as well as capturing pupils' imagination. This practice effectively supports pupils' information and communication skills. Teachers are very encouraging and use praise positively so that pupils respond well and try hard in lessons. Their questioning is skilful and includes all pupils at an appropriate level. The final part of lessons is used well to reinforce learning or to give the pupils the chance to perform to an audience. A very good example of this was noted in a Year 1/2 lesson where pupils working on the story, 'The dragon who came to breakfast', revised their skills of asking and answering questions of one pupil dressed as a dragon. This enhanced pupils' learning and also gave teacher the chance to check that pupils of all abilities had understood. Classroom organisation is good and pupils are grouped appropriately. Teachers achieve a good balance between offering support and expecting independence. For example, in a good Year 2 lesson, expectations of work were made clear and pupils were well prepared for the task of using descriptive words to describe 'Cops and Robbers'. Where there are weaknesses, it is because there is insufficient interaction between teachers and pupils. In some lessons, teachers did most of the talking and pupils were not provided with opportunities to read aloud, answer questions and make suggestions with confidence.
96. The management of the subject is satisfactory. The two co-ordinators have clear direction and commitment to raising standards. There is appropriate forward planning based on clear understanding of strengths and weaknesses in the subject. They effectively carry out monitoring of teaching and learning. The procedures for assessing pupils' progress are good. The results of all tests are effectively analysed and used to set individual and class targets. Useful additions have been made to resources in classes to support the implementation of the literacy strategy. There are sufficient books of good quality, both fiction and non-fiction in the classrooms.

## MATHEMATICS

97. When pupils enter the school, attainment is very low. By the end of Year 6, when the pupils are eleven, standards have improved to well below average, indicating that progress over time is at least satisfactory. Although the school's records show that most pupils not on the register for special educational needs are making at least satisfactory progress over Key Stage 2, pupils are capable of higher standards. There are too few pupils working towards level 5, the level above that expected of pupils aged eleven. However, standards are improving and, in the current year, the proportion of pupils in Year 6 on track to attain level 4 is nearer half, a significant improvement upon the results in 2001. Nearly half the year group are on the register for special educational needs (nearly all at Stage 2) and they are making good progress. A larger proportion of pupils (about three-quarters) in Year 2 are on track to attain level 2, the level expected for pupils aged seven but there are still too few pupils attaining level 3. Nearly all the remaining pupils are on the register of special educational needs and they are making good progress. Pupils who are learning English as an additional language are supported well and they make good progress. Overall, standards in mathematics in the school are improving as better teaching and the new strategies, including target setting, 'springboard' and 'booster' classes and the adoption of the national numeracy initiative, take effect. Information and communication technology is used well in the classrooms with interactive white-boards but not all pupils have sufficient opportunities to use computers to develop their mathematical skills.
98. By the end of Year 6, there are many weaknesses and few strengths. The higher attaining pupils are confident that they know their tables but only the highest attaining pupils have quick mental recall. They do not have such quick recall of number bonds to 100. Pupils of all abilities lack strategies to add, subtract, multiply and divide two digit numbers such as  $2 \times 99$  and  $5 \times 99$ . They can work out the prime numbers but are unable to define what they are. The higher attaining pupils remember which is the numerator and which is the denominator in fractions but other pupils are unsure and they cannot work out which is the largest fraction when comparing  $\frac{1}{2}$ ,  $\frac{3}{4}$  and  $\frac{5}{6}$ . Pupils know how to calculate the perimeter of an object but they are less clear how to work out the area and volume. Their knowledge of triangles and their properties is weak as is their understanding of the number of degrees in a circle and in triangles.
99. By the end of Year 2, most pupils can identify numbers to 100 and count in twos, fives and tens. They recognise odd and even numbers to at least 30. The higher attaining pupils understand that subtraction is the inverse of addition and they realise that if  $3 + 4 = 7$  then  $30 + 40 = 70$ . They know that addition can be done in any order but not subtraction. Most pupils understand that halving is the inverse of doubling and that the operation of multiplication is repeated addition or as describing an array. Place value is not so well understood and the pupils' ability to use known number facts and place value to carry out mentally simple multiplications and divisions is not so well developed. Only the highest attaining pupils are able to choose and use appropriate operations and efficient calculation strategies to solve problems.
100. The standard of teaching is inconsistent through the school. It is satisfactory overall, although it ranges from poor to excellent. In the best lessons:
- Planning is very good with clear learning objectives shared with the pupils. These objectives are returned to at points in the lesson, particularly the end when pupils are given the opportunity to assess their own learning;
  - Relationships between teachers, teaching assistants and pupils are excellent. This enables pupils to work hard in an environment conducive to learning;
  - Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported by teachers and teaching assistants who work very well together, enabling pupils to progress well;
  - Time limits are used well to keep pupils focused on their tasks and to ensure learning continues at a fast pace;
  - Very good use is made of resources; for example, the interactive whiteboard and games such as bingo, to encourage all pupils to join in activities;
  - Teachers continually use praise to boost pupils' confidence; for example, a merit point for putting up a hand to answer a question;
  - Very good use of correct vocabulary; for example 'partitioning';
  - Excellent supervision of pupils' learning and assessments of their learning;

- Effective questioning is used to make pupils think; for example, 'How did you work that out? Can you show us please?'
- Teachers effectively include all pupils in the lesson. Planning takes account of the needs of pupils based on their prior learning and questioning is directed at individuals at a level that they can participate.

Where teaching is poor or unsatisfactory:

- Teachers have insufficient control to contain pupils' misbehaviour, which leads to unsatisfactory learning;
- Insufficient account is taken of resources; for example, a pupil was unable to see the board and therefore the examples set out on it;
- The main part of the lesson is too long. Pupils become bored and lose interest;
- Expectations of behaviour and work are too low resulting in insufficient learning;
- Work is planned at an inappropriate level and, as a result, some pupils are not sufficiently challenged.

101. In some lessons pupils' behaviour affects their learning. Classroom routines, self-control and attentive listening are not consistently taught in line with school policy and followed through. This contributes to low attainment.
102. The co-ordinator is new in post and has made a very good start in her role. She is a very good practitioner who sets a very good example to her colleagues. An appropriate action plan is in place and is being effectively implemented. The strategies that the school has put in place are an improvement since the previous inspection and are helping to raise standards in the subject. These have only been in place since the appointment of the new headteacher. Pupils are beginning to enjoy mathematics and, as a consequence, they are motivated to achieve better standards. However, the school is not making sufficient use of the computers in classrooms to help raise standards.

## SCIENCE

103. Although pupils' attainment is still well below the national average, there have been a number of improvements in the subject for example:
- Pupils investigate more methodically and regularly;
  - The quality of teaching is better and teachers have clear targets for pupils' learning;
  - The co-ordinator provides very good leadership and thoroughly checks teaching and learning;
  - Teachers are more aware of pupils' needs and plan accordingly;
  - Pupils with behavioural difficulties no longer interrupt the flow of lessons.
104. By the age of seven, pupils' attainment is well below average. However, in lessons, pupils sometimes work at an average or above average level. Moreover, pupils talk about science at a higher level, albeit still below average. They name parts of plants and birds' bodies and have a basic knowledge of what plants need. They compare the bodies of spiders and birds. They know that some materials cannot return to their original shape and state after heating. The more able know that elastic and string behave differently when stretched and released. They make simple electric circuits and know that pushes and pulls are involved where things move. Pupils' difficulties lie in retaining the knowledge they gain, using it to solve problems and communicating in writing. They cannot plan, obtain and present evidence. For example, in studying plant life, pupils' recording is limited to labelled drawings. Pupils cannot write simple sentences to describe their observations. They cannot explain their experiments with ramps involving surfaces with different materials.
105. By the age of eleven, pupils' attainment is well below average. They make predictions and recognise that thorough evidence is needed in investigations. Pupils quickly learn to use symbols in recording a variety of electric circuits. They explain the processes of evaporation and condensation and how these relate to the water cycle. Pupils are confident to discuss physical processes, such as magnetism and measuring forces. Their problems are very similar to those experienced by pupils aged seven. They cannot generate their own ideas for solving problems, or determine their own ways of gaining knowledge, using equipment and sources of information that

they have chosen. They are too reliant on their teacher and do not recognise where 'fair testing' is required. They list most of the major organs of the human body. The more able know the systems of which they are a part but are not sure about their functions. Only these pupils are secure about the parts of a plant and their functions and about food chains. Pupils cannot describe the processes of sieving and separating or explain saturation. They are also unsure about the movements of the earth and moon in relation to the sun and do not recognise friction.

106. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Lessons in classes for five to seven-year-olds vary from satisfactory to good and in classes for eight to eleven-year-olds from satisfactory to excellent. Overall, more than half the lessons in the school are good or better. Where teaching is particularly strong, teachers hold well-paced discussions. For example, in one lesson, the teacher recapped pupils' knowledge about skeletons and then used a range of resources to stimulate interest in explaining their function. These included computerised displays. Teachers prepare their lessons well, based on good subject knowledge. This benefited an experimental session to learn about electricity. A very good array of resources, together with clear explanations of the tasks, enabled pupils to develop a thorough understanding of how to set up different circuits. Teachers manage pupils well, so that very young pupils, for example, become thoroughly involved in learning about the qualities of different materials. Nevertheless, pupils' written work consistently shows low expectations of thinking and reasoning, as well as of accuracy and presentation. Some pupils' work is incomplete and not adequately marked, so that pupils do not know how to improve. Pupils with special needs and those who are learning English as an additional language are well supported and therefore make good progress.
107. The headteacher has responsibility for the subject. She provides very good leadership based on thorough knowledge of where there are strengths and points for development. She checks on teaching and learning through classroom observation and looking at pupils' work. She also works alongside teachers providing support to them and pupils. The school recognises the need to develop pupils' independence in investigation and to improve the quality of writing, so that science becomes a vehicle for developing literacy. It also recognises that planning does not always take into account the different needs of pupils and does not use opportunities to use numeracy or computers. The school's resources are very good and support a full range of experiments.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

108. Few lessons of art were seen during the inspection and so judgements are based upon analysis of art on display and in the portfolio, as well as by that seen in class. Currently standards at the end of Year 2 are satisfactory and at Year 6, unsatisfactory, which is not as good as at the time of the last inspection.
109. In the infant classes, pupils explore and create images and patterns using many different media, such as pencil (drawings), paint (pictures and print patterns), paper and fabric (collages), tissue paper with card (patterns) and they use computers to paint their own portraits. By the end of Year 6, skills needed for using these media have been developed but not to the required standard due mainly to a lack of systematic skills teaching and lack of subject knowledge by staff. Pupils have learned about the work of artists such as Haring, Matisse, Lowry and Miró and produced work in the style of these artists using varied media. They have discussed the sculpture, 'The Angel of the North' in preparation for making a sculpture of their own to go into the school grounds. All pupils use sketchbooks but this use is relatively recent and there is no evidence of them being used for skills practice as yet. Pupils with special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language are fully included in the art lessons and are very well supported by teachers and support staff. They make satisfactory progress.
110. Pupils' attitudes to art are good, which is a contributory factor in their learning. They are interested and always keen to try out new techniques though they sometimes become frustrated when their lack of skills inhibits the result they want to achieve. They listen very well as teachers explain about different artists and techniques and they persevere when trying to do work in a particular style.

111. Art teaching is good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. In the best lessons, teachers prepare thoroughly and plan sessions, which are intriguing, using artefacts or pictures to stimulate pupils' interest. They are aware of the language of art and succeed in explaining it to the pupils. These teachers ensure that all parts of the lesson are timed and that pupils lose no opportunity to learn. They control with a light touch often using humour to defuse potential problems. Weaker teaching is due to a slack pace where time is lost and to a lack of subject expertise.
112. At the time of the inspection there was no art co-ordinator and this role was being overseen by the new headteacher. The curriculum for art needs reviewing. At the moment it is broad and balanced but neither skills development nor specific language are included. The headteacher is about to introduce a curriculum, skills based and including language, which was prepared by the former co-ordinator but never put into practice. There is a need for staff development and already one teacher has been sent on a four-day course for this purpose. Resources for art are very good. There is a new display policy, which is beginning to improve the school environment as pupils' work is celebrated. ICT is another weakness within art, particularly in desk-top publishing and the use of graphics as pupils do not have sufficient time to develop learnt skills. The headteacher gives a satisfactory lead. There is soon to be a new arts centre built on site, which will greatly enhance the school's provision and will also forge stronger links with the community who will share use.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

113. At the time of the previous inspection standards were satisfactory by the end of Year 2 and unsatisfactory by the end of Year 6, the major weakness being a lack of skills teaching which inhibited progress. The situation changed little until the appointment of the new headteacher. Since then, with the appointment of a new co-ordinator, the profile of design and technology is changing. Standards are now satisfactory at both Year 2 and Year 6, which is an improvement and, within that, there are some pieces of work which are of good quality; for example, umbrellas.
114. Progress in designing and making skills is satisfactory overall. By Year 2, pupils have made dragons from junk, cutting, sticking, painting and pinning, toys from commercial kits, model carts from junk using wheels and axles and they have designed and made felt hand puppets. Pupils in Year 4 link science with technology when they make night-lights and electrify them. By Year 6, they have made workable umbrellas, which are tested to keep out the wet, and slippers in various materials. At all stages the pupils design, plan, make and test. They then evaluate, either verbally or in writing. Pupils with special needs and those who are learning English as an additional language are fully included in these lessons and are frequently supported by a teaching assistant. They make good progress.
115. Pupils enjoy this subject, coming to each lesson with enthusiasm and working hard at all the given tasks, persevering where necessary. They are able to collaborate and are often helpful to one another, making suggestions for improvement or for choice of resource. Attitudes and relationships are satisfactory and sometimes good and this enhances the pupils' learning. ICT is not well used to research designs.
116. Only two lessons were seen during the inspection. The quality of teaching in those lessons was satisfactory overall. In the most effective lesson, the planning and use of resources was both thorough and motivational, the teacher was enthusiastic for the subject, encouraged pupils to make choices and set high expectations of both behaviour and work rate, all of which resulted in high quality work from the pupils.
117. The co-ordinator has been actively in charge since September 2001. She is an expert and an enthusiast for the subject. She has already developed a new scheme of work, which includes suggestions for the progressive teaching of skills, and she has fully resourced the subject, organising those resources into easily accessible topic boxes, which relate to cross-curricular themes. Colleagues are supported via planning and the co-co-ordinator has recently made a start on assessing what pupils have learnt at the end of each block of work, though this is not yet fully implemented. Currently she is not able to monitor delivery in classes but there is to be a design

and technology week when she will be able to teach with colleagues in order to 'model' good practice and see what is happening. She gives good leadership.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

118. Only one lesson was observed. However, pupils' work was scrutinised and interviews held with pupils in Years 2 and 6.
119. Attainment at the age of seven is well below expectations. Pupils name a number of natural and man-made features around the school. They cannot describe them in detail or explain how they have changed over time. They say what they like or dislike about the place they live in but cannot explain why. Pupils find it difficult to talk about how weather affects people. They write briefly about their own town and use a simple local map. Otherwise, pupils have not learnt to communicate their observations, findings and views in writing.
120. Attainment at the age of eleven is well below expectations. Pupils define a country and name those in the United Kingdom. The more able define a continent and name most of the major ones. Pupils have some awareness of the effects of pollution on people's lives. They recall some of the geographical vocabulary associated with their recent study of rivers and describe the water cycle. However, pupils cannot define a county and their knowledge of their locality is very limited. They cannot describe the changes that have taken place in land use. They are not aware of how landscape affects the people's lives. As with the younger pupils, they have not learnt to communicate their observations, findings and views in writing. Moreover, pupils cannot carry out independent research to answer questions in depth.
121. It is not possible to make a judgement of the quality of teaching. However, pupils' work demonstrates a need for higher expectations of depth in writing. Increased use of literacy is in the school development plan. Marking lacks rigour, so that pupils are not aware of their inaccuracies and the need to work at their spelling and presentation. Pupils with special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language are supported well in lessons and this ensures they make good progress.
122. The curriculum meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. It is inclusive in enabling pupils to learn about different world communities. However, it rarely involves pupils in making simple maps or recording mathematically and on computers. The co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership. However, the school does not adequately check pupils' work. Plans to develop geography are in place in order to begin to make improvements.

## **HISTORY**

123. It was only possible to observe two lessons. However, pupils' work was scrutinised and an interview held with pupils in Year 6.
124. Attainment at the age of seven is well below expectations. Pupils do not have a clear understanding of the sequence of the months of the year nor know the name of the current month. More able pupils state the order of events such as the seasons. Pupils cannot record distinctions between their own lives and those of people in the past. Moreover, they cannot refer to different sources of evidence and use them to answer questions.
125. Attainment at the age of eleven is also well below expectations. Pupils have a basic knowledge of the chronology of different periods they have studied but cannot accurately relate them to centuries. Their ability to recall facts about Victorians is average but of other times is poor. Pupils have an average awareness of different sources of evidence and use them to carry out research, sometimes in order to answer their own questions. However, research is mainly about facts and rarely involves explaining or interpreting.
126. It is not possible to judge the quality of teaching. However, the evidence is that it is at least satisfactory and sometimes good in lessons. Where it is good, pupils discuss their knowledge of

the 'forties and modern times'; for example, in order to make comparisons. This is followed up by the use of well-prepared resources, including CD-ROMs, books and photographs so that pupils can carry out their own research. Questioning is skilful and includes all pupils. The main area for development throughout the school is writing. Teachers do not use literacy adequately as a vehicle for communication in history. There are low expectations of depth in thinking, of completion of work, presentation, accuracy and response to marking. Much marking is not helpful to pupils in making improvements. Pupils with special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language are well supported and make good progress.

127. The co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership. However, other managers need to work with him in checking the quality of pupils' work and assessing their knowledge and understanding. Planning does not take pupils' different needs into account, including those of pupils who could be working at a more advanced level. This does not help establish good behaviour where there are a significant number of pupils with behavioural difficulties. There are missed opportunities for developing interest through computer programs, music, drama and art. History has an established place in the sequence of plans for school development, once action is completed on English, mathematics and science. This is designed to make the necessary improvements.

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

128. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils attain standards that are close to those expected of pupils aged seven and eleven although where the work requires competent literacy skills, standards are not quite as high. Very few pupils attain above the standards expected even though a significant proportion have regular access to computers at home. Pupils achieve well. Pupils of all ages are keen to use the computers, which they do with confidence. Most pupils work well with a partner when using the computers, particularly in the computer suite.
129. By the age of seven, pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language, can use the mouse and keyboard confidently to load and run software. They talk knowledgeably about their work. They are able to design a picture using a painting program and they enter information into a database to produce a graph; for example of their favourite drink. They use a word processing program to re-tell a story, such as 'The Three Little Pigs'. Pupils are beginning to understand how ICT has advantages over other methods of communicating.
130. By the age of eleven, pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language, use ICT to help them in many subjects. Word processing is used to write poems and in doing so, pupils learn to locate and insert graphics into text. They learn about symmetry and learn to alter the size of their pictures. They learn to use the spell check when they design and create a concept map about food or animals. In Year 4, pupils learn to use LOGO to predict what a set of commands would do. By Year 5, pupils have learnt to use 'drawing' tools in a graphic package and to enter labels and numbers into a spreadsheet. Year 6 pupils use a graphics package to copy work of an artist. They use more advanced data packages and they learn to create and enter information into a table. They have opportunities to use electronic mail and they use the Internet to research information; for example to help them design a home page for their own multi-media presentation. However, overall, pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to develop the skills they have learnt and use them in other contexts.
131. Teaching and learning is at least satisfactory throughout the school. It is sometimes good and, occasionally, very good with the consequence that pupils are making at least satisfactory progress; often it is better. Teachers have undergone training through use of the New Opportunities Fund and feel confident to teach pupils appropriate skills. The school has adopted the nationally recommended scheme of work that sets out clearly what pupils are expected to learn. The school has invested heavily in equipment including four interactive whiteboards. It has a well-appointed ICT suite with sufficient computers for a class to use with two pupils per computer. In addition, there is at least one computer in every classroom but these are not made sufficient use of to develop pupils' skills across the curriculum, particularly in literacy and mathematics.

132. In the best lessons:
- Teachers make clear the learning objectives to pupils in language they understand;
  - At the beginning of the lesson they revise the learning from the previous week;
  - The teacher demonstrates on the computer what the task is to ensure pupils understand what they have to do, ensuring that the pupils can see;
  - Pupils are given time limits to complete their work, thereby ensuring a brisk pace to their learning;
  - Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language, are supported as they work in pairs to ensure they complete the task;
  - Effective questioning, particularly at the end of the lesson ensures that all pupils benefit from other pupils' findings;
  - The correct vocabulary is used; for example 'icons', 'web site', 'home page'.

Minor weaknesses that occurred in satisfactory lessons include:

- Insufficient attention to the learning objectives which meant that the pupils were unable to make assessments of their learning at the end of the lesson;
- Insufficient demonstration of the task to the pupils before they start.

133. Curriculum leadership is good. The subject leader has been in post for nearly two years. She is enthusiastic and competent in her ICT skills. The school has an appropriate action plan, which is being effectively implemented. Staff expertise has improved as a result of training and the scheme of work is in place based on the nationally recommended scheme. The co-ordinator has devised a method of recording assessments of pupils' attainment and three teachers are currently using this in a trial before all the staff are asked to use it. Standards in ICT have improved since the last inspection and particularly since the appointment of the new headteacher.

## **MUSIC**

134. Standards have not changed since the previous inspection. By the end of Year 2, attainment is satisfactory but this is not sustained and by the end of Year 6 pupils' attainment is below the expected level for their age. The exception however is singing. All ages sing sweetly in tune and with excellent rhythm holding the melody line even when the adult does not! Singing is a strength within music.
135. In Years 1 and 2, pupils explore pace and volume in music as they listen and sing. They experience early composition as they choose instruments to represent sounds and movements. They learn about beat and rhythm by both clapping and playing instruments following a conductor. They sing with good rhythm and in tune whenever given the opportunity. They can identify many untuned percussion instruments, such as maracas, shakers, Indian bells, go-go, tambourine and tambour, and they learn other facts/names such as gyro, claves, and xylophone. By Year 6, composition and other skills, including knowing and using the correct musical language, have not been sufficiently developed. Pupils did not know what composition was when asked, although they remembered doing something like it 'in the infants.' Listening and appraising skills are not well developed although Year 6 pupils are working on them now. Apart from singing, which is good throughout the school, there was no opportunity during the inspection to hear pupils performing and no junior pupils were seen playing instruments. It is therefore not possible to comment on their skills in this area.
136. All pupils are keen to participate in music, which is an improvement on the findings at the last inspection. They long to play the instruments and are often frustrated when the pace of the lesson is slow and they do not have sufficient time. They concentrate and try hard to remember the names of the instruments and the details of composers whose music they are hearing. Attitudes and behaviour are good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6.
137. Music is taught by each class teacher to his or her own class. The quality of the teaching is good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. In the best lessons, teachers set a challenging pace of work and have high expectations of what pupils will achieve. They waste no time, ensuring that all pupils learn something new and, where appropriate, that they get to play

instruments, so developing their musical abilities. Most staff are not expert musicians and it is this lack of expertise which accounts for the unsatisfactory nature of the learning by the end of Year 6. Most staff plan thoroughly and in the best lessons pupils make progress in all areas of music but in other lessons lack of subject knowledge means that specific language is not used and specific skills are not perfected. Teachers do not assess and music lessons are not based upon knowledge of what pupils already know. Pupils with special needs and those who are learning English as an additional language are fully included in lessons and well supported by teachers and teaching assistants.

138. The music curriculum is planned to cover all aspects of music and includes the regular development of skills. However, teaching of skills is not a regular feature of lessons particularly in the junior classes. Computers are not used enough to help develop skills. The co-ordinator is new to this responsibility and admits she is not an expert although she is confident with music, especially with Years 1 and 2. She plans a full audit of staff needs in order to raise standards. She is also auditing resources, which currently lack a multicultural element and she is aware that there are very few books about music in the library. She has prepared a new policy for music that has yet to go to governors for adoption and there is an action plan. There is no direct systematic monitoring or assessment, although both are in the action plan. The co-ordinator says there is a long way to go. She gives satisfactory leadership. The choir (extra-curricular) is a very strong support to singing in school and takes part in community activities such as the opening of the new community centre. The only other additional learning opportunity is the violin lessons taken by a few pupils. Visits from theatre groups and musicians support the curriculum.

### **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

139. It was not possible to see all elements of physical education and no gymnastics was seen. Therefore judgements have been made from lesson observations, discussions with teachers and pupils and from school records. By the end of Year 2, pupils attain standards close to those expected of pupils aged seven. By the end of Year 6, pupils attain standards that are close to those expected of pupils aged eleven in games but attainment is below the standards expected in dance and swimming. These standards are similar to those reported at the last inspection.
140. By the end of Year 2, pupils have developed an awareness of space and can run around the hall without bumping into others. They are developing appropriate skills in propelling balls with hands and feet with reasonable accuracy and they are beginning to develop the ability to catch balls of various sizes. They are developing an awareness of others and the need to take turns, such as in relays. Pupils understand that exercise affects heart rate.
141. By the end of Year 6, pupils attain below the levels that are typical for their age in dance and swimming. In dance, pupils have insufficient poise and quality in their movement. They are not naturally aware of the need to plan movements at different heights nor can they quickly determine that the pace of the music has changed and the need to adapt their movements to the music. However, the pupils work well together in pairs and they concentrate well in devising movements to fit the music. In athletics, a significant proportion of pupils have not developed a good style for throwing a ball for distance and accuracy and they still have to develop appropriate skills to jump for distance. Swimming lessons are provided for pupils in Years 3 and 4 during the spring term. As a result of this limited programme, very few pupils can swim the expected minimum distance of 25 metres unaided. This is unsatisfactory and does not meet statutory requirements. Pupils' understanding of the benefits of exercise is limited although pupils can satisfactorily explain why there is a need to warm up before heavy exercise and what one should do afterwards to cool down.
142. In the lessons observed, teaching was satisfactory overall. It ranged from unsatisfactory to excellent. Pupils with special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language are fully included, well supported and they make similar progress to other pupils.
143. In the best lessons learning is very good:
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils in behaviour, concentration and performance; for example, the emphasis given to the quality of movement;

- The pace of the lesson is excellent with no time unused. Numeracy skills are developed whilst pupils change;
- The teacher effectively uses questioning to ensure pupils are involved in making decisions;
- Vocabulary to develop literacy skills is emphasised; for example in dance, 'scary', 'soft', 'small' and 'fast';
- Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported and participate fully in activities;
- Pupils' moral and social development are promoted well through emphasis on playing to rules and working in small groups or 'teams'.

Where teaching is unsatisfactory:

- Learning objectives are not shared with the pupils so they are unable to assess their own learning;
- Pupils who are not on task and misbehaving are ignored for too long by the teacher. This affects the quality of learning, which is unsatisfactory overall;
- There is insufficient use of demonstrations to clarify expectations of skills to be achieved or to praise those who have achieved the requisite skills;
- Tasks are insufficiently challenging leading to unsatisfactory learning;
- Where pupils' behaviour is corrected, there is no reference to the school code to reinforce expectations and, therefore, it has insufficient impact.

144. Leadership is unsatisfactory. Attainment is not high enough and there has been insufficient attention given to improving the weaknesses identified at the last inspection. The subject manager has an action plan which is being slowly implemented. The pupils have several opportunities during the year to participate in extra-curricular activities. The school runs some after-school clubs such as football, which are beneficial to the pupils' learning of skills. They participate in a wide range of tournaments organised by the local community sports college, such as hockey, basketball, athletics, football, rugby and netball which also help to raise standards of attainment. Accommodation is good and resources are sufficient although inflatable balls had insufficient air in them to be of use in improving pupils' skills. Teachers make little use of computers.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

145. Only two lessons were observed, both of them in the junior part of the school. However, pupils' work was scrutinised and a representative number of pupils, aged seven and eleven, were interviewed. Improvement since the last inspection has not been satisfactory.
146. At the age of seven, pupils' attainment is well below the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus. They have a basic knowledge of Christmas and Easter, but cannot retell a story from the Bible or state anything about Jesus and what he taught. They have no awareness of what Christians believe or what a church is like and do not seek to answer any religious questions.
147. At the age of eleven, pupils' attainment is still well below expectations. They have progressed in their understanding of what Jesus taught. Some of the more able state some of the features of a Christian church, as well as their symbolic meaning and purpose. They have begun to ask questions such as, 'What happens when we die?' and 'What does God look like?' However, they are not secure about the details of Christmas and Easter and are still unable to recount stories from the Bible. In spite of having been taught about Islam, Hinduism and Judaism, their recall of facts is very limited indeed. Pupils show little ability to write at length, except in Year 4, where they retell the miracle story of the loaves and fishes.
148. Too few lessons were seen to judge the quality of teaching observed. They, together with the work scrutiny, give evidence that expectations are not always high, especially in relation to writing. At seven, pupils' work is mainly limited to drawings or labels, so that they have no way of showing their interest in Florence Nightingale, for example. Much of the older pupils' work is factual, although what is written is in pupils' own words, such as retelling stories from different religions. Some teachers inappropriately praise poor work and allow pupils to leave work

uncompleted. Pupils with special needs and those who are learning English as an additional language are fully included in lessons. When fully supported they make good progress.

149. The curriculum meets the requirements of the local syllabus. It is inclusive in referring to a range of religions and their practices. The teacher with responsibility for the subject provides satisfactory leadership, but curriculum managers do not ensure that teaching and learning are thoroughly assessed. Opportunities are missed to bring the subject to life with good resources, including computers, as well as with activities such as drama and music. Consequently, pupils do not show interest in the subject and this restricts their learning.