

INSPECTION REPORT

ALBURY C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Ware

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117419

Headteacher: Mr S P Fanthorpe

Reporting inspector: John Heap
18824

Dates of inspection: 4 – 6 March 2002

Inspection number: 197331

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 3-11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Church End
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Appropriate authority: Hertfordshire

Name of chair of governors: Mr D Gibson

Date of previous inspection: 8 September 1997

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18824	J Heap	Registered inspector	Mathematics English Art Geography History Physical education	What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements How well pupils are taught? How well school is led and managed?
9370	R Wingrove	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes values and personal developments How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does school work in partnership with parents?
11510	K Oglesby	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Design and technology Music	Curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils
24091	E M Shaw	Team inspector	Equal opportunities Special educational needs English as an additional language	
31177	M Mangan	Team inspector	Foundation Stage	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Albury Church of England Primary school serves pupils aged three to 11 years from a social background that shows very few signs of deprivation. Most pupils live in the village or in nearby villages, but some come from farther afield, including the nearest large town of Bishops Stortford. There are 51 pupils on roll 24 boys and 27 girls. The school is much smaller than the average primary school in England and Wales. The majority of pupils are white and the proportion of pupils from ethnic minority families is well below the national average. Seventeen pupils (35 per cent) are on the register of special educational needs and this is broadly in line with the national average. Two pupils (4 per cent) have a Statement of Special Educational Need and this is above the national average. The proportion of pupils (2 per cent) entitled to a free school meal is much lower than the national average. The levels of attainment of children entering the reception class are mixed, but generally they are above average. There are two classes in the school and both have mixed ages. However, there are a greater number of teaching groups, particularly in the morning, with a three-year-old group, reception, Years 1 and 2, Years 3 and 4 and Years 5 and 6.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school. Its strengths far outweigh the areas for development and this is recognised by an interested and informed group of parents. Overall, pupils achieve well and attain the standards that they should. Teaching is good, but there are areas to develop, particularly in the classes for three to seven-year-olds. Overall, the school's provision and practices ensure that each pupil benefits equally from what the school offers. Leadership and management are good. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- By the age of eleven, pupils' attainment and achievement are good, overall.
- In Years 3 to 6, the quality of teaching and learning is good.
- Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are very good.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
- The provision for and progress of pupils with special educational needs are good.
- Leadership and management are good.

What could be improved

- In reception and Years 1 and 2, lesson planning is unsatisfactory because the learning intentions are insufficiently clear.
- In English, average and lower attaining pupils' skills in spelling are below what they ought to be. Pupils do not have sufficient skills to use the library well enough.
- Achievement in history and geography is unsatisfactory.
- The accommodation is unsatisfactory and restricts the curriculum in physical education.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good improvement since the last inspection in September 1997. In relation to the key issues identified, there has been:

- good improvement in the use and application of information and communication skills in other subjects, which has led to good improvement in pupils' attainment;
- very good improvement in the setting up of policies and schemes of work in all subjects and in the development of assessment and recording of pupils' attainment and progress;
- good improvement in the curriculum for children who are under five and satisfactory improvement in the teaching for them;
- good improvement in design and technology standards.

The overall quality of teaching has improved satisfactorily and standards in English, mathematics and science are better than they were.

STANDARDS

Owing to the small number of pupils aged seven and 11, it would be inappropriate to look at percentage proportions of pupils' attainment in national tests. This is because each pupil would equate to as much as 25 per cent and would give an unclear comparison with schools where there are many more pupils.

However, some guidance and analysis is possible when looking at the trends in results over the last three years. In that time, standards for seven-year-olds exceeded the national average in reading and writing. Standards in mathematics fell below average. The results in 2001 show an improving picture. Eleven-year-olds, in the same period, produced results that exceeded the national average in English, mathematics and science. Results in 2001 were broadly similar. The overall trend in these results is broadly in line with the national trend.

Overall, pupils are achieving the standards expected and those with special educational needs are making good progress in relation to their prior levels of attainment. This is particularly due to the challenging targets set for them in their individual education plans.

By the ages of seven and 11, standards seen during the inspection are above expectations in English and mathematics and in line with expectations in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, information and communication technology and music. Standards in science are in line with expectations by the age of seven and above expectations by the age of 11 years. There is insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement about physical education.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are keen, enthusiastic and like their school very much.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. There have been no exclusions in recent years.
Personal development and relationships	Overall, good. By the age of 11, pupils take on responsibilities well and show initiative. Younger pupils have too few opportunities to develop initiative. Relationships are very good.
Attendance	Good. The attendance rate is above the national average. There were no unauthorised absences last year.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Overall, teaching is good. It is strongest in Years 3 to 6 where the majority of good and very good lessons were seen.

In reception and Years 1 and 2, the teaching of English and mathematics is satisfactory. Teachers have sound knowledge and understanding of subjects and management and control are adequate. However, in lesson planning the learning objectives are unclear and this leads to pupils learning less than they ought to because they do not produce enough work and work at a slow pace.

The strengths in Years 3 to 6 are the management of pupils and the use of accurate judgements of attainment to check progress and assist forward planning. Pupils learn well because they are interested in what they do and have a very clear view of their own learning.

The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good, overall. Their needs are met well, mainly because the match of task to the individual is usually effective and particularly in Years 3 to 6.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Overall good. It is stronger in Years 3 to 6, particularly in the way that pupils' initiative and independent skills are catered for. National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been implemented well. The school does not teach gymnastics to pupils in Years 3 to 6 because of accommodation restrictions.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need are particularly well supported. Pupils are equally provided for. Management is very good. Effective independent education plans make use of social and emotional targets as well as academic ones.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. The provision makes a significant contribution to pupils' very good attitudes, behaviour and relationships. It is also important in shaping the view of the school as a large 'family'.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare are good. The management of the school are vigilant on safety matters, but there are a few that remain difficult to resolve; for instance, the school hall is cluttered. Assessment procedures and practices are good.
Relationship with parents	Very good. Parents' views about the school are very positive. They receive an abundance of information about the school and their children's curriculum. The reporting of pupils' progress and learning is very good.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher is knowledgeable, committed and cares deeply about the school and the pursuit of improvement. He provides a strong example in his teaching.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Strong support for management. Positive and open approach that enables them to be effective 'critical friends'.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good overall. The priorities for development are identified accurately. A range of effective measures has been introduced to judge pupils' work, the quality of teaching and to check performance in national tests.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Grants are used well for their designated purpose. A careful check is made by governors on income and expenditure. The school has good measures to ensure the efficient funding of services and resources.

The accommodation is inadequate because it does not enable the full curriculum to be taught, most particularly gymnastics. Staffing levels and learning resources adequately support teaching throughout the school.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • The progress that their children are making. • The good standard of behaviour. • The good quality of the teaching. • They feel comfortable approaching the school. • The expectation of the child to work hard. • The closeness of the home/school relationship. • The effective leadership and management. • The way the school helps their child to become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework. • The information they receive about their child's progress. • The range of activities outside lessons.

Overall, inspectors agree with the majority of positive comments although, the quality of teaching and the rate of pupils' progress is not consistently good, particularly in reception and Years 1 and 2, where it is satisfactory. The amount and quality of the homework given to pupils are satisfactory. The information parents receive about their child's progress is good. The range of activities outside lessons is good.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The initial judgements of children's attainment indicate that they enter the school with attainment levels above those usually expected for this age. However, there are variations between children. Achievement is satisfactory and all the children are firmly on track to achieve the nationally endorsed Early Learning Goals in personal and social development, communication, language and literacy; mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development.
2. Overall, standards of work seen during the inspection are above the national expectations. This is an improvement on the standards achieved at the time of the last inspection. These standards, in general, are sufficiently high and represent satisfactory achievement for most pupils and in the majority of subjects. However, achievement in geography and history is unsatisfactory.
3. The attainment of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. They are given work carefully matched to their levels of attainment. Challenging targets are set for pupils with special educational needs and their progress is good. The clearly identified learning objectives ensure that pupils and learning support assistants have a clear understanding of the tasks set. Work is reviewed throughout the lesson and includes all pupils. Work seen for pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need shows clearly how they are making good progress over time. There is a significant improvement in the standard of work done in September and the most recent seen.
4. The results of the 2001 national tests are based on numbers of pupils that are too small to indicate secure judgements about attainment. However, the trends in the results over the last three years are generally positive. In that time, the results for seven-year-olds in reading and writing have been above the national average. Standards in mathematics are below average. Eleven-year-olds have produced results that are above the national average in English, mathematics and science. The overall trend in the results over the last three years is in line with the national trend.
5. By the ages of seven and 11, standards of work seen during the inspection are above national expectations in English and mathematics. Standards in science are in line with expectations at the age of seven and above expectations at the age of 11 years. Standards in information and communication technology are in line with expectations.
6. Throughout the school, standards in English are above expectations in speaking and listening and in most aspects of reading and writing. Standards are generally high enough, but this is not so in the acquisition and use of library skills and in spelling, particularly for the average and lower attaining pupils. Most pupils speak well and listen for long periods. They read fluently and accurately, with higher and average attainers expressing themselves particularly well. All pupils in Years 3 to 6 have favourite authors and books, but lower attainers lack a broad range of vocabulary. Most pupils write maturely, present their work well and provide the reader with the detail that makes the piece interesting.
7. In mathematics, seven-year-olds have the expected number skills and they can use these skills well to work out sums and simple problems. Pupils are equally successful

at using their measuring skills, knowledge and understanding. For example, in work on money, time, length and weight. All pupils know a range of two and three-dimensional shapes and higher attainers recognise more complex shapes. By the age of 11, skills, knowledge and understanding of number operations have continued to progress soundly. Pupils are developing a good knowledge of the relationship between vulgar fractions, decimals and percentages. Higher attainers find that long multiplication is challenging, but comfortably within their capabilities. Pupils handle data skilfully; for instance, when doing some work in science about weightlessness. Higher attainers are strong at using and applying their skills, knowledge and understanding in problem-solving work. Attainment in shape and space work is sound.

8. In science, the main reason for the difference in standards between seven and 11-year-olds is the quality of the independent work. Eleven-year-olds set up their own experiments and use their skills, knowledge and understanding to predict, observe and record their results. Seven-year-olds have sound scientific attributes, but there are too few opportunities to use them in more independent work, such as experimenting and problem-solving. Nevertheless, they investigate and make fair assumptions and comparisons when testing and discussing variables, such as which is the best material for -waterproofing.
9. In information and communication technology, seven-year-olds are competent users of the word processor. They have the expected skills, for instance, to use the keyboard well and improve the text they have typed in. They make simple graphs from data they have collected. Pupils do not need to be helped in the saving, printing and retrieving of work. By the age of 11, pupils' further development of skills, knowledge and understanding gives them the opportunity to work on advanced projects, such as using several computer functions to produce a vivid poster, with pictures, graphics and data. They know how to develop a spreadsheet and control a floor robot with the instructions they provide. Most pupils can use a search engine to find information on the Internet.
10. Standards are in line with expectations in art and design, design and technology, geography, history and music. There is insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement in physical education.
11. Standards in literacy are good and skills are used well in other subjects. This is most evident in religious education and science, where pupils make appropriate notes and write competently about their findings. Standards of presentation are generally good, but spelling lacks accuracy amongst the average and lower attainers. Numeracy skills are used well to classify, compare and measure in subjects such as science, geography and art. Pupils use information and communication technology skills well to enhance and practise their work in English, art, science and religious education.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. The children are so keen to come to school that many of them arrive early and have to be coaxed away by their parents at the end of the school day. Many parents commented that the children would come every day if they were allowed. Also, they spoke of the ease with which their children settled into school, whether they came as three-year-olds or joined the school after experience of schools elsewhere. These are similar to the strengths identified at the last inspection and parents recognise even further progress in recent years.
13. Attitudes and behaviour are very good. Pupils are keen to learn, enjoy their lessons and take part fully in the vast majority of activities arranged for them. They sit quietly

listening to their teachers or to one another when pupils are asked to give examples from their work. Pupils are articulate, and this includes some whose language was limited when they first came to school. There is a very good atmosphere of hard work and enjoyment in achievement throughout the school. Achievement assemblies are held at which pupils who have excelled, both in school and other pursuits such as Brownies, are presented with their certificate in front of the school and parents. On these occasions too, pupils give demonstrations of dancing and perform music and drama. In this way, all the children find themselves at some time performing to an audience, which does much to build their self-confidence.

14. The personal development of all pupils by the age of 11 is very good and this is a result of their primary school experience. The pupils are well mannered towards adults and generally considerate of one another. Frequent examples were seen of older children helping the younger ones. Many older pupils have responsibilities during the day such as collecting materials from the upstairs resources store or preparing the hall for various activities, particularly assemblies. Considering the difficult layout of the building, the pupils move around very sensibly and, most noticeably, Years 5 and 6 are careful on the narrow stairway.
15. Relationships within this family school are very good. Teachers listen to the views of pupils and pupils, in their turn, show respect for their teachers and for all the adults working in the school. Pupils work and play well together and are noticeably friendly to everyone. They can be trusted to work in pairs or groups or on their own, although there are too few opportunities for Years 1 and 2 pupils to show initiative and work without copious instructions. However, the introduction of planned activity time in the Years 1/2 class is proving very worthwhile and giving pupils the opportunity to make choices about the work they do and evaluating how successful they are. Any signs of bad behaviour such as rough play are dealt with very quickly and pupils know that a visit to the headteacher means a serious reprimand. The majority of pupils are sensitive to the feelings of their peers in school.
16. Attendance rates are always above the national average and there were no unauthorised absences last year. Most pupils are punctual and lessons begin on time, with registration in key stage groups in the morning and afternoon. Registers are completed in accordance with legal requirements and are held by the school secretary in case of emergencies.
17. The attitude of pupils on the special educational needs register and supported by a learning support assistant is no different to that of any other pupil observed in the school. Pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need are well supported by other pupils within the classroom and outside and their achievements are noticed and applauded.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

18. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good. The majority of lessons observed were good, or better. Teaching and learning are stronger in Years 3 to 6. This is a satisfactory improvement on the previous report because the 10 per cent of unsatisfactory teaching has been reduced to nothing. However, the proportion of good teaching has also reduced whilst the proportion of very good teaching has almost doubled. At the time of the last inspection the unsatisfactory teaching was confined to one teacher who has successfully embraced the new planning guidance and is now more effective in supporting learning.

Reception group taught by the nursery nurse

19. The nursery nurse has achieved a suitable balance between directing the children's learning and promoting their learning through organised play activities. There is a wide range of practical activities on offer and these promote learning and skill development. However, although the overall quality of the teaching has improved it is still below what it ought to be and the main reason for this is the occasional unsatisfactory planning. In these lessons, the learning intentions are insufficiently clear and this leads to pupils' fidgeting and loss of concentration and interest. This was seen in a knowledge and understanding of the world lesson, where the youngest children were required to record their fair-test findings on a grid. The work was too difficult and this led to some becoming agitated, distracted and not listening for a short period.

Years 1 and 2 and two reception children

20. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, but this judgement masks a range of lessons from very good to satisfactory. However, the majority of lessons were judged to be satisfactory (seven out of 11). The very good lesson is described as planned activity time, in which pupils have free choice in a range of activities that are planned and carried out over a four-week period. This session was very worthwhile because of:

- the strong element of guided choice;
- the move towards pupil-directed learning;
- the planning to a set format – the activities included computers, mathematics, role play, water play and modelling;
- the completion – recording an evaluation.

Pupils worked very hard throughout the session, showed good values, such as perseverance and wanting to finish their work and pride in the completed task. It is this sort of lesson that is better than the ones that are dominated by the teacher, which are the norm in the Years 1/2 class. These lessons were satisfactory, but the inconsistency in teachers' planning led to a slower pace and less work done. The good lessons are informative, go along at a brisk pace and pupils learn for themselves. For example, in an information and communication technology lesson, the pupils were left to experiment with the computer keyboard and this led to useful learning, in response to errors in the pupils' applications. The two reception children are catered for inconsistently in a minority of lessons. For example, in physical education they join in fully with the class activity, but in geography there is insufficient attention paid to their needs. This is a good example of the way that insufficient and insubstantial joint planning by the job-share teachers and nursery nurse is not always meeting the needs of all the pupils.

Years 3 to 6

21. Overall, teaching is good with some very good features. The physical setting of the teaching area is not ideal, with the larger Years 5 and 6 pupils working in a very small room that used to be the Headteacher's bedroom. Teachers achieve a very good standard of management and control, in these difficult circumstances. They also maintain pupils' interest and concentration and this is done through the accurate and sharp judgement of pupils' levels of attainment and progress. Teachers are vigilant when judging work and they use the outcomes to check on progress over time and to set targets for learning that are shared with the pupils. Teachers have good subject knowledge and understanding; for example, in a very good Years 3/4 science lesson, the instructions and guidance were carefully judged and pupils developed a greater awareness and personal interest in the subject matter. In a Years 5/6 literacy lesson

based on 'The Jabberwocky', the good preparation, brisk pace and high interest were brought about because the teacher set clear learning goals that pupils understood. Often, this includes a re-cap of earlier learning and the good learning builds on prior achievement. For example, in a Years 5/6 creative writing lesson, the teacher and pupils built on the skills developed in the morning literacy lesson. Pupils knew that their objective was to write their own fable and much of the discussion centred on the need to identify a moral in the story.

22. The quality of marking is often good in Years 3 to 6. Comments are positive and they are aimed at highlighting the progress made towards a set target. Often, these targets are stuck into the pupils' books. As a result, pupils have a clear view of their own learning.
23. Homework is given regularly, much of it related to work in the class; for example, research for science on condensation in the home, or learning words for a performance in assembly. A particularly good use of homework is when pupils work on a piece of their own music and then talk to the class about it.
24. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to use literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills across subjects:
 - in a Years 5/6 science lesson, pupils' imaginative writing skills are developed well in their writing about a visit to the moon;
 - in geography, Years 1/2 pupils analyse the ways that pupils come to school and also plot a graph;
 - information and communication technology skills are practised in several subjects; for instance, in Years 5/6 mathematics lessons pupils produced line graphs on the computer.
25. Overall, teaching is good in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in art and design and music in Years 3 to 6. It was not possible to make secure judgements in art and design, design and technology, geography, history and physical education in Years 1 and 2.
26. Lesson plans show the careful matching of tasks to the individual, including those on the special educational needs register and any identified as higher attainers. In one lesson observed, a higher attaining pupil wrote a poem about 'morning sounds' using a much wider vocabulary than other pupils in the class. The pupil made good use of information and communication technology; by word-processing and saving his work. Learning support assistants contribute well and their work is reviewed at the end of the lesson and the plans are annotated as required. Individual education plans are clear and detailed and include targets for social and emotional behaviour, such as the pupil who had 'to look at the person speaking to you' as an objective. Another was given the target to learn an agreed number of spellings each week and correctly spell them to the learning support assistant. Individual education plans are reviewed regularly, depending upon the stage on the register of the pupil. For example, those on Stage 1 are set new targets termly, whilst those with a Statement of Special Educational Need (Stage 5) on a six-weekly basis. Parents are, rightly, active partners in the review process.

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

27. The school aims to provide a broad and balanced curriculum for all its pupils and emphasises personal and social education as an important part of its provision. In the main it achieves this aim by including all National Curriculum subjects and religious education, as well as health, drugs and sex education. The gaps in provision seen at the last inspection in design and technology and information and communication technology, have been resolved. However, the lack of provision for gymnastics remains an unsatisfactory area for pupils in Years 3 to 6. This is because of the lack of an appropriate place and resources, because the school hall is used as a teaching area. The school is aware of the problem and does its best to compensate with other activities.
28. The school has successfully adopted the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and standards in English and mathematics are above average by the end of Year 6. The trends in results show improvement over time. Pupils throughout the school have a sound range of opportunities to use and extend their writing skills in other subjects. However, the library is underused, mainly because it is difficult to reach without disturbing other classes.
29. A key issue from the last inspection was that schemes of work were not in place for all subjects, linked to assessment and records. The headteacher has worked hard on this deficiency and schemes of work and good clear policies are now in place for all subjects. Some have been adapted usefully from recent national guidelines. The curriculum mapping and planning system in use is particularly effective, because it does not involve teachers in unnecessary copying. Teachers' weekly and daily planning is now based on a consistent format throughout the school. However, there is much stronger planning in Years 3 to 6, than in reception and Years 1 and 2. The reasons for this disparity are:
- clearer objectives for pupils' learning;
 - stronger links to procedures for judging pupils' levels of attainment;
 - the job-share teachers in the reception and Years 1 and 2 class do not plan closely enough together.
30. The school broadens its curriculum by a number of regular and occasional visitors to the school. These include the local clergy, police, and visiting artists. Pupils also enjoy a range of visits linked to their learning. The older pupils benefit from an annual residential trip that provides many opportunities for personal and social development. There is a good range of lunch-time and after-school clubs and parents appreciate that this is particularly generous for such a small school. Pupils choose, at various times, from French, Spanish, several sports, music and drama. Pupils take part in several charity events and take a full part in village life. There is a growing partnership between the local schools, which is strengthening the curriculum and sporting links.
31. Provision for the pupils' personal, social and health education is good. There is a clear policy that identifies opportunities within the full range of the curriculum. Citizenship has, rightly, now been included in this programme. Some of the provision takes place in class discussions and assemblies.

32. The curriculum supports teachers well in promoting equality of opportunity for boys and girls and for pupils of different prior attainments. Pupils with special educational needs are given good support, usually when working in their normal classroom. Targets in pupils' individual education plans are used well to match the work in hand to their needs. These targets are generally shared with the pupil. Support from teachers and other adults is organised and appropriate. These pupils make good progress and benefit from equal entitlement to the curriculum offered by the school.
33. Provision for spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is very good. Daily acts of collective worship play a full part in this and meet statutory requirements. The vicar of the neighbouring church is an effective governor who plays a full part in the life of the pupils.
34. The school provides very good opportunities for spiritual development through the curriculum and the daily life of the school in its community. In all subjects, teachers talk about the wider issues in the things that pupils are learning. For example, in science pupils look at the significance of evaporation and the water cycle in sustaining the variety of life on earth. Pupils' reading and their very personal writing reflects on human frailty and our capacity for love and courage. In all subjects, teachers use searching questions to explore issues and look for meaning. They give pupils time to express their own ideas and concerns. Pupils respond by making thoughtful comments and listening well to others. Assemblies are special occasions; older pupils organise music and there is usually a discussion on how pupils feel about it, or what human emotion it conveys. There are moments for quiet reflection. Teachers recognise and praise special moments in most lessons, as in an art lesson when a boy in Year 6 received whispered congratulations on the way he had been completely absorbed in his work.
35. Provision for moral development is very good. There is a clear moral code that is consistently promoted. The school's policies and the way in which adults apply them, encourage respect, consideration and tolerance. The very good relationships that exist between adults and pupils make a significant contribution. They allow teachers to have high expectations of their pupils' behaviour towards others and enable them to praise promptly any thoughtful actions. They take advantage of opportunities; for example, in literature, to make pupils aware of the difference between right and wrong. Teachers explore themes, such as 'working together' and 'relationships' during lessons and assemblies.
36. Provision for pupils' social development is very good. Most pupils start school with very good social skills; they are welcoming, polite and considerate. Staff value this and encourage pupils to use and improve their skills around and outside the school. Visitors such as the parish vicar are greeted as old friends and pupils converse sensibly about events and social issues in the news. The good range of activities outside lessons contributes very well to their social development. Regular musical productions foster a sense of community and teamwork. Staff encourage older pupils to take responsibility and support younger ones when needed and they do this willingly. In the wider community, pupils have spent a valuable day at a school for pupils with severe learning and physical difficulties.
37. Provision for pupils' cultural development is also very good. Displays around the school show that pupils are learning about other times, faiths and customs. Music played and discussed includes pieces from around the world, both classical and modern. The library has an adequate collection of fiction and non-fiction books about other cultures. There are regular opportunities to visit theatres and museums and

recent guests have included Ashanti drummers and a theatre group. Pupils can join French and Spanish clubs and the school cook joins in by teaching a Spanish phrase each day. The school is aware that many pupils have little experience of a culturally diverse society and looks for opportunities to give a broader view of the world in the curriculum. One example is the Indian cookery afternoon, enjoyed by pupils, parents and governors.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

38. The staff are dedicated to caring for their pupils and making them feel special. The children are all included equally in every activity and learning experience. Pupils with special educational needs are well provided for and make good progress, whilst those who are capable of higher achievement have work set specifically for them. The previous inspection report referred to the family atmosphere within the school and this is still very apparent. The pupils, staff, governors and parents are all part of this very good relationship that helps pupils to feel safe and secure and to make good progress in their lessons. Pupils know that they can talk to any member of the staff if they have a problem and their self-confidence grows because they know they are so well supported. Any incidents of unkindness between pupils are dealt with very promptly. Sometimes the one responsible has to write a letter of apology to the pupil who has been upset. Pupils accept the apology and soon become friends again.
39. All the pupils are well known to the staff who are aware of their family backgrounds and also any health issues. The views of pupils are taken into account when decisions have to be made and they, as well as their parents, have been consulted over the recent revision of many of the school policies. The governors take great care over health and safety issues and have installed adequate security measures. Parents were very pleased when the governors found it possible to convert part of the old School House to a classroom for Years 5 and 6, so that the larger class of pupils in Years 3 to 6 could be divided. This change has made it much easier to match work to pupils' levels of attainment. However, governors will need to keep the safety aspects of this conversion constantly under review, most particularly the passage of pupils on the staircase.
40. There is a very detailed and satisfactorily implemented policy on child protection. The headteacher is the responsible member of staff to whom others report any concerns they may have about the well being of any of the children. He then decides about involving outside agencies. All the staff are aware of their responsibilities in this respect and a governor is accountable to the governing body for child protection arrangements. The pupils are taught about health matters and given appropriate and agreed sex education as they proceed through the school. Such matters are included in the science curriculum or in personal, social and health education.
41. Each year the small group of pupils who are due to move to secondary school, with their parents, are given advice and information by the school to help them to make the right choices. There are a number of schools from which to choose and the pupils have the opportunity to visit them. Effective arrangements are also made for teachers from receiving schools to come to Albury and meet the pupils.
42. Attendance is very effectively monitored. For example, a small increase in the number of minor illnesses and term-time holidays has been identified recently.

43. The school has good systems for monitoring and recording the academic progress and personal development of pupils. Judging pupils' levels of attainment and progress is carried out methodically and is improving, but the information is not always used effectively to guide teachers' planning, particularly in reception and Years 1 and 2.
44. The school takes good care of all the pupils on the register of special educational needs. The school has a comprehensive system for judging pupils' levels of attainment and progress according to their stage on the Code of Practice.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

45. One of the great successes and strengths of the school is the way in which parents are involved. They give the staff their full support and many of them help in school with reading, or join working parties to help to decorate and maintain the old buildings and the grounds. There is a thriving 'friends of the school' organisation, which arranges many activities for the school and the village as a whole and raises large sums of money that benefit the school. Albury School retains its importance as a very important focal point of the local community, partly because of its links with the parish church.
46. At the well-attended parents' meeting, the work of the staff and governors was highly praised and parents supported the caring and family ethos of the school. Parents have great confidence that their children are secure, protected and well educated at the school. Many examples were given of pupils being helped to settle in to school very quickly and their parents noted rapid increases in their children's self-esteem and academic progress. They know, too, that poor and thoughtless behaviour will not be tolerated.
47. Parents drew inspectors' attention particularly to the acquisition of the new reading scheme and related this to great improvements in their children's reading abilities. They feel themselves to be part of the decision making of the school. Most recently, a questionnaire was sent out to them to ascertain their views on homework and the school has agreed to take these views into account in revising the homework policy. Other revisions to policies have resulted from consultations with parents. Most parents give great support to their children by encouraging them to read at home and to work hard on their homework, knowing that it will be marked and annotated by their teachers.
48. Parents receive abundant information about the curriculum, school events and policies and there are notice boards too. The prospectus and the annual report of the governing body are well written, informative and meet legal requirements. Two interim progress reports and an end of year progress report give clear information about the individual pupil's achievements and the targets set. There are opportunities for parents to meet the teachers regularly. However, parents most value the chance to have a word with the headteacher or another member of staff in the playground at the beginning or end of the day. Parents know that they are very welcome in the school.
49. The school sees the parents of pupils on the special educational needs register as active participants in the learning process. The parents of both pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need very clearly support the school and value the efforts being made to integrate their children into the classroom. Both are very positive and emphasised the quality of teaching and the willingness to adapt lessons to meet the needs of their children. They also recognise and value the role of the learning

support assistants. They also stressed that the individual education plans are up to date and that they attend regularly the reviews.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

50. The headteacher provides strong leadership and because of this standards are rising. He is committed, works hard and has a clear vision for the school. He gives a good example to colleagues and pupils and this is recognised and appreciated by parents. This is a similar judgement to the one made at the last inspection, when the school had a different headteacher. The delegation of tasks, such as co-ordinating subject areas is not easy in small schools because of the heavy burden on a few people and this one is no exception. However, teachers are increasingly having an impact as subject managers, most particularly in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. The co-ordination of the other subjects is rightly a corporate responsibility, but individual teachers take charge of the day-to-day management of resources and small budgets.
51. The checking and evaluation of teaching are generally good. The method of doing this falls into several categories of investigation, for example:
- formal lesson observations by the headteacher, a local colleague headteacher and inspectors and consultants from the local education authority;
 - members of the governing body visit regularly to check on standards, evaluate what they have seen and report back to the full governing body;
 - a great deal of work is done in judging pupils' work, analysing test data and setting realistic and challenging targets.

These elements are a good improvement on the practice described at the time of the last inspection, when the main check was on the curriculum. The impact of this work is that the teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 are now much more focused on the individual pupils' needs and lesson planning reflects this. However, there is less evidence of this strong impact in reception and Years 1 and 2. This is mainly because the arrangements for the job share are not sufficiently consistent, particularly in terms of joint planning. Time needs to be set aside for the two teachers and the nursery nurse to meet at least once a week to plan work collaboratively and in the light of pupils' prior attainment. The school recognises that these are weaknesses because the checking processes have highlighted them.

52. The governing body is effective, interested and highly supportive. It benefits from the appropriately skilled membership and continues to develop its role as a 'critical friend' in a helpful and challenging manner. Much of the detailed work is carried out in committees and the closeness of relationships ensure that the quality of communication is good. Their aims for the school are published in the prospectus and for the most part they are met. The only area needing significant improvement relates to the 'development of lively, imaginative and enquiring minds' in the reception and Years 1/2 class. Nevertheless, parents are happy with the school's values and commitments and support them fully.
53. Overall, development planning is good and the priorities have led to improvements in a variety of areas; for instance:
- monitoring and evaluation of standards and procedures;
 - the continued development of the judging of pupils' work and progress;
 - attainment and provision in information and communication technology.

The plan is technically sound in most respects, such as the identification of responsible personnel, timescale, resource identification and evaluation of the completed task. However, there are few indications of the interim steps that would indicate the rate of progress towards successful completion and implementation of priorities. This means that it is more difficult to check and measure progress, except at the end of the process.

54. The procedures for development planning are effectively supported by the strong implementation of the performance management policy. It is part of this policy that priorities in the development plan figure strongly in the teachers' individual targets. So, at present, the focus is on the judging of pupils' attainment and target-setting for individual pupils in lesson plans.
55. The school has sufficient staff to support the curriculum and teaching quality. In-service training for all staff supports well the school priorities for improvement; for instance, the drive to improve teaching and learning has led to a range of quite innovative training responses, such as the visiting of other schools to view other methods. However, not all the learning support assistants have benefited from up-to-date training sponsored by government funding. The school has a useful staff handbook and this plays a helpful part in the school's effective induction of new members of staff.
56. Special educational needs is well managed. Parents see the co-ordinator as approachable and he works well with other agencies as required. The 12 pupils on the register are clearly identified and have appropriate individual education plans. The school has an active policy of early identification and intervention. No child on the register is denied access to any aspect of the curriculum. The governor with responsibility for special educational needs is effective and well informed.
57. Day-to-day administration is good. Teachers are released from as many activities as possible that might distract them from their work. A key factor in this is the input of the school secretary, who makes a strong contribution, particularly in the ongoing deployment of finances. She gets adequate support from the use of the office computer and this ties in well with the very helpful and regular guidance from the financial adviser hired from the local education authority.
58. Financial management is good. The governors and management have prudently managed the school's income and expenditure. The Chair of the finance committee is knowledgeable and competent. She challenges spending decisions and provides detailed updates for the finance committee. When setting the annual budget, there is an effective procedure for the Chair, headteacher and local authority officer to discuss and formulate a range of options. These options are then presented to the finance committee, with the relevant explanations. This process correctly provides governors with first-hand involvement in financial decision-making. To support this type of work the governors have developed appropriate policies and schemes to clarify responsibilities; for instance, guidance on the delegation of powers to the headteacher, most particularly in spending. Monthly checks are done on the income and expenditure accounts and these are properly shared with governors.
59. The school has good procedures in place to ensure that they achieve best value in their spending on supplies and services. Competitive quotes are acquired when building work is to be done and when buying equipment. The school accepts challenges from outside people checking standards; for instance, a local headteacher

sitting in on lessons. Parents and the local authority were consulted when new computers were being purchased and the school uses well the comparative information from the government and local authority when evaluating areas such as standards and finances.

60. Overall, the accommodation is unsatisfactory because it does not fully support the curriculum. For instance, the school hall is unsuitable for the teaching and learning of gymnastics and, as a consequence, the school cannot comply fully with requirements for physical education. The school hall, which serves as an adequate classroom for the three-year-old children in the morning, as a dining room, a library, an assembly hall for meetings and school productions and a space for physical education, also provides a thoroughfare to adjoining classrooms. The amount of storage necessary to meet all these demands, particularly for the youngest children, reduces severely the space available. This is a safety issue, as well as limiting the hall's use for physical education lessons that require 17 or more children to be able to run or dance.
61. The external environment is good and there is plenty of space for pupils who wish to find a quiet haven, to do so. The school is in need of constant repair and maintenance and this is particularly evident at the moment.
62. Overall, learning resources are adequate and support the teaching and learning in the school. Where shortcomings have been identified, the school has managed to channel funds in that direction, most particularly in English and information and communication technology. Parents, through the money raised by their association, have made a significant contribution in this direction.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

63. Governors, headteacher and staff should:

- (1) improve teaching in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 by:
 - making the learning intentions for lessons much clearer and more focused on groups and individuals;
 - setting weekly times for joint planning by the job-share teachers, nursery nurse and learning support assistants.
(Paragraphs: 19, 20, 29, 67, 99, 107)
- (2) further improve standards in English by:
 - developing the spelling skills of average and lower attainers;
 - increasing pupils' knowledge of and use of the library.
(Paragraphs: 6, 28, 86, 87, 88)
- (3) improve achievement in geography and history by:
 - increasing the opportunities for individual research work, through regular use of information and communication technology and the library;
 - making the judgements of pupils' work more consistent and a basis for future work;
 - monitoring provision and pupils' progress in all classes.
(Paragraphs: 2, 122, 123, 124, 125)
- (4) continue to find ways to overcome the difficulties with the accommodation, so that a full curriculum can be offered in physical education.
(Paragraphs: 60, 137, 140)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	31
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	23

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	0	6	11	14	0	0	0
Percentage	0	19	35	45	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	Y[R – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/a	51
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/a	1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y7
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/a	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/a	17

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	2
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	1
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	43
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	13
Average class size	12.7

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	75

Financial information

Financial year	2000/01
	£
Total income	186,030
Total expenditure	191,883
Expenditure per pupil	3,367
Balance brought forward from previous year	22,478

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	59
Number of questionnaires returned	24

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	75	25	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	71	29	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	83	17	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	46	33	17	4	0
The teaching is good.	75	21	4	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	58	25	17	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	79	8	4	8	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	83	17	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	71	29	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	71	17	4	8	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	75	17	8	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	42	29	17	8	4

Please note: the numbers above are percentages of parents of a small pupil population. The figures therefore could represent very small numbers of parents.

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

64. Evidence from inspection indicates that children enter the school with attainment levels above those expected for their age, although there are some variations between individual children. They make satisfactory progress across the Foundation Stage and as a result of this all children are on track to meet the Early Learning Goals by the time they reach the age of five.
65. Children enter the school in the September prior to their fourth birthday and attend part-time for five mornings per week. At the time of the inspection there were ten children on roll in the youngest class and two reception age children who were taught in the class with Year 1 and 2 pupils.
66. Under the guidance of the Foundation Stage co-ordinator, the nursery nurse teaches the youngest children in the reception class. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is judged to be satisfactory overall with some significant strengths and some areas in need of further development. This represents improvement since the last inspection when teaching was seen to range from unsatisfactory to good. The reasons for this improvement are:
- better planning formats that are having a significant impact on the quality of teaching and learning;
 - that the planned curriculum is now good overall, which is a marked improvement on the previous inspection;
 - that there is a suitable balance between directed activities and learning through play in most areas of learning. Children are given a wide range of practical experiences, which are carefully prepared to stimulate interest and promote learning and skill development.
67. The nursery nurse and learning support assistant establish good relationships with all children and in most lessons, children are well managed and behave well. However, in some whole-class lessons, learning intentions are not always sharply focused and this occasionally results in children sitting for too long and becoming increasingly inattentive. In these lessons, listening skills are not always effectively sustained, teaching opportunities are missed and these factors occasionally contribute to a slow pace of learning with low challenge, especially for the higher attainers. The nursery nurse and the teaching assistant generally work together as a team, but the teaching assistant could be more effectively deployed in some lessons. These matters now need to be given attention in order to further improve the quality of teaching and learning across the Foundation Stage.
68. By the time they enter reception, the children's attainment is still above average in all areas of learning. Teaching in the reception year is generally satisfactory and this represents improvement since the last inspection when the children's progress was judged to be slow as a result of inconsistent teaching. However, there are still a very few occasions when these children are not catered for appropriately; for instance, when they are expected to sit and listen for periods that are too long.

Personal and social development

69. Teaching and curriculum planning is good in this area and most children make good progress. The staff provide a secure and caring environment in which children can learn. There is a good range of opportunities provided for children to co-operate with each other, such as during role play in the 'Bob the Builder Workshop' and when using building blocks and playing with the model house in imaginative play.
70. Children form good relationships with others in the class and with the teacher and teaching assistant. The adults take care to provide a wide range of opportunities for pupils to work together. Most children behave well and show good levels of concentration and an eagerness to take part in the activities organised for them. They settle quickly, listen attentively to stories and happily share ideas. They take turns, help each other and express their needs and feelings in an appropriate manner. For example, children happily share tools in the role play areas, taking turns sawing and drilling in role play situations. They dress independently in preparing for outdoor play and manage their own personal hygiene. Children are confident to try out new activities and demonstrate positive attitudes to learning as seen in one lesson where they took turns to use a hair dryer to blow down the three little pigs' houses. During snack and circle time they wait patiently to be served and express their preferences confidently. Adults encourage the development of a sense of responsibility through well-established tidying routines. Many children are on course to exceed the desired outcomes in this area of learning.

Language and literacy

71. Children enter the school with levels of attainment that are generally above national expectations. They make satisfactory progress in developing communication skills across the Foundation Stage and, as a result, most are expected to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the age of five and approximately one half will exceed these.
72. Most children show keen enjoyment of story time. They can remember familiar stories and retell these with enthusiasm. They ask simple questions to clarify understanding and take turns in conversation. They use spoken language effectively in role play and responding to what they have heard. A small minority of children do not always listen well and only join in when the conversation is of interest to them. Children are given good opportunities to make spoken contributions throughout all lessons. Most nursery children can recognise and read their own name and the higher attainers demonstrate emerging writing skills as they write their name on their work. Currently, however, opportunities for children to engage in the act of copy and free writing are - underdeveloped in the nursery classroom.
73. By the time they reach five years of age children demonstrate the ability to write and sound letters of the alphabet and some can copy and write simple words with minimum help. They successfully use picture clues and initial letters to recognise unknown words. Good progress is seen in children's understanding of books. They enjoy stories and know how to handle books. Higher attaining children have developed good pre-reading skills, have an appropriate sight vocabulary and some knowledge of letters and their sounds. Planning for learning is usually, although not always, well focused and pupils make satisfactory progress overall.

Mathematical development

74. Evidence from planning files and assessment records indicates that children's mathematical development is sound and most children are on track to meet the Early Learning Goals by the age of five. Satisfactory progress is attained overall. Children in the nursery class build up their mathematical language through well-structured play activities linked to a weekly theme. For example, during the inspection week many children successfully identify 'Bob the Builder's' square and triangular shaped sandwiches. Nursery children participate enthusiastically in oral counting activities and generally demonstrate good levels of attainment. Most count and order numbers up to ten and higher attaining children count accurately up to 20 and beyond. They are beginning to represent numbers with fingers and marks on paper or pictures. All children are able to name and identify simple shapes, such as square, rectangle, circle and triangle and use these effectively to create pictures of a house. The oldest children in the Foundation Stage display increased confidence with numbers. They can identify and record numerals up to 20 and use mathematical language such as 'longer than' and 'lighter' with accuracy. They know their number bonds up to ten and can confidently count forwards and backwards in ones and forwards in twos.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

75. Teaching and progress in this area of learning is satisfactory and by the time they leave reception, the children's attainment in knowledge and understanding of the world is generally above expected levels for this age group. Children expand their knowledge in response to the many activities offered and as a result of effective questioning strategies of adults.
76. Much of the work is based upon practical activities designed to develop first-hand experience. For example, in the nursery, children learn about the properties of a wide range of materials as they use them in their cutting and sticking activities. These practical activities stimulate children's curiosity and they ask questions confidently to clarify their understanding. Most children use a good range of vocabulary when discussing the world around them as seen when they enthusiastically discussed similarities and differences in their three-dimensional models of their faces. The teacher takes great care to provide a range of stimulating activities, which are often linked to stories. For example, an exploration of the children's faces, is stimulated by a reading of Nick Sharratt's, 'What do I Look Like?' and simple exploration of scientific testing is developed from a reading of 'The Three Little Pigs'. Activities usually capture and stimulate the children's interest although, on occasion, learning objectives are too general, teaching sometimes lacks a clear focus and learning is hampered as a result.
77. The classroom computer is used effectively to introduce the children to the world of information and communication technology and satisfactorily supports their learning in other areas, including learning of shape and colour and number and letter recognition. Cultural awareness is also enhanced in the nursery when children explore the Chinese New Year. Children demonstrate good understanding of 'the year of the horse' and show keen interest in sharing their observations.

Physical development

78. On balance, children make satisfactory progress in this area of learning. They make good progress throughout the Foundation Stage in developing their manual dexterity but only satisfactory progress in developing their larger physical skills because of limited opportunities for clambering and climbing.
79. Staff provide plenty of opportunities for children to use small equipment. Children use their hands well to make things and fit things together; for example, in the nursery when they make exploding squares, sew dishcloths and make thumb pots. Most children's drawing, writing and colouring are mature and generally match expectations for this age although a few higher attaining children are clearly attaining standards above national expectations. The children demonstrate good, fine motor skills. For example, they use pencils to draw and write with, scissors and glue spreaders in art and craft and needles to sew.
80. Children in the nursery develop their physical skills through using a satisfactory range of wheeled toys in the school playground. They demonstrate enthusiasm and enjoyment when using outdoor equipment and good control. They play safely and avoid crashes. They move freely and confidently, walk, skip and run with good control and good spatial awareness. However, the development of gross motor skills are not given sufficient attention, as this area does not contain suitable adventure apparatus for developing co-ordination, clambering and balancing skills. The teacher works hard to vary outdoor play provision, occasionally linking themes to local visits. However, planning for outdoor play does not always specify precise learning intentions and on occasion, opportunities to support learning and extend skill development are missed. This limits the children's progress in this area of learning.

Creative development

81. Teaching and curriculum provision in this area is good and clearly a strength and, as a result of this, most pupils are expected to exceed the Early Learning Goals by the age of five. They are given rich, sustained opportunities to express their creativity and to develop their skills. Throughout the Foundation Stage, children explore a wide range of media including clay and play dough for modelling, printing media, coloured spaghetti, collage materials and construction kits. Through drawing around templates, cutting out shapes and using materials to decorate their work, children explore colour, texture and shape. For example, they use a range of textiles and materials when creating habitats for creatures that hibernate and when making models of their faces and collages of 'The Chameleon' based on Eric Carle's story of 'The Mixed up Chameleon'. Attainment is good in all aspects. Role play activities are well supported by dressing-up clothes and appropriate props. For example, during the inspection week, individual pupils were seen to be engaged in imaginative role-play, acting out construction and demolition roles using hard hats, architects' drawings and toolboxes. However, the space allocated to the role play area is currently very cramped, affords room for only two pupils at a time and severely restricts opportunities for collaborative play.

ENGLISH

82. The attainment of pupils aged seven and 11 is above average and they achieve satisfactorily. The results of National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds taken across the three years from 1999 to 2001 show that attainment exceeded the national average in reading and writing. In the same period, the attainment of 11-year-olds also exceeded the national average, but they are less consistent and this illustrates the problems of using statistical scores with such small numbers of pupils. However, the evidence from the inspection is that standards are above expectations and pupils are attaining the standards that they should, including those with special educational needs. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set for them. This is due to the good support they receive.
83. Attainment in speaking and listening is above the national expectation, by the age of seven. Pupils listen for long periods, show understanding of the main points in the discussion and often make very appropriate responses. For instance, in Year 2, pupils using a computer function to read back poetry actually achieved greater rhythm with their own efforts. Pupils engage willingly and enthusiastically in conversations and answer questions well. Speech is clear and thoughtful and the higher attainers are beginning to adopt the tone and breadth of vocabulary to suit a range of different circumstances.
84. By the age of 11, most pupils listen carefully to teachers and others, often for long periods. They answer questions clearly and confidently, many providing extra information for the listener. Pupils ask questions to make sure they have understood, or to develop an idea. They give reasons for their answers and opinions and some will change their opinion when they hear what others have to say. Pupils talk interestingly and with insight about the books and authors they enjoy.
85. Standards in reading are above the national expectation, by the age of seven. Pupils are accurate, fluent readers who understand the books they are reading. The majority of pupils read expressively and change the tone of their voice when moving between characters. Attitudes to reading are good and positive and generally this reflects the interest and example shown by parents. Higher attainers read challenging books well; for example, one pupil is reading accurately and fluently the books of Tony Roff. Pupils are unclear about how to find reference materials in the library.
86. By the age of 11, all the pupils read challenging books accurately and fluently. Most pupils have a wide range of vocabulary and they pronounce difficult words very competently. Higher attainers have a deep interest in fiction books and they have read widely and with understanding. They also compare authors and their attributes; for example, 'I like J K Rowling because of the detail in her books, and Anthony Horowitz for his exciting plots and adventure'. Lower attainers lack breadth in the words they know by sight, but they enjoy their reading and have favourite authors. Pupils of all levels of attainment have barely adequate library skills and this is mainly due to them having too few opportunities to use the school library.
87. In writing, attainment is above expectations by the age of seven. The vast majority of pupils write extended pieces of prose, with sentences marked out appropriately with capital letters and full stops. Stories are interesting and often words are chosen well to create the desired effect. Handwriting is generally good; joined, legible and neat. Higher attainers are ambitious in their choice of vocabulary, such as 'designed'. They use effectively a range of spellings and punctuation; for instance, direct speech and exclamation marks. Average and lower attainers are weak at spelling, most

particularly words with double consonants, such as 'trimmed' and 'dragged'. The style of writing is effective and the highest attainers usually develop their ideas well and use language maturely: 'Hi I'm Yim Sung. I live with my grumpy mother in a small cottage and outside there are some cherry trees'. Consequently, the reader's interest is developed significantly. Attitudes to writing are good, most particularly the willingness to produce long pieces of work and the perseverance to improve work.

88. By the age of 11, pupils' writing is accurate, mature and interesting. This is because: the range of writing is broad and includes narrative from the viewpoint of self and a third person, poetry; articles and simplifying text for younger readers. Targets for improvement are made explicit and they are pinned in books. The highest attainers provide the reader with an eye-catching opener: 'The woman and the girl walked quickly through the busy, dirty street'. They build interest and suspense: 'This was the second time she had dreamt about a fire in the library and the dream was even more detailed this time round. 'Could this be some kind of warning'? Most pupils are comfortable recognising and using similes and metaphors and they write accurately. However, average and lower attainers are weak spellers. This is mainly due to inadequate knowledge and understanding of spelling rules.
89. Overall, good use is made of other subjects to help to develop literacy skills. For instance, in religious education, Year 2 pupils word-process short books that illustrate and explain the meaning of parables. In information and communication technology, the computer is used by Year 6 pupils to re-draft their story-writing. In science, pupils wrote some interesting pieces about their 'experiences' on the moon.
90. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Lessons ranged from very good to satisfactory and they were stronger in Years 3 to 6. In the highest quality lessons, the particular strengths included:
- effective planning that has clear objectives that require pupils to meet high expectations. For example, in a Years 5/6 creative writing lesson, the progressive development of knowledge and understanding of the style of a fable meant that pupils gained a good understanding of the need to have a moral in their story;
 - very good teacher knowledge and understanding. For instance, in another very good lesson in Years 5/6, every opportunity was explored to analyse closely the vocabulary in Lewis Carroll's 'Jabberwocky'. Consequently, pupils' responses were also precise and this confirms their thorough ground of knowledge and understanding.
 - the very good pace of lessons, range of resources and support for pupils. As a result, pupils concentrate hard for long periods, often producing long pieces of work that are accurate and interesting.
- In the vast majority of lessons, planning has clearly stated objectives. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and the pupils respond very well. There is a wide and varied range of displays that promote literacy throughout the school. Classrooms and resources are well organised to promote effective learning and all pupils benefit from full and equal access to all activities and expectations.
91. Management of the subject is good. Monitoring is effective, particularly through the scrutiny of pupils' work and the observation of teaching. Shortcomings and areas for development are identified appropriately; for example, the need to improve spelling. As a result, the school is focusing on the quality of spelling, particularly in the marking of books. The curriculum is generally broad and balanced and there is an appropriate amount of writing in different styles and for a range of audiences. The judging of pupils' attainment is good and this is supported by regular target setting for individual

pupils. The range of resources is sufficient. The subject meets statutory requirements.

MATHEMATICS

92. Pupils' attainment by the ages of seven and 11 is above average and standards are improving from the time of the last inspection, when they were average. There is a clear trend of rising standards, which match national trends.
93. Taken over the last three years, attainment at the age of 11 has exceeded the national average. Teachers, particularly in Years 3 to 6, are successfully developing their expertise in implementing the National Numeracy Strategy and the benefit to pupils is evident in the good rate of learning in most lessons. In addition, the analysis of test results and the strengths and weaknesses identified are shared with the staff resulting in realistic targets being set for all pupils. The reduction of group sizes for lessons is effectively used to secure the mathematical knowledge of all pupils and to extend the knowledge and understanding of the higher attaining pupils. Inspection evidence indicates that the school has high, but realistic, expectations.
94. Looking at the results of the national tests over the last three years, the trend at the age of seven, indicates that attainment is around the national average. A significant factor in explaining why this is lower than attainment at age 11 is the quality of teaching and learning and most particularly the:
- inconsistency in teaching styles between the two job-share teachers of the reception, Years 1 and 2 class;
 - the lack of sufficient joint planning between the two teachers.
- The previous inspection judged pupils' attainment at seven to be in line with national standards. Overall, achievement is better because the level of attainment of pupils entering the school is lower than that of the pupils previously inspected.
95. By the age of seven, most pupils count and write whole numbers up to 100, many are able to add multiples of ten up to 100, counting on and back in steps of one and ten. They know by heart their two and five times tables and these support their learning in calculations and problem-solving situations. Most are able to perform simple addition, subtraction and multiplication operations. They understand in a practical situation odd and even numbers. Higher attaining pupils have a sound understanding of addition and subtraction from oral commands and recognise simple number patterns and relationships between numbers and use this understanding when carrying out calculations. For example, some pupils when adding six to 86 understood that adding the 'sixes' was a useful strategy for quickly calculating tens and units. A minority is developing confidence in seeing relationships between addition and subtraction. For example, pupils successfully worked out the correct answer to $? + 17 = 20$ and showed clear understanding that subtraction reverses addition. In problem solving, standards vary considerably. The higher attainers are beginning to use mental strategies in solving problems; for example, when working out who scored the least and most in sports sums. All pupils read simple problems and use appropriate number operations. They are comfortable using a variety of measures; for instance, in time, weight, money and length. Higher and average attaining pupils are accurate when estimating and measuring. Lower attainers are appropriately reliant on practical resources to support their learning. Most pupils recognise and describe the names of common shapes such as rectangles, circles and triangles. The higher attaining pupils are able to identify the more complex shapes such as cylinders and pyramids. They use appropriate mathematical vocabulary and symbols. Achievement is satisfactory in mental mathematics for all pupils including those with special educational needs.

96. By the age of 11, most pupils understand place value up to 100,000. They can multiply whole numbers by ten, 100 and 1000. They add and subtract numbers to one decimal place and reduce numbers by the factor of ten, as in:

5500, 550, 55, 5.5.

They know that there is a relationship between vulgar fractions, decimal fractions and percentages, such as:

$\frac{1}{4} = 0.25 = 25\%$.

Higher attaining pupils use all four number operations to two decimal places and are able to calculate fractions and percentages of numbers and quantities. They check the results of their calculations. Pupils are able to carry out calculations involving multiplying with two digit numbers, but only the higher attainers show ease with long multiplication calculations. All pupils know the method for doubling and halving and use these skills well in their investigations. In data handling they are able to interpret accurately 'pie chart' information and record their results in fractions and decimal fractions. Pupils use these data handling skills very well in their science work, particularly when plotting the difference in an astronaut's weight on the moon and on earth. They are developing single and multiple-step strategies for solving problems by identifying the important parts of the information, using approximation and rounding up or down to estimate the answer. Using and applying mathematics is a generally strong feature in their work. Work in shape and space is sound. For example, pupils investigate accurately the properties of squares and rectangles and most have a good knowledge of the properties of three-dimensional shapes such as the cylinder, cube and pyramid. Most pupils are learning to recognise the coordinates of reflected two-dimensional shapes. Pupils use computers adequately to help them record data.

97. The National Numeracy Strategy is being effectively implemented throughout the school. Pupils' understanding of mathematical vocabulary is good, mainly because it is used to good effect by the teachers in lesson introductions. Pupils use their full range of skills and knowledge to solve mathematical problems. Also, they take responsibility for their own learning as a direct result of the targets set for them, which are realistic and challenging. The presentation of pupils' work is generally good and there is evidence of good progress since the start of the school year.

98. The quality of teaching in mathematics is good overall and stronger in Years 3 to 6. Where the teaching is very good, in a Years 5/6 lesson:

- the pupils are clearly informed of the learning objectives for that lesson, which leads to them being enthusiastic and confident;
- there is brisk pace and the teacher communicates strongly to all the pupils the challenge of the work in the variety of questions set and the pupils respond by developing original and intuitive responses to explain their methods of calculation;
- pupils and teachers are involved in mathematical dialogues; for example, about the everyday use of coordinates in map work and since it is a dialogue there is an avoidance of teacher-dominated lessons as can be seen elsewhere in other lessons;
- the teachers constantly assess pupils' work and set challenges. Tasks are well-matched to pupils' levels of attainment; for instance, lower attainers were given easier work that enabled them to work hard and briskly.

The evidence from the work scrutiny, other lessons observed and talking to pupils is that the pupils respond to challenge and enjoy working hard. This results in good behaviour and attitudes to mathematics. Pupils work independently without the need for adult supervision, working co-operatively in pairs and groups. Relationships are generally good and set a positive atmosphere where pupils can join in class discussions with confidence. There are common teaching strengths such as good

subject knowledge and well-prepared lessons where the numeracy framework is used as a basis for planning. Teachers share the learning objectives with pupils and make good use of the discussions at the end of the lesson to judge learning and point up future targets.

99. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. The teaching is less effective than in Years 3 to 6 because:
- learning objectives are not fully achieved as a result of too great an input from the teacher that leads to too much listening and not enough activity; explanations are unclear, resulting in some pupils not always understanding the task and becoming bored and restless;
 - the whole-class discussion at the end of the lesson is not always used effectively to provide pupils with sufficient information on what they have learnt and areas requiring further development.
- On these occasions, pupils' progress is slower than it ought to be. There is also a lack of consistency in the methods of the two teachers who job share. This is because there is not a set time for these teachers to plan their work together. Overall, however, progress is satisfactory. Homework effectively reinforces learning, particularly in the learning of times tables.
100. Marking is good in Years 3 to 6 because of the constructive comments, but only satisfactory in other year groups, where such comments are sometimes not as well focused on improvement.
101. Pupils develop their skills of numeracy in other subjects satisfactorily at both key stages. There are examples of useful work on data handling in science and geography, also symmetry and tessellation work in art. Pupils are soundly using information and communication technology to help them to develop their mathematical skills.
102. The mathematics curriculum is well planned. Comprehensive long, medium and short-term planning ensures that pupils make good progress as they move through the school. The co-ordinator is the Headteacher, and he works closely with other subject co-ordinators and staff. This effective partnership contributes to the raising of standards throughout the school. There is regular checking of teachers' planning and monitoring of teaching. Assessment procedures are effective. There is a good range of resources, which are organised well and easily accessible to staff. The subject meets statutory requirements.

SCIENCE

103. By the age of 11, standards of attainment in science are above expectations and pupils achieve well. This is an improvement since the last inspection and means that pupils have more than kept pace with the rise in standards seen nationally. They have managed to do this because the teaching is good and the pupils work hard. By the age of seven, pupils' attainment is broadly in line with expectations and pupils achieve satisfactorily. This is a similar picture to that seen at the last inspection. Standards have been maintained, although when compared to other schools very few pupils reach the higher Level 3. The school supports pupils with special educational needs well and these pupils make good progress in all classes.
104. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have a good knowledge of all aspects of the National Curriculum and a particularly good understanding of investigative work. This is seen; for example, in the work on water and evaporation. Pupils set up their own

experiments, make predictions, collect and examine data and then write sensible conclusions. They display their results in useful ways with graphs, tables and spreadsheets and look at the figures critically; for example, 'The cup in the fridge did not lose any water but strangely gained 10cc'. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 work in a similar way; for instance, in the work on shadows they made careful measurements in millimetres. and organised the writing and results in their own way. When separating liquids and solids, they show that they understand fair testing and how the results could be invalid.

105. By the end of Year 2, pupils are developing a satisfactory fund of knowledge about their environment and how it functions. They can investigate and explain what they see, using diagrams and labels well; for example, in the work on electricity or sorting materials. They write good notes with minimum help; for example, when they study growth or find out which fabric is the most waterproof. Pupils know how to make fair comparisons, as when they look at shoe size and height. However, they are not given enough opportunities to use all these scientific skills in more independent work.
106. Overall, teaching and learning are good. The quality of teaching and learning is good in Years 3 to 6. Teachers set challenging work, which makes pupils think for themselves. They train pupils to predict what might happen and then to question the results, looking at the evidence carefully. This is seen; for example, in the work on balanced and unbalanced forces in Years 5 and 6. A good feature of the teaching is that investigators are sometimes allowed to get things wrong. The teachers do not supply quick answers. Instead, the teachers ask plenty of questions in lessons and pupils' books are full of comments, such as 'Think what are you investigating here' or 'But what conditions are you testing?'. There are good examples of these in Years 3/4 lessons on friction, or Years 5 and 6 work on evaporation. These questions help pupils to understand scientific ideas and give them confidence to investigate further. Another good feature of the teaching in the junior classes is that science lessons are related to everyday situations. For example, when Years 3 and 4 study materials and electric circuits the teacher writes, 'Brilliant, these are just the sorts of questions that manufacturers ask'. This helps pupils to understand the uses of science. Teachers' marking in the older classes is very good and is one of the reasons for pupils' good progress. There are frequent comments that clarify points and encourage further effort.
107. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. Teachers mark thoroughly, but their comments are usually more general than those found in the older classes. Teaching is planned in detail and gives pupils a solid foundation of knowledge and practical experience. However, it lacks the challenge and excitement seen in the other classes.
108. Pupils in all classes thoroughly enjoy their science lessons. They remember very well what they did and what they discovered. They work very hard and know that they are doing well. Pupils' writing about their findings and their way of conducting the work is particularly good. In the junior classes they do not use worksheets, but write freely and enthusiastically about what they are learning.
109. Management of the subject is satisfactory. Science has not been a priority for development in recent years. The scheme of work uses an adapted version of national guidelines and makes good provision for the range of learning needs within the school. It provides a secure base for ensuring that all areas of science are taught effectively. There are good systems to record what pupils know and understand. The school has begun to use information and communication technology in science

lessons to present results, but this could be extended; for example, in the use of sensors. There are no formal systems in place yet to look at lessons or teachers' planning. The school is aware that this will be needed if the many strengths are to be built on and extended to all classes. The subject meets statutory requirements.

ART AND DESIGN

110. Owing to timetable restrictions, it was possible to see lessons in Years 3 and 4 and Years 5 and 6, only. Consequently, the teaching judgement is for those years only. However, there is a sufficient range of evidence from displays and discussions with pupils and staff to judge attainment throughout the school.
111. By the ages of seven and 11, pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations and achievement is satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs make sound progress. These findings are similar to those of the last inspection.
112. By the age of seven, pupils are skilled at mixing colours in a range of materials. The work on display, the decorated letters and the Chinese blossom trees, are good examples of this. Discussing paint mixing, pupils verbally illustrate their knowledge and understanding by citing the camouflaging qualities of the chameleon. Pupils develop a wide range of techniques that they usefully apply to their work in other subjects; for example, footprints from paint are used in mathematics data handling to find out the relationship of 'big', 'bigger' and 'biggest'. Pupils use information and communication technology skills well when using a drawing program.
113. By the age of 11, pupils are confident and competent at drawing. For example, pupils observe closely the main features of the adjoining churchyard and compare these views and impressions with those discussed in an earlier lesson. They use photographs and sketches to compare and they discuss their own work at length. Displays of previous work provide pupils with the opportunity to analyse close observations and highlight their ideas about light, shade and tone. Pupils' skills in observational drawing are good because they effectively collect evidence of the subject and adapt and improve their work in the light of constructive criticism from peers and staff.
114. Throughout the school, pupils become increasingly aware of the work of a wide range of artists; for instance, Van Gogh, Lowry and Monet. Pupils attitudes to the subject are generally very good and they are well motivated.
115. The quality of teaching in the Years 3/4 lesson observed was satisfactory and the strengths in the teaching included:
 - good planning that includes an opportunity to recap on previous work on three-dimensional objects;
 - the provision of helpful photographs of a range of sculptures, including the Statue of Liberty;
 - the availability of useful resources, such as chicken wire to make the frame of a sculpture.

However, the teacher did not take the opportunity to introduce a real sculpture, or take advantage of sculptures in the local community; for instance, in the neighbouring church. In the good Years 5/6 lesson, the lesson strongly explores a range of observational techniques, from first-hand visits to the churchyard to the extensive use of photographs. These approaches underline the fact that close analysis of information is necessary if an accurate and life-like image is to be produced. The impact of this level of detail is that pupils develop greater reserves of confidence and

perseverance, which ensure that there are no cries of 'I can't draw!'. The lesson was busy and intense and the teacher showed good knowledge that helped to provide good and challenging questioning, within an inquiring 'workshop' atmosphere.

116. There is a sound policy and useful framework that gives clear guidance in all areas of the curriculum, including the use of information and communication technology. It includes the study of a sufficient number of artists and media and makes a good contribution to pupils' appreciation of the arts. The art co-ordinator has a useful day-to-day role in ensuring that resources are available and sufficient to support the curriculum and teaching. The headteacher is responsible for the strategic development of the subject and he maintains a strong role in checking provision and standards. Resources are adequate for the implementation of the school's programme.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

117. Standards at ages seven and 11 are in line with those expected nationally. This is a sound improvement since the previous inspection. At that time, standards were below expectations in all classes and the range of work offered was insufficient. Pupils now have regular opportunities to design and make. They enjoy their lessons, work hard and, as a result, pupils of all abilities are now making satisfactory progress. However, some pupils could do more. In some of the work seen, teachers underestimate what pupils can do. Higher attaining pupils have insufficient opportunities to generate their own ideas for products, handle more difficult materials and use a greater variety of fastenings and finishes.
118. The new scheme of work has been in operation for less than a year and, as a result, only a little previous work was available during the inspection. Younger pupils do some good design work for a supermarket trolley and considering the needs of the user; for example, 'It's for my dad, he has a bad back'. However, there is insufficient evidence of ongoing design during and after the making process; for example, explaining why something was changed or whether it worked better. In Years 3 and 4 pupils design and make sandwiches. This work is effective because pupils follow the whole process of research, production and evaluation. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 make successful moving vehicles. They evaluate the performance and try to improve it. They design and make bridges, showing a good standard of construction and finish.
119. It is not possible to make an overall judgement about teaching. In the only lesson seen, in the Years 1/2 class, teaching was satisfactory. Each pupil made a winding mechanism. The work was well planned and prepared, with very good support for the younger pupils. The teacher explained the task clearly with good regard for health and safety. However, although the teacher asked good questions to elicit pupils' design ideas, the material supplied allowed only one type of design. As a result, some pupils were unable to extend their learning.
120. The school has satisfactorily resolved most of the criticisms made in the last inspection and standards have improved. The subject leader is aware that to reach higher levels there is a need to check planning and teaching to ensure that all the elements of designing and evaluating are included in lessons. The school keeps records of pupils' achievements, but these are unsatisfactory because they are not always used to set new challenges at the right level. The good scheme of work has been reorganised, using national guidelines. It covers a two-year cycle, but is not yet

fully in place. Consequently, teachers are not fully familiar and confident with design and technology work. However, the school is well placed to raise standards further because the pupils are keen to learn and the adults are keen to develop their expertise.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

121. Owing to timetable arrangements, only one lesson was observed during the inspection and that was a geography lesson in the reception, Years 1/2 class. Other evidence includes scrutiny of pupils' work, teachers' plans and discussions with pupils and teachers. From this, it is clear that pupils' attainment, at ages seven and 11, in geography and history is in line with national expectations, but that the standards ought to be higher. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make unsatisfactory progress in the development of geographical and historical skills, knowledge and understanding as they move through the school. These findings are similar to those reported at the last inspection. However, satisfactory improvements have been made to the planning and judging of pupils' work through the adoption of national guidelines.
122. In geography, all classes develop pupils' mapping skills and by Year 6 the majority use -coordinates and four and six-figure grid references confidently. In Years 1 and 2, early mapping skills and drawings of plans of objects and rooms develop into a study of the fictional 'Isle of Struay' as a comparison with Albury. Pupils accurately recognise the differences in the two places; for instance:
- that the houses on the island are often a long distance apart, whereas this is much less so in and around Albury;
 - that the mail comes to the island by boat and to Albury in a van.
- These early indications of human geography show that the pupils have a keen interest and sound general knowledge. Higher attainers have a good knowledge of the countries of the United Kingdom and identify Albury on the map. Most pupils know that Albury is 'near to London'. There are useful links with mathematics when pupils draw up graphs that illustrate the method of travelling to school. In Years 3 to 6, sound skills in map work in British Isles and world geography lead to detailed studies of mountain ranges and deserts and useful comparisons with life in the villages of the Andes. Pupils use successfully CD-ROMs and the Internet to find information about mountain ranges and they follow this up for homework. Across the school, pupils have a positive attitude to their work. They listen carefully and respond well to questions. They sustain concentration and often work well together in pairs. They take care in the presentation of their work, show interest and are enthusiastic.
123. In history, pupils' factual knowledge is better than their ability to interpret historical sources and use the information to produce interesting work. Skills of enquiry are not systematically developed and over-reliance on worksheets results in heavily fact-based learning. This adversely affects the opportunities for independent learning, particularly for higher attaining pupils. In Years 1 and 2, pupils know about famous characters such as Elizabeth I and Guy Fawkes and know that homes and transport have developed through time. In Years 3 to 6, pupils empathise carefully with people from history such as Years 3 and 4 expressing probable feelings of people under attack from Viking raiders. Years 5 and 6 pupils can separate fact from opinion when imagining how life was different in Victorian times, most particularly the lives of children and the jobs that people held. They understand that there was an unequal situation that depended on whether people were from rich or poor families. Resultant written work is usually factual and there are too few opportunities for all pupils to regularly speak during class discussions about their reasoning or justify their

contributions. While progress in factual learning is satisfactory for all pupils, opportunities to reflect on and record other historical learning are neither regularly nor progressively provided as pupils mature. Pupils with special educational needs, who are often enthusiastic about the subject, are appropriately involved in factual introductions and supported with written work, but are often not actively involved in more open-ended activities.

124. It is not possible to judge teaching because of insufficient lessons seen. In the one geography lesson seen the quality of teaching was satisfactory. The strengths include:

- good subject knowledge and understanding, which enable the teacher to draw pupils' attention to similarities and differences between Struay and Albury;
- good use of commercial and -homemade resources that provide the pupils with a clear view of the island;
- appropriate questioning to develop ideas and extend pupils' answers further;
- the discussion at the end of the lesson was used well to reinforce key learning points.

In this lesson, pupils' learning was satisfactory. Pupils were eager to answer questions and offer their own thoughts. Appropriate attention was given to basic skills and vocabulary and pertinent interventions ensured that pupils remained on task and completed the set work. Overall, the amount of work on display or in books was less than expected. Insufficient use is made of information and communication technology and the library, with Year 6 pupils reporting that they have only used the library five or six times since September.

125. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable, enthusiastic and works hard to maintain a sound range and quantity of resources on a small budget. Procedures for assessing pupils' work are not consistent throughout the school. The policy and schemes of work are usefully based on the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority Programmes of Study. Resources are adequate, well maintained and easily accessible to both pupils and teachers. The co-ordinator has not had the chance to see classroom practice, or to influence colleagues.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

126. In Years 2 and 6, standards are in line with national expectations. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when standards by the end of Year 6 were judged to be below expectations. The school has invested in new computers, revised the curriculum and organised training for all staff. Teaching is good and the pupils work hard. These are the main reasons for the rise in standards. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, are now making rapid progress.

127. By the end of Year 2, pupils can open and use a word-processing program. They use the keyboard confidently and can improve the appearance of their text. They use a drawing programme and can enter data to make simple graphs. Pupils can save, retrieve and print without help. They enjoy returning to a piece of work to develop their ideas; for example, when writing long stories.

128. By the end of Year 6, pupils combine text, pictures and graphics; for example, to make attractive cards or eye-catching posters. They order text using cut and paste. Pupils can make and use spreadsheets confidently. They know how to use a formula; for example, to calculate the area of irregular shapes. They enter information in a simple database and display the information in various ways. All pupils can give instructions to control a floor robot and can predict the results. They use a graphics programme to create and arrange images; for example, when they make a painting in the style of Matisse. Pupils can use a search engine sensibly and find information on the Internet. The school has not yet been able to teach e-mail, but some pupils have learnt this at home.
129. Teaching in the subject is good throughout the school, both in direct teaching of information and communication technology skills and when using these in other subjects. Teachers' subject knowledge is good; they explain clearly and ask challenging questions. A strength of the teaching is the emphasis on the uses of technology outside school; for example, in lessons on spreadsheets or robotic devices. This enables pupils to discuss the subject with knowledge and understanding. Pupils respond to the good teaching by exploring and experimenting purposefully, overcoming problems and becoming very involved in what they do.
130. Teachers make good use of information and communication technology to support learning in other subjects. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 study holiday literature in English lessons. They consider issues such as bias, opinion and half-truths and then present their own versions using text and graphics. Pupils in all classes make graphs and charts to present information in mathematics lessons and older pupils use a spreadsheet to record and predict evaporation rates. These tools help pupils to see patterns in their data and improve their understanding.
131. Leadership in the subject is good. Progress was slow after the last inspection, due to problems with equipment and finance, but a great deal has been achieved since then. Parents with computer expertise have been involved in choosing new equipment. The curriculum is now broad and balanced and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Good support materials have been bought to ensure the best use of lesson time. Pupils move to other classes or offices when more machines are needed. This works well, they are polite and do not disrupt lessons. Training for staff is a priority and teachers have appreciated the quality of this. The school has good arrangements for technical support. A useful assessment system is in place, which enables skills and knowledge to be built on from year to year. Pupils keep samples of their work on disks as a record of progress. This work is also used to keep a check on standards through the school, although there is, as yet, no monitoring of teaching. Overall, the combination of a challenging curriculum, good direct teaching and well-organised use of the new computers, results in positive attitudes and good progress. The school is well placed to keep pace with the rapidly rising standards seen nationally.

MUSIC

132. By the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils' attainment in music matches the levels expected for seven and 11-year-olds. Pupils enjoy a good range of interesting activities, they listen carefully and work well together. This enables all pupils, including those with special educational needs, to make satisfactory progress. A particular strength is that pupils know about and explore, music of all types and from a variety of cultures. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

133. Younger pupils sing well, they have a sense of rhythm and are able to keep in tune with others. They know the names of many instruments, including some African ones. Pupils listen intently to new pieces and can talk about rhythms, sounds and mood, as when one Year 2 boy decided 'it was brilliant and jumpy, I like the sticks at the beginning, they made a good sound'.
134. Older pupils continue to make steady progress. In Years 3 and 4, for example, pupils successfully created and improvised a musical poem, using their voices and one or two instruments to accompany the words. These pupils can select suitable instruments and play them well to match the rhythm and theme of the poems. In another lesson the pupils chose CDs from home and wrote about their chosen song. They presented this to the class and sang some verses. Pupils listen well to this sort of work and they discuss using words like 'dynamics' or 'percussion'. By Year 6, pupils sing with increasing control and technique. They can recognise where improvement in performance is needed and are willing to work on a song. Almost all the pupils take part in school productions; they remember these well and are proud of their efforts. Most pupils know how to read music and enjoy composing and playing together. They can identify, and talk about, elements of classical, jazz and popular music, as well as music from many parts of the world.
135. The school employs a specialist music teacher who was absent during the inspection. However, from the evidence of pupils' ability, attitudes and their written work, the quality of teaching is at least satisfactory. In the music lessons seen, the teaching was good. The knowledge and enthusiasm of the headteacher and his good relationships with the pupils means that all classes continue to learn. Questions and tasks are challenging, but enjoyable. As a result, pupils are enthusiastic, well behaved and make constructive and thoughtful comments.
136. Music contributes appropriately to pupils' personal development. They have time to listen to and reflect on music in assemblies and have opportunities to relate these to their own moods and emotions. The school celebrates achievements in playing or composing; for example, a beginner on cornet played 'Happy Birthday' in assembly to great acclaim. Since the last inspection the school has revised the music scheme of work and renewed the store of instruments. There is a popular recorder club. The programme is enriched whenever possible by visitors; for example, an African drum group. Pupils take part in local music festivals. Music is not currently a priority for development. If standards are to improve further, the school will need to consider its priorities for the next two or three years and plan how to make the best use of the expertise and time available.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

137. Only a very small part of the work in the subject could be observed: one lesson on the development of games skills in Years 1 and 2. Consequently, it is not possible to make a secure judgement about the overall standards of attainment, achievement, teaching and learning. However, scrutiny of plans and discussions with pupils and staff indicate clearly that the school is unable to provide a full range of activities for pupils. This is because the school does not have the facilities to teach gymnastics. The hall is unsuitable and there is a lack of appropriate apparatus. Other areas of learning are covered adequately and the school is successful in achieving good standards in swimming and competitive sports against similarly sized schools.

138. In the single lesson observed, the seven-year-old pupils' games skills met expectations. Generally, pupils are agile, willing to provide constructive criticism about others' performance and they know and understand that exercise has an effect on their body. Throwing and catching skills are adequate, with most pupils watching the ball, or quoit, onto the target and also attempting successfully to catch the ball against the body. This is generally accurate work and an adequate foundation for activities that require good co-ordination of hand and eye, such as rounders and cricket. Throughout the lesson, pupils are highly enthusiastic, listen quite carefully to instructions and try very hard to improve their skills and techniques.
139. The quality of teaching in the lesson observed was satisfactory. The lesson began with an active warm-up, which tested pupils' physical and mental resources because the pupils had to react to commands by completing an activity. Pupils worked hard in this opening session. However, the level of activity diminished afterwards because of the amount and frequency of instructions, often relating to behaviour that was satisfactory. Helpful reminders about health and safety concerns are appropriate. Pupils benefit from seeing their peers perform skills and techniques, when the teacher and assistant identify good practice.
140. Management of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator checks provision by matching teachers' planning to the school's programme through sampling their record sheets. Areas for development are identified annually through the audit process, mainly in relation to resources. There is also a very useful link with a local school for the sharing of resources. The school's provision for swimming is good, with pupils having a weekly session throughout their school career. Activities organised outside lessons are adequate and the school has won football and swimming tournaments for small schools. Overall, resources are adequate for the areas of learning that the school provides. The internal accommodation is inadequate, but the school is in negotiation with the local authorities to have access to the village hall.