

INSPECTION REPORT

ST PAUL'S CofE (VA) PRIMARY SCHOOL

Langleybury, Watford

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117417

Headteacher: Mrs Allyson Woodhouse

Reporting inspector: Mrs Patricia Davies
22460

Dates of inspection: 10th – 13th September, 2001

Inspection number: 197678

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 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Langleybury Lane
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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Mike Monk

Date of previous inspection: 29th September, 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
22460	Mrs Patricia Davies	Registered inspector	Mathematics; Art and design; Design and technology; Physical education; Provision for pupils with special educational needs.	The school's results and achievements; How well pupils are taught.
9053	Mrs Vivienne Phillips	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development; How well the school cares for its pupils. How the school works in partnership with parents.
23233	Miss Jo-Anne Cheadle	Team inspector	Science; Geography; Information and communication technology; Music; Equality of opportunity.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils.
3678	Mrs Jo Harris	Team inspector	English; History; Areas of learning for the Foundation Stage.	How well the school is led and managed.

The inspection contractor was:

e-Qualitas Ltd, Langshaw, Pastens Road, Limpsfield Chart, OXTED, Surrey RH8 ORE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Paul's is a voluntary aided primary school. Although numbers have risen since the time of the previous inspection, with 166 pupils, the school remains below average in size. Numbers vary between year groups. Where they are particularly small, classes are formed from two age groups. The school has a nursery class and these children currently form one group with those of reception age. Nearly five per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, slightly lower than at the last inspection and below average nationally. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs has doubled and is now 26 per cent. Most are at an early stage of need and one pupil has a Statement of special educational need. Nine per cent of pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds. The attainment of children when they enter the reception group is similar to that found nationally. Since the last inspection, the school has experienced a period of uncertainty in its management. A majority of the staff have been appointed since that time.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

St Paul's is an improving school, providing a sound education. Staffing and management are now more stable. Systems for whole-school improvement are being developed and successfully implemented. There is a good capacity for further improvement. Pupils in Year 6 are attaining standards expected for their age. The quality of teaching and leadership and management is satisfactory, with strengths in both. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- All pupils achieve well in reading and standards are above national expectations in Years 2 and 6. Pupils in the current Year 2 are reaching standards above those expected nationally in English, mathematics and history because of the good teaching they receive in Years 1 and 2.
- Children in the nursery and reception class have a good start to their education and progress well as a result of high quality teaching.
- The good leadership of the headteacher and her deputy has created a positive climate for improvement through team work. Identified priorities for improvement are highly appropriate to the school's present needs.
- Very high quality care and a focus on pupils' wellbeing ensure pupils are happy to learn and they behave well.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

- Standards in information and communication technology, particularly in Years 3 to 6;
- The systematic and rigorous monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning by senior and key staff and governors, in order to raise standards further in all subjects;
- The collection and use of assessment information to give staff detailed information about the achievement and progress of all pupils so that planned work focuses more closely on the needs of groups and individual pupils.

These areas are already being improved. The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

There has been satisfactory improvement overall since the school was last inspected in late September, 1997. Much of this improvement has taken place comparatively recently and, in some cases, has not had time to make a full impact on standards and the quality of teaching and learning. This is true of information and communication technology (ICT) in

Years 3 to 6. The overall quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 has improved and pupils in Year 2 are now reaching higher standards in English and mathematics. Pupils' attitudes to school, their behaviour and their relationships with others are now good. Other good improvements have taken place within the curriculum, to provision for pupils with special educational needs and to moral and social provision and assessment procedures. Arrangements for ensuring pupils' protection and welfare are now of a high quality. Most importantly, leadership and management are effective and a good working relationship has been established with the governing body.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with				Key
	All schools			Similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	C	E	B	C	<i>well above average</i> A
Mathematics	D	D	C	E	<i>above average</i> B
Science	D	C	B	D	<i>average</i> C
					<i>below average</i> D
					<i>well below average</i> E

Results have improved in mathematics and science each year since 1997. English results were significantly higher in 2000 than in the previous year. The unpublished results for the tests in 2001 show a further improvement, particularly in the percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 5. The school attributes this success to the positive effects of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy and an improvement in reading resources. Year groups vary in size and therefore care should be taken in looking at trends over time. The group of pupils taking the tests in 2000 was small. So too is the present Year 6. School targets for these tests were exceeded in 2000 and 2001. These targets were not based on detailed analysis of pupils' attainment. Inspection evidence, early in the school year, shows the present Year 6 to be achieving satisfactorily and reaching standards close to national expectations in English, mathematics and science. Standards are above national expectations in reading. Limited evidence of higher achievement was seen in science work in books. This is because pupils are taught well the knowledge they need for the science tests, but not enough emphasis is given to developing scientific investigative skills. Pupils are achieving well in Years 1 and 2 as a result of good teaching and good improvements to the curriculum. Pupils in Year 2 are reaching above average standards in English, mathematics and history. Standards in all other subjects are average, with the exception of history in Year 2 where they are above average. Pupils do not achieve well enough in information and communication technology in Year 3 through to Year 6, and by the time Year 6 pupils leave the school they have not reached expected standards. There was not enough evidence for overall judgements for design and technology and physical education.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils of all ages show enthusiasm for school and work well.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Most pupils behave very well most of the time but some are restless when tasks are too easy.
Personal development and relationships	Good, especially relationships. Given the chance, pupils use their initiative well. Their independent skills are less well developed.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Term time holiday absences are preventing the school reaching past high levels of attendance.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Pupils achieve well in the nursery and reception class because of the very good teaching planned to meet their particular needs and interests. They continue to make good progress in Years 1 and 2 because teaching is good. Pupils with special educational needs involved in small group fast track sessions are also well taught. Many lessons are enhanced by varied and stimulating activities that capture pupils' enthusiasm and attention, and they work with sustained concentration. Learning in English and mathematics is often reinforced in this way. Where teaching is strongest, it is pacy and lively and relationships are warm and encouraging. Effective discussion with focused questioning checks individual understanding which then influences what is taught. When these qualities come together most powerfully, teaching is excellent. English and mathematics are well taught in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactorily taught in Years 3 to 6, where teachers are sometimes not fully confident with the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy. Other weaknesses include missed opportunities to improve understanding or to challenge pupils to achieve better. Sometimes time is not well used or activities are too tightly controlled which prevents pupils from developing independent learning skills. Sometimes, weaknesses prevent pupils from making enough progress and teaching is unsatisfactory. This sometimes happens at Key Stage 2, but does not reflect the overall quality of teaching in these classes. Subject skills have not been well taught in many subjects, most significantly in ICT, but this is improving because of developments to the curriculum. Music and science, and literacy and numeracy skills, are satisfactorily taught. There was not enough evidence to make overall judgements about the quality of teaching and learning in all other subjects.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. Recent subject planning is of good quality and focuses on the systematic development of understanding and skills, but is too new to have made a full impact, particularly on older pupils.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. Progress is regularly monitored and some pupils make good progress against their individual targets. Information and targets are sometimes too broad.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Provision for moral and social development is good. It is sound for spiritual and cultural development, but there are not enough planned opportunities in lessons to increase pupils' experience in these areas.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school effectively promotes good behaviour. Procedures are satisfactory for assessing academic achievement. However, information from assessment is not detailed enough to help teachers with their planning.

The school has worked hard to improve links with parents, and they are now good.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher has a clear vision and, together with the deputy headteacher, gives a strong sense of direction. Improved teamwork is allowing co-ordinators to develop their subjects and to support colleagues.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory overall. They have very good relationships with the school and a good knowledge of its strengths and weaknesses. Their active involvement in strategic planning is insufficiently developed.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Unsatisfactory. The evaluation of teaching and learning is not yet rigorous enough and the subject co-ordinators' monitoring role is under-developed.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. The school is increasingly seeking the best value for the money it spends.

Staffing and accommodation are satisfactory. There is a good team of support staff. Learning resources are adequate, except for ICT where more are needed.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school is well led and managed. • Their children like coming to school. • Teaching is good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quality of information about children's progress. • Activities outside of lessons. • The setting of homework.

Parental satisfaction with the school has increased and is good overall, with many parents holding very positive views. Inspection evidence confirms much of what parents like about the school. Homework and the range of activities outside of lessons were found to be satisfactory. While annual reports have been improved, they do not always give parents a clear idea of children's levels of understanding or age-related attainment.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Attainment on entry to the nursery is generally in line with expectations for children of this age. Initial assessments, made in the first few weeks after children reach reception age, indicate that standards are broadly average. Last year, the level of mathematical attainment was low, while inspection evidence indicates that children in the present reception group are attaining above average standards overall. These children achieve well over time, and often very well in lessons. This is because teaching is of a high quality. The well-planned and broad curriculum meets the needs and interests of all the children, including those with special educational needs. It is likely that the current reception children will achieve most of the early learning goals, and exceed them in personal and social development and in knowledge and understanding of the world.

2. Year groups tend to vary in size, and so care should be taken when looking at comparisons in results over time. The group of Year 6 pupils taking the national tests in 2000 was small, whereas the group taking the tests in 2001 was a larger group. Year 6 pupils in 2000 attained standards that were above national averages in English and science and broadly in line in mathematics. These results were average in comparison with similar schools in English, but were below average for science and well below in mathematics. While the proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 was average for science, it was below average in English and well below for mathematics. Over time, boys have generally performed better than girls in mathematics. Although the school's trend has been below the national trend, there has been year on year increases in the test results in mathematics and science since 1997. Results in English were also significantly higher than those reached in 1999. The school's success has been marked by a recent Government Achievement Award, and is reflected in its most recent unpublished results from the tests taken in 2001, where results have improved further.

3. In the national tests in 2000 for pupils in Year 2, standards were average in writing, but were below average in reading and mathematics. These results were all well below average when compared with similar schools. Fewer pupils achieved the higher Level 3 in reading and mathematics than was found nationally. In these tests, boys did not perform as well as girls. Raising boys' achievement is currently a school priority. Teacher assessments for science were below the national average, with the lowest standards found in relation to pupils' investigative skills. These were well below average, as was the proportion of pupils reaching the higher level.

4. The results of the most recent national tests, taken in 2001, show further improvement on those of the previous year for pupils in both Years 2 and 6. This is particularly significant for the percentage of pupils attaining at the higher levels. For example, the percentage of pupils achieving at the higher levels in mathematics increased by just over 20 per cent in Year 6, and by over 30 per cent in Year 2. Similar increases occurred in English in the tests for Year 6 and in reading in Year 2. The percentage of Year 2 pupils attaining the higher level in reading, for example, rose by 37 per cent. The school attributes this success to the positive impact of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, and particularly the school's focus on mental mathematics and on the improvement of reading resources. Pupils in Year 6 were also well prepared for the knowledge content of the science tests. Percentage targets set by the school for these tests in 2000 and 2001 were exceeded. These were not based on detailed analysis of pupils' attainment and the school plans to improve the accuracy of future target setting as part of its development of assessment

procedures.

5. Inspection evidence shows pupils achieving well in Years 1 and 2 as a result of good quality teaching. Pupils in the present Year 2 are attaining standards above national expectations in English and mathematics, which is a good improvement on the average standards found at the time of the last inspection. Standards have also improved in information and communication technology (ICT) and Year 2 pupils are now attaining national expectations. Achievement at Key Stage 2 is satisfactory. The present Year 6 is a small group of pupils and, early in the school year, there is limited evidence of higher achievement in comparison with the work of the previous Year 6. These pupils are attaining average standards in English overall, and in mathematics and science, although standards are above average in reading. Improvements to the curriculum have had a positive impact at both key stages, but they have had a stronger effect on achievement in Years 1 and 2 than at Key Stage 2. The achievement of these older pupils has increased because they are now benefiting from recent improvements to teaching and to the curriculum, although they have not had the systematic development of skills and understanding over time. Some staff at Key Stage 2 are not fully confident when teaching the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy and this sometimes reduces the quality of teaching. Additionally, whilst work is broadly modified to accommodate pupils of different abilities it is not sufficiently fine-tuned to match individual needs. This is because assessment is not yet focusing closely enough on the achievement of individual pupils. Consequently, work is sometimes not challenging enough, for example in science, and particularly for the more able. As a result of these factors, pupils do not always make enough progress in lessons. Pupils at Key Stage 2 are not achieving as well as they could in ICT because they do not get enough experience of working on computers to build on the skills they have already learnt. Consequently, they do not reach the expected standards for their age. Those pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress as a whole. Pupils taking part in focused small group work away from the classroom make good progress.

6. Generally, pupils achieve satisfactorily in other subjects. Standards are as expected in art and design, geography and music. While they are average in history for pupils in Year 6, they are above average for pupils in Year 2. There was not enough evidence to make overall judgements in design and technology or physical education. Games skills were below expectations for pupils in Year 6. The small amount of design and technology work, seen on display and in pupils' books from last year, was of an expected level.

7. Many pupils are articulate and confident speakers, but a few are reticent. Most listen attentively. Pupils enjoy reading. More able Year 2 pupils read fluently, and, while lower attainers are more hesitant, they successfully use a range of strategies to read unknown words. More able pupils spell and punctuate their written work competently. Pupils write in a range of styles, using a wide vocabulary and sustaining ideas. By Year 6, more able pupils read challenging books fluently, discussing favourite authors and convincingly justifying their choices. Some others are less confident in talking about books. Most have a secure understanding of book-related vocabulary. However, there are too few opportunities to develop research skills in subjects such as history and ICT, and limited use of the library is made to encourage these skills. Pupils in Year 6 continue to write in a good range of styles, and some writing uses evocative language and imagery. However, they do not have enough experience of extended writing. Standards of handwriting and presentation are unsatisfactory overall, particularly at Key Stage 2. Unsatisfactory presentation was also found in mathematics and science books.

8. At the very beginning of the school year, more able pupils in Year 2 confidently use mathematical vocabulary. They add two digit numbers together and are beginning to apply

rules to help them calculate. Many add and subtract numbers to 20 and explain what they are doing. Pupils in Year 6 are generally confident with numbers up to 1000 and beyond. The use and application of mathematical knowledge is increasingly encouraged during numeracy activities and some more able pupils securely applied their knowledge to estimating multiplication sums involving two and three digit numbers, but most pupils do not confidently apply their knowledge of place value to new situations. They are also slow to respond in mental mathematics sessions. However, some more able pupils could calculate mentally with numbers having two decimal places.

9. Pupils in both Years 2 and 6 show a good recall of previously learned scientific knowledge. Pupils in Year 2, for example, could remember why milk is important for healthy teeth and bones and why exercise is necessary for good health. The implications of new information are quickly grasped. Pupils understand the notion of a fair test and can explain why this is necessary. They make sensible predictions for results. More able and middle attaining pupils explain the reasoning behind their predictions, for example why a car would travel more quickly down a ramp than on a flat surface. Lower attaining pupils in Year 6 explained fully about ball and socket joints in the human body and went on to learn about hinge joints. By the end of the lesson, almost all were able to write an explanation of how this joint works. Investigative skills, however, are not well developed because there too few challenging opportunities throughout the school for pupils to plan experiments or ask questions to help them explore ideas, direct their own learning or apply their scientific knowledge.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Since the last inspection, the attitudes, behaviour and personal development of pupils have improved well. This is as a result of the whole school's attention to creating a happy, secure atmosphere in which pupils can work and play. During this inspection pupils' attitudes and behaviour in lessons were never less than satisfactory. They were good or better in 80 per cent of lessons, including 20 per cent which were very good.

11. Pupils of all ages show enthusiasm for school and are willing to work. Their attitudes to different activities are good. Their positive approach to work and play helps them to learn even when they are sometimes asked to do tasks that are too easy or unclear to them. In lessons where work is very well matched to the strengths and weaknesses of groups and individuals, pupils relish the challenge and strive to be successful. For instance, in the reception group, when the teacher asked a child if she could write a "kicking k", her response was "I'll have a good try", followed by "Look, I've done the flick at the end". However, many of the older pupils do not take enough pride in the presentation of their work.

12. Behaviour is good. Around the school, pupils are well mannered and co-operative. The dining area and playground are very civilised and happy places, with no sign of any form of unpleasant behaviour or bullying. Pupils come into assemblies and walk to church in a very orderly way. Most children behave very well most of the time, which helps them to learn. There are sometimes examples of restlessness or inattention where there is a mismatch between the work set and pupils' level of understanding or ground rules for behaviour have not been fully established at the beginning of the school year. There have been no exclusions.

13. Personal development is good overall. Pupils use their initiative well, for example, in the care they take of the school garden and of each other, being quick to show kindness.

Year 6 pupils take their responsibilities seriously. The introduction of playground 'buddies' has given pupils the opportunity to help others and ensure that no one is left out of playground activities. Pupils understand the effect of not having anyone to play with and of bullying. However, there are not enough opportunities in lessons for them to think about or plan their work, or to discuss their opinions and experiences. As a result, their curiosity, independence and understanding of other people's values are less well developed than their basic concern for others. They get on well with each other and with adults. Good relationships are an important factor in their personal and academic development, contributing to a positive atmosphere in which to work and play.

14. Attendance is satisfactory. It is close to the national average. Pupils have to travel from well beyond the school site, which is surrounded by fields. Transport problems contribute to some instances of lateness and absence. The number of term time holiday absences is preventing the school from reaching the high levels of attendance reported in the past. There is no firm guidance for parents on the school's concern about holiday absences in the prospectus or other documents. There is also a lack of clarity about the adverse effects of such absences on pupils' achievement, particularly the impact of missed literacy and numeracy lessons.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

15. Evidence from lessons seen during this inspection and from pupils' work in their books and on display, shows the overall quality of teaching and learning to be satisfactory. The youngest children make a good start to their school life in the nursery and reception class where the quality of teaching is high. Teaching and learning are good in Years 1 and 2. This represents an improvement on the findings of the last inspection, and particularly in relation to the teaching of English in these classes. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall at Key Stage 2. During this inspection, teaching was satisfactory or better in 90 per cent of lessons. Of these, 37 per cent were good and 13 per cent were very good. One lesson at Key Stage 1 was excellent. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than three percentage points. Teaching was unsatisfactory in ten per cent of lessons. The few unsatisfactory lessons seen at Key Stage 2, are not representative of the teaching quality as a whole in these classes and relates primarily to the lack of confidence with which the teachers sometimes implement the Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy. Good teaching was also seen in these classes. The headteacher has monitored teaching across the school, with particular emphasis on English and mathematics. This has enabled her to assess strengths and areas for development and helped to improve the quality of teaching in these subjects throughout the school. However, although feedback has been given, it has not always rigorously identified areas for improvement. This is because the headteacher has first ensured that the practice is established throughout the school as a normal method for improving teaching and learning. The school is now planning to extend this monitoring role to other key staff.

16. English and mathematics are both well taught in Years 1 and 2. They are taught satisfactorily overall at Key Stage 2, as are science and music from Year 1 onwards. This is an improvement on the quality of music teaching formerly noted at Key Stage 2. There was not enough evidence to make an overall judgement about the overall quality of teaching and learning in other subjects. During the inspection there was little teaching of information and communication technology (ICT). Improvements to planning have begun to make a positive impact across the school on the systematic development of subject-related skills knowledge and understanding, although the effect has been greater in Years 1 and 2 than in Years 3 to 6. The teaching of research skills in English and history, however, is under-

developed. Those pupils with special educational needs are well supported in lessons by learning support staff and work is generally suitably matched to their needs. Small groups of these pupils taking part in a structured learning programme are taught well and make good progress during these sessions.

17. Teachers in the nursery and reception class plan a wide range of indoor and outdoor activities to interest and purposefully involve the children. They teach basic skills of numeracy and literacy very well. The high standard of planning ensures that time is used productively. Teachers use information from ongoing assessments to plan activities at the right level to meet children's needs. Good communication between adults and children build very good relationships and a caring and mutually respectful atmosphere so that all the children are happy and confident and make good progress over time.

18. Teachers use a good range of interesting activities in Key Stages 1 and 2 to stimulate pupils' enthusiasm and keep their attention. For example, teachers reinforce pupils' learning with lively, whole-class mental mathematics sessions. In a good Year 1 numeracy lesson, pupils counted up to ten and back, loudly, in whispers and then silently as the teacher clapped or stamped different numbers. They reinforced their learning by writing numbers in the air and on white boards. Teachers manage pupils well in lively sessions like this, most often in English and mathematics, which helps to develop good relationships and positive attitudes to learning. This encourages pupils to work with sustained interest and concentration. In Years 1 and 2, teachers use careful questioning to assess pupils' progress and they use the information to adapt their teaching in the course of lessons to meet pupils' needs more exactly. In a literacy lesson the teacher used lively questioning to check the understanding of some Year 2 pupils whose attention had wandered and to refocus them on the task. Pupils made outstanding gains in a Year 2 history lesson where the teacher dressed as Florence Nightingale. She spoke in character and strongly motivated the pupils. Compelling questioning encouraged them to justify their views. This led to outstanding gains in knowledge and the use of historical evidence.

19. Relative weaknesses in teaching include, missed opportunities to improve and increase pupils' skills and understanding or to challenge them to achieve better. This is also reflected in the quality of marking which does not always focus enough on the purpose of the activity, assess what pupils can or cannot do or help them to understand how to improve their work. Expectations of how well older pupils should present their work are also not high enough. In some lessons, rules for listening to each other and taking turns have not been fully established early in the school year and some pupils call out or interrupt. Where time is not well used or activities are too tightly controlled, pupils do not have the chance to develop or explore independent thoughts and ideas. Sometimes teachers are not wholly confident with the expectations and subject material of the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Sometimes these weaknesses result in pupils making unsatisfactory progress.

20. Pupils with special educational needs are satisfactorily taught overall. Very small groups of pupils withdrawn from lessons on a focused learning programme, are well taught. Constant praise, encouragement and reinforcement ensure that these pupils are well motivated and make good progress. Pupils are generally supported well in lessons by individual help from learning support staff in appropriately planned activities. Sometimes, however, pupils do not have resources readily to hand to help their learning, for example to help them make calculations in mathematics.

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

21. The school's curriculum meets the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum in all subjects for pupils at Key Stages 1 and 2 and all learning goals for children aged five and under at the Foundation Stage. Since the last inspection, the school has specifically targeted the development of the curriculum so that understanding, knowledge and skills are progressively developed over time, and there has been good overall improvement. However, much of this improvement is recent and has not yet had a full impact on pupils' achievement across the school. In general, all pupils have equal access to learning opportunities, although chances to develop their skills in information and communication technology (ICT) are limited. The school is also aware through its improved analysis of test and assessment information that there are discrepancies in the relative attainment of boys and girls and are starting to track these trends in order to redress the balance.

22. In the nursery and reception class, the curriculum is well adapted to meet the needs of all pupils, including those on the school's register of special educational needs. The good curriculum helps children to make an impressive start to their learning and, consequently, they achieve well over time. Planning is of a high quality, clearly showing how each adult is to be deployed and the activities and resources for the different groups of children. There is an appropriate balance between teacher-directed and child-selected activities. There are also good links with Year 1. Shared half-termly topics ensure a smooth transition for reception aged children, particularly when there are children of this age placed in the Year 1 class.

23. Good attention has been given to national guidance and published schemes of work. This guidance has been amalgamated with the strengths of the existing curriculum into a useful 'curriculum map' with progressive steps for learning from the reception stage to Year 6. Recently introduced termly and half-termly subject planning is of good quality and clearly outlines learning objectives for each area of study. When complete, it is intended that these plans will form the basis of the school's schemes of work. An appropriate two-year programme of themes and activities ensures that repetition is avoided in mixed age classes. Scrutiny of pupils' work from last year and evidence from some lessons indicate that skills have not been systematically developed in the past and this has inhibited learning over time, particularly for the older pupils currently at Key Stage 2. This was evident in mathematics, science, art and design, design and technology, ICT, geography and physical education. In particular, pupils have had too little opportunity to develop investigative skills in science, to apply mathematical knowledge and understanding and to research aspects in English, geography and history. Pupils have few opportunities to use computers or develop ICT skills across the curriculum and, as a result, pupils are not reaching expected standards in this subject by the time they leave the school. Co-ordinators are now beginning to check planning for their subject to ensure its good quality, but this monitoring work is not yet sufficiently rigorous as it has not been extended to checking its impact on pupils' learning.

24. The school has focused its attention first on ensuring that the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy are successfully incorporated into the school's curriculum. The structured approach of both strategies has resulted in improvements to teaching at both key stages and the progressive development of knowledge and skills throughout the school. In mathematics, the introduction of a focused mental mathematics session is clearly beginning to help pupils' understanding, mental calculation and the application of mathematical knowledge. However, some teachers at Key Stage 2 are not wholly confident with the use of these strategies or their material and this sometimes contributes to some unsatisfactory teaching. Literacy and numeracy skills are satisfactorily used and developed in other subjects. The school has given careful consideration to the balance of time given to

subjects within its curriculum planning. This is reflected in the weekly time tables for most classes.

25. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory, and is identified for further development during this school year. Good improvement has already taken place with the introduction of a structured and closely focused learning approach for very small groups of pupils away from the classroom where activities are tailored to their individual needs. There is also effective provision for the pupil with a statement of need. Documentation is satisfactorily maintained by class teachers, although the quality of information varies. Sometimes it is too general and does not always contain information or targets about individual pupils' personal development or behaviour. Parents are now kept fully informed and are suitably involved in the termly reviews of progress. There are good links with outside agencies, including some support for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. However, there is no formal whole-school approach to dealing with emotional or behavioural difficulties. The school has started to identify pupils with particular gifts or talents, but has not yet established a register. Where those very few pupils with English as an additional language have only just joined the school, they are being fully involved in class activities and the school has appropriately contacted the local education authority for support and guidance.

26. The school provides a satisfactory range of extra activities to enhance the curriculum. These include a gardening club, where pupils are encouraged to think about environmental issues, basketball and knitting clubs and a choir and school band. Pupils also benefit from specialist instrumental music tuition and football and gymnastics clubs, for which they pay. There is a good range of visits to support and enhance pupils' historical studies. Pupils and parents enjoy the annual school drama production. Last year, this was 'Romeo and Juliet', and pupils made their scenery and costumes in addition to taking part. The school's links with the community, particularly the church, are productive and beginning to contribute well to aspects of personal development. For example, pupils have enjoyed the history project work based in the parish church. Good use is also made of the local area to enhance work in geography. Environmental studies in the locality are sponsored by an international company. The local quarry has been used for studies and pupils have been involved in issues relating to recent changes to the road layout leading to school. The school's isolated location limits contact with other schools, but links are satisfactory. The school forms part of a wider partnership schools and headteachers meet to discuss common issues. Staff from local secondary schools visit the school as part of their transfer arrangements once places have been allocated.

27. The school's provision for personal, social and health education is satisfactory, but limited improvement has taken place since the previous inspection. A policy is in place, including one for sex and drugs education, but planning has not yet been fully modified to meet the school's needs. The need for further development is recognised by the school and included in its development planning for the current school year.

28. Since the last inspection there has been a good improvement in provision for spiritual, moral, social, cultural and personal development.

29. There is satisfactory provision for pupils' spiritual development. Assemblies and links with the church are beginning to make a good contribution to this aspect of pupils' personal development, particularly when there is a genuine sense of occasion and thoughtful questions encourage a mood of reflection. The sensitive way in which the vicar explained the attacks on America with reference to behaviour in the playground, so that children could understand without being frightened, and then offered them comfort and hope, was a

significant and moving contribution to their spiritual awareness. In lessons, however, opportunities for reflection are often missed.

30. The building of teamwork has been a high priority for the school after its recent period of uncertainty. Everyone is expected to work in a co-operative way and this underpins the life of the school. The head and deputy head teacher set the tone and lead by example, which helps to foster moral and social development well. Daily routines such as registration, break, lunch and assembly are all positive experiences where children are expected to be courteous and to recognise the difference between the right and wrong thing to do. There are good opportunities for pupils to show initiative and contribute to the life of the school by working together when giving up time to do the digging and planting in the school garden. The annual production and events such as fashion shows also encourages co-operation and team work. The playground 'buddy' system gives pupils a special chance to support each other. As a result, the provision for pupils' moral and social development is good and set to be even better with newer intakes, used to good working relationships from the start.

31. The school gives satisfactory support to pupils' cultural development. In subjects such as history and geography there are some good examples of work that encourages appreciation of different cultural heritages. Pupils have enjoyed the chance to learn about the lives of ordinary people in Tudor times and the significance of the Aztec civilisation. Charity work linked to helping children in Zambia gives a useful start to understanding cultural diversity. This is not continued in lessons, where chances for pupils to explore similarities and differences between cultures and traditions are often overlooked. The use of the school's Charlie Bear to give children some idea of life in other countries is helpful when the experiences are described and discussed in detail. Art and music do not make a significant contribution to pupils' cultural awareness yet because their experience of the rich range of different styles and traditions is limited.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

32. Welfare and guidance were positive features of the school's work at the time of the previous inspection and have developed well. However, whilst the quality of care is high, it has still to be fully harnessed to help raise standards and give children self-esteem through genuine achievement.

33. The school gives a high priority to children's wellbeing and happiness. It is reflected in very clear procedures for child protection and a very positive approach to building each child's self-confidence within a caring atmosphere. Staff set a good example in the way they encourage and support children with special educational needs. All staff know the children very well, which helps them to monitor any problems linked to behaviour, attendance and personal development. Formal monitoring is less well established and, as a result, there are gaps in written records for use by other staff or to identify patterns in behaviour and responses. Registers are taken as required, but are not always well kept. Messy alterations and lack of weekly totals are unhelpful for tracking absences and the reasons for them. The school has a clear focus on harmony and a sense of community in which bullying is unacceptable. It promotes good manners and traditional courtesy well. Behaviour and personal development are monitored and supported well in general.

34. There have been good improvements to academic assessment procedures. Whole-school documents for recording and tracking pupils' attainment against National Curriculum levels for English and mathematics and for predicting individual pupils' targets for achievement in these subjects are used consistently from Year 1 onwards. Pupils'

achievement in science is recorded and monitored in the same way, but is at an earlier stage of development. Optional test data in Years 3, 4 and 5 give staff useful comparisons with teacher assessments, and are used to help inform judgements about attainment and future achievement. A checklist has just been introduced for recording progress in information and communication technology (ICT). A new tracking document for children in the nursery and reception class was introduced last year. This is closely matched to the small steps of learning within the learning goals for this age group. Reception year assessments are matched to early National Curriculum levels in order to set targets in literacy and numeracy for these children when they reach Year 1.

35. The headteacher and assessment co-ordinator have taken the lead in developing the use of assessment information and have actively sought to improve their own skills first so they can support the extension of assessment responsibilities to other staff. They have made detailed analyses of national test information and now use this, and information produced by the local education authority, to look for trends and monitor the quality of progress over time. These findings are shared with staff and governors, but the school is aware of the need to extend such monitoring to other key staff. As a result of this analysis, the school has focused, with some success, on improving skills in reading, and has begun to look at particular groups of pupils, for example the relative attainment of girls and boys in national tests.

36. Because most assessment systems have been recently developed, they have yet to make a significant impact on curriculum planning and, therefore, on standards. As yet, no formal assessment systems have been developed for the foundation subjects and there is no formal checking of the development of pupils' scientific skills. Teachers keep regular detailed comments about children in the nursery and reception class and for those pupils with special educational needs in the small group work. None were seen elsewhere during the inspection about the attainment and progress of individual pupils in order for teachers to fine-tune their lesson planning. Planned lesson activities are generally appropriately modified for broad groupings of pupils with different abilities, but do not always provide activities that meet and challenge pupils' particular needs or ability. Where there is information about individuals' strengths and weaknesses, for example in the annual reports for parents, they are not linked to or compared with pupils' performance in previous years in order to assess progress. Reading records are kept, but this practice is not consistently established for the newer group reading records. The school is aware that the quality of marking needs to be developed further so that it gives pupils more guidance on how to improve their work. It is also keen to see that pupils are more informed about and fully involved in monitoring their learning. To this end, individual targets for literacy and numeracy are now set and recorded following discussion with each pupil.

37. Targets on individual plans for all pupils with special educational needs are reviewed each term. Targets are changed or modified in the light of pupils' progress and changing needs. This contributes towards the good progress made by some pupils against their specific targets who then move, as appropriate, to other stages of need. The school now plans more frequent reviews of targets to ensure that these learning objectives reflect more closely the pupils' current needs.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

38. The school's partnership with parents is better than at the last inspection. The rate of improvement is good.

39. Parents' views of the school are positive. They think that it is doing a good job,

particularly in terms of their children's happiness, how well it is led and managed and the quality of teaching. Inspection findings mostly confirm these views. Where some have concerns about homework and extra-curricular opportunities, inspection evidence found these aspects of the school's work to be satisfactory. Links with parents are good and have become effective as a result of the school's hard work in the last two years to build bridges and re-establish trust. Parents have been involved in issues such as safer access to the school. Their views were sought in order to produce the home-school agreement and to review homework arrangements. It is easy for parents to have a quick word with staff before and after school. Parents come into school to help in classrooms, to hear readers and to watch class assemblies. The Friends' Association is very active in raising funds for the school and providing social activities to reinforce the school's sense of community.

40. The school provides a wide range of information for parents. It recognises that communication is an important area for further development, particularly as the quality of reports is inconsistent. This confirms the concern of some parents about the quality of information about children's progress. Better reports, such as those for Year 1, show clearly what each child knows, understands and can do in English, mathematics and science. They also outline key features of progress in other subjects. In the best examples, clear targets for improvement are given, but in others the targets are often too vague and not linked to skills or subjects. Weaker reports rely too heavily on descriptions of work that are the same for most children, rather than specific examples of new skills or levels of understanding. No grades are given to show the standard reached or effort made, except in relation to national test results in years 2 and 6. As a result, it is hard for parents to tell whether the rate of progress and standards achieved are as expected for the child and the age group.

41. The school works effectively with parents of children with special educational needs who are fully involved in termly reviews of progress. Parents of children starting in the nursery are given a very helpful booklet about what to expect and fully involved in the initial induction process. The main school prospectus is clear but less lively and informative. The annual report from governors gives most of the required information but without making it more interesting through the inclusion of, for example, children's contributions, news of staff and pupils and examples of experiences such as residential trips. There is very little detail in descriptions of the curriculum to give a flavour of what is taught. Parents contribute well to learning because they make good use of the homework diaries and encourage children to read, practise spellings and do other work at home. The impact of their involvement with the school is good and ready to improve further once the information they receive about their children's achievements becomes consistently good throughout the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

42. The headteacher has a clear vision, which is to improve the quality of teaching and learning in order to continue to raise standards. Together with the recently appointed deputy headteacher, she is providing a strong sense of direction, which is appreciated by staff, parents and governors. This was clearly recognised by parents in their very positive response to the quality of leadership and management in the inspection questionnaire. After a difficult period, with senior staff changes leading to some uncertainty over leadership and direction, the school has settled and there is a good emphasis on teamwork and improvement. Many developments and initiatives have been undertaken in the last year and the school's priorities are highly appropriate to the school's present needs. There is a strong sense of purpose and the capacity for future improvement is good. The headteacher and deputy headteacher lead by example and therefore make their

expectations clear. The headteacher has begun to observe in classrooms formally, with oral and written feedback to teachers. This has enabled her to have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in teaching and to make improvements to its quality. It has also been effectively used to establish the practice as a normal part of the school's work. She and the deputy headteacher are also analysing test and assessment data in order to pass these skills on to staff. However, the monitoring of teaching and learning is not yet satisfactory overall because it does not rigorously identify where teaching needs to improve and has not been extended to include subject co-ordinators. The aims and mission statement – 'we aim high and work hard', suggested by pupils and adopted recently, are being reflected satisfactorily in the school's work.

43. All subjects of the curriculum have an allocated co-ordinator. The improved communication and teamwork in the school are enabling co-ordinators to satisfactorily support colleagues and they receive teachers' planning, so that they know what is being taught in their subjects. However, their monitoring activities are inadequate at present. Lack of time away from class teaching has meant that there have been no opportunities to undertake any observations of lessons or analysis of pupils' work. This is being addressed this term with the provision of some non-contact time. These factors have also influenced the co-ordination of special educational needs, which is also in the early stages of development. The co-ordination of the Foundation Stage is good and this is reflected in how well this stage has developed since the previous inspection and the overall high quality of teaching.

44. Governors are supportive of the school and the working relationship between them and the new headteacher is very good. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection where a key issue for action was to improve the trust, support and confidence between the governing body and the headteacher. Many of the governors are new to the role and the local education authority is providing very good support though the appointment of a clerk, whose good advice is appreciated by the governors and headteacher. Appropriate committee structures and systems are in place, and some of these benefit from the specialist support of local authority staff. Many governors have a good understanding of the strengths of the school and areas requiring attention. They consider national test and statistical data and those with specific roles visit the school to increase their knowledge of the school's work, subsequently providing written reports. During these visits they observe lessons, meet with senior staff and talk with subject co-ordinators.

45. The school improvement plan is a well-organised and readable document which identifies five very appropriate priorities for development. The school's aims are given a central place and planning is firmly based on a review of previous progress. This plan was presented to governors for discussion once it had been formulated through discussion amongst staff. All subjects have maintenance plans, drawn up by the co-ordinator and headteacher together. The provision of a glossary is helpful for new governors. Financial implications are identified on the action plans, as are criteria for success, although targets are sometimes too broad. The plan identifies who will monitor the impact of the various targets, but not how this will be done, and there is no reference to evaluating the impact of initiatives on the quality of education and pupils' achievement. Governors recognise the need to be more actively involved in the future in drawing up the plan and in formally monitoring and evaluating the success of decisions. Their most recent annual report for parents is detailed, but does not cover all requirements. It does not include national comparative data, reference to the last inspection action plan, access for pupils with disabilities or the school's agreed targets.

46. Educational priorities are well supported through sound financial planning. For example, funding was allocated for an additional teacher to be appointed in response to increasing pupil numbers. Unallocated funds are being kept back in order to fund resources should numbers continue to rise. The school uses the local education authority's accountancy service and the chair of the governors' finance committee meets with the accountant monthly. A recent audit found that the budget was well monitored and expenditure processing was good. However, it identified a number of issues to address and an action plan is currently being drawn up to respond to these issues. The principles of best value are conscientiously applied within this context, using competitive tendering to ensure best value for money. Results are now compared with those of other schools, consultation with parents is through questionnaires and forums and the school is beginning to ask questions and undertake self-evaluation, and recognises that this is an area for further development. Any grants are satisfactorily used for their designated purpose, such as those for special educational needs and for improving staff facilities. The school's use of new technology for management is under-developed at present, with limited access to the internet or use for data analysis. Neither is enough use made of ICT for educational purposes.

47. The school is adequately staffed with appropriately qualified teachers. After a period of staffing changes, they are now working well as a team and keen to develop and raise standards. Training is planned to increase teachers' knowledge and expertise in the use of ICT. Induction arrangements for new teachers are satisfactory. Teachers are well complemented by a good team of support staff, who are valued members of the school community. Appropriate arrangements are in place for the performance management of the teaching staff

48. The accommodation is adequate for the current number of pupils, and governors are consulting on the provision of additional accommodation, as numbers continue to rise. Helpful support and guidance are given by the local authority's consultant surveyor. The library is a good facility, much improved since the last inspection, but it is underused at present. The building is clean and well cared for, and displays of pupils' work provide interest and stimulus at this early stage of the school year. The outdoor environment is being enhanced by tubs of flowers and shrubs. Many improvements have been made recently, including resurfacing of a playground, new fencing, refurbishment of toilets and the provision of outdoor storage for the early years unit's equipment. However, the early years unit does not have a secure or covered outdoor play area. The quality of display is attractive and interesting in some classrooms and public areas of the school, particularly at the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2, but this standard is not consistent throughout the school.

49. Resources to support pupils' learning are adequate, with significant recent improvements in book provision and small equipment for physical education. There is little specialist equipment for art or design and technology, and insufficient computers and range of software. While resource provision for the Foundation Stage is good for most areas, the children do not have opportunities to practise balancing and climbing, nor is there a track in the outdoor area to develop their co-ordination when riding the tricycles.

50. The school provides satisfactory value for money. Unit costs are above the average, but pupils make satisfactory progress overall as they move through the school and national test standards have improved. Standards of attainment in English, mathematics and science are at an expected level for pupils currently in Year 6. They are above average for reading. Pupils have good attitudes to their work and behave well.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

To raise standards of achievement in all subjects and for all pupils, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- improve standards in information and communication technology, particularly at Key Stage 2, by:
 - increasing the opportunities for pupils to use ICT in all subjects;
 - increasing staff knowledge, expertise and confidence through planned training;
 - fully implementing the scheme of work and building systematically on the skills and knowledge pupils already have;
 - increasing resources as quickly as finances permit.

- develop systematic and rigorous monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning by key staff and governors, by:
 - continuing to develop the critical evaluations of teaching by senior staff;
 - extending the monitoring role of subject co-ordinators to include regular scrutiny of pupils' work, assessment and test information and of teaching in their subject;
 - developing formal procedures for governors to monitor the progress of planned educational priorities.

- collect and use detailed assessment information about the achievement and progress of all pupils so that planned work focuses more closely on the needs of individual pupils, by:
 - continuing to develop and extend systems already in place, including the use of new technology and the analysis of test and assessment information to track trends and monitor groups of pupils;
 - consistently using discussion and questioning during lessons to assess what individual pupils understand;
 - using marking to focus on the purpose of the task and give pupils helpful pointers for improvement;
 - developing formal assessment systems for foundation subjects;
 - including more information about pupils' achievement and progress in annual reports to parents.

Other areas in need of development, which the governors should consider for inclusion in the school's action plan, are:

- opportunities to develop independent and investigative learning skills in all subjects through the full implementation of schemes of work
- expectations of standards of presentation for older pupils
- the use of the library to promote reading standards and skills
- opportunities to have more experience of all aspects of the writing process
- developing a scheme of work for the development of speaking and listening skills
- developing a formal whole-school approach to and strategies for dealing with pupils with emotional or behavioural difficulties

- reviewing weekly timetables for older pupils at Key Stage 2 so that they benefit from a more varied arrangement of subjects reflected in the weekly timetables of other classes.
- provision for personal, social and health education so that it is tailored to the school's aims and ethos
- further the improvements to the quality of displays
- guidance for parents about the adverse effect of term time holiday absences on pupils' achievement
- improving and enlivening the quality and readability of school's prospectus and governors' annual report to parents and ensuring it contains all statutory information

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	30
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	56

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satis-Factory	Unsatis-factory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	4	11	11	3	0	0
Percentage	3	13	37	37	10	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 three percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery and YR	Y1 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	44	120
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	7

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery and YR	Y1 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	39

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	10
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.9
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	00	12	14	26

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	7	8	9
	Girls	12	13	13
	Total	19	21	22
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	73 (85)	81 (70)	85 (80)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	8	9	9
	Girls	13	13	13
	Total	21	22	22
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	81 (85)	85 (80)	85 (85)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	00	7	4	11

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	6	5	6
	Girls	4	3	4
	Total	10	8	10
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	91 (40)	73 (80)	91 (80)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	5	5	5
	Girls	4	2	4
	Total	9	7	9
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	82 (50)	64 (60)	82 (60)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	8
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	112
Any other minority ethnic group	2

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes:

Y1 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23:1
Average class size	23

Education support staff:

Y1 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	73.45

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery and YR

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	28:1
Total number of education support staff	1.5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	48.5
Number of pupils per FTE adult	11.2:1

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
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£

Total income	341857
Total expenditure	344857
Expenditure per pupil	2090
Balance brought forward from previous year	23986
Balance carried forward to next year	20986

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
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	163
Number of questionnaires returned	58

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	72	21	3	0	2
My child is making good progress in school.	66	33	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	60	38	2	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	38	38	14	2	3
The teaching is good.	71	26	2	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	47	31	21	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	67	28	5	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	62	33	2	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	47	33	14	0	5
The school is well led and managed.	76	21	3	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	57	40	2	0	2

The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.

33	38	16	0	14
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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

51. The school now has provision for nursery children, which is a significant development since the previous inspection. The Early Years Unit comprises twelve reception aged children and thirty-two part time nursery children. Twenty-two of these attend in the mornings and ten in the afternoons. At the start of next term, the reception children will join the small Year 1 class. The older nursery children, who will be five before the following September, will then be of reception age for two terms and there will be a further intake to the nursery. Almost all the children of reception age have attended the nursery. The Unit is favourably staffed with a full time teacher and nursery nurse as well as a part time nursery nurse for the mornings.

52. There are good induction arrangements for children joining the nursery. Parent are well involved. The staggered entry and presence of older children in the class help new children settle quickly and happily. Attainment on entry to the nursery varies widely, but is generally in line with expectations for this age. Initial assessments, taken a few weeks after children reach reception age, indicate broadly average standards, though last year the levels of mathematical attainment of the younger children were low. Although the initial assessments have not been completed for the current reception children, inspection evidence indicates that they are attaining above average levels. The children achieve well, and often very well for their ability, in lessons. It is likely that many will achieve most of the early learning goals in the six areas of learning, and exceed them in personal, social and emotional development and knowledge and understanding of the world, which are particular strengths. This is due to the quality of teaching, which is very good in all areas of learning and is an improvement since the last inspection. The nursery nurses and learning support assistant provide very good support for individual and groups of children, including those with educational needs.

Personal, social and emotional development

53. The staff place appropriate emphasis on developing this area and the children make good progress, understanding class routines and expectations. Most of the new nursery children are already responding orally to their name being called out at registration, though some are still a little hesitant. Nursery children choose independently which activity they will focus on and many persevere for some time as they explore and learn. For example, one child practised balancing vegetables in the shop while another spent time exploring texture and shapes as he filled various containers with wet sand. The children understand the importance of taking turns and helping to tidy away at the end of a session. They have a developing awareness of right and wrong, encouraged by the adults in the classroom. They are all enthusiastic learners and reception children work well together, for example sharing and discussing a book, building models with bricks or using the computer.

Communication, language and literacy

54. The constant oral interaction between the adults and the children, with many appropriate questions to encourage a response, promotes good progress in speaking and listening and the children achieve well from a wide range of starting points. During the quiet drink and fruit time each day, nursery children are encouraged to recount what activities they have pursued so far. They express likes and dislikes, for example when tasting

vegetable soup and stir-fry. Having read 'The Enormous Watermelon' to the reception children, the teacher encouraged them to make up a story together, and in a similar style. They were fully engrossed as they took turns to suggest the next sentence, using toys to help. All the children enjoy hearing stories read to them and join in with refrains and familiar parts. Reception children confidently tell a story from pictures. Elements of the National Literacy Strategy are well used by the teacher with the reception children. In a very good session, they were beginning to recognise sounds and to write a simple sentence, using the key words 'I like..', in connection with their study of vegetables. Evidence from last year's work shows more able children writing several sentences in conventional script independently by the end of the year.

Mathematical development

55. Children make good progress in this area of learning. Nursery children practise counting, matching toys to spots painted on the playground. They enjoy singing number songs, weighing vegetables in the shop and counting treasures found in the sand. Most reception children use numbers confidently and recognise one more or less than a given number up to ten. The more able make repeating patterns from wooden beads of varying colours, shapes and sizes. The children use paper triangles, squares and rectangles to make collages and very confidently discuss their choices with a nursery nurse. They use mathematical language, such as *taller* and *shorter*, for example when building towers with plastic blocks. Last term, children grew sunflowers and measured the tallest ones and previously completed work shows children sequenced events through the day.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

56. The children make good progress in this area because it is well planned and taught. The current topic of 'health and growth' provides very good opportunities for the children to explore a wide range of activities to support this area of learning. They learn the names of many vegetables and they feel, smell and taste them. They recognise which grow under the ground and begin to identify similarities and differences between them. During the inspection week, the children participated in making vegetable soup and a vegetable stir-fry. The very good teaching, with clear explanations by both the nursery nurse and teacher, ensured the children saw how the ingredients changed as they cooked. They developed an early understanding of another culture as they saw a wok being used to cook the stir-fry, with unusual ingredients such as bean shoots. The teacher explained that the Chinese often used chopsticks to eat. Some of the reception children use the computer confidently, manipulating the mouse successfully as they use programs to reinforce their developing mathematical and language skills. A visit to a local farm, where they saw many animals, helped the children appreciate the local environment. They use a variety of construction equipment confidently. Evidence from last year's work shows a developing understanding of changes over time as they sequenced events from getting up to going to school.

Physical development

57. Progress in this area is satisfactory. The children enjoy using the wheeled vehicles outside and show good control and awareness of space, avoiding collisions as they ride round! This helps large muscle development, but the lack of other facilities outside prevents climbing and balancing practice. They use bats and balls and are beginning to hit the ball successfully. Fine co-ordination skills develop as they use tools such as scissors and glue spreaders, the computer and small construction equipment.

Creative development

58. There is good progress in this area. Children enjoy painting, using a range of brushes. They experiment with mixing colours and discover new colours as a result. Their paintings of some of the animals seen on their farm visit are of a good standard. They developed an

increasing awareness of pattern as they used vegetables to print with. Using paper shapes, the children created imaginary pictures and described them to the nursery nurse. They enjoy singing and engage enthusiastically in role-play, dressing up and buying and selling in the shop.

ENGLISH

59. Results in the national tests in 2000 for pupils in Year 6 were above the average for all schools nationally. Over the last four years, results have fluctuated and the 2000 results were significantly higher than those for 1999. However, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 was below average. Results were close to the average for similar schools. This was a particularly small year group with just eleven pupils, whereas in 2001, where a larger group of pupils were in Year 6, unpublished results indicate a much higher proportion of pupils attaining the higher level.

60. At the end of Year 2, results in the national tests in 2000 were below average in reading and close to the average in writing. While the results in writing have shown improvement since 1999, the reading results in 2000 were significantly lower than in the previous year. Results in both reading and writing were well below average compared with similar schools. Girls have performed significantly better than boys in both subjects. Unpublished results for 2001 indicate considerable improvement in reading results, particularly at the higher level 3, and a small improvement in writing results.

61. Inspection evidence shows that the standard of work attained in Year 2 is above national expectations. This is higher than at the time of the last inspection because the teaching is better in Years 1 and 2, book provision has improved greatly and the National Literacy Strategy is having a positive impact. When pupils start school in reception, the standards they attain are broadly average. In relation to these prior levels of attainment, Key Stage 1 pupils achieve well. The current Year 6 has just twelve pupils and standards are about average overall. Their Year 2 national test results were average in reading and below average in writing, this indicates their achievement to be satisfactory in reading and good in writing. Pupils work hard in lessons and behave well as they are keen to learn, though many of the older pupils take insufficient pride in the presentation of their work. Those pupils with special educational needs, make good progress in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory progress at Key Stage 2.

62. Most pupils listen attentively in lessons. Many are articulate, confident speakers, though a few are more reticent. Opportunities for pupils to engage in speaking and listening activities include circle times and class assemblies. Class discussions, with valuable opportunities for pupil participation, are a feature of good literacy lessons. For example, Year 1 pupils discussed 'The Gingerbread Man', Year 4 pupils read different newspapers and discussed the effectiveness of headlines, while the oldest pupils established whether statements were fact or opinion. Some emphasis is given to the acquisition and use of technical vocabulary in other subjects. Key vocabulary to describe the properties of materials is used in Year 4 in science and an Internet glossary is displayed in the classroom for Years 5 and 6. Year 6 pupils used newspaper articles last year to discuss the pros and cons of changes in the local environment as part of their geography studies. However, few classrooms have displays of key vocabulary for literacy or other subjects. Standards are average in this area.

63. Attainment in reading is above average in both key stages. There has been a successful emphasis on improving reading recently. Pupils enjoy reading and the support

of the many parents who read with their children at home raises standards. More able Year 2 pupils read fluently and remember details of a good range of stories. Lower attaining pupils read more hesitantly, but successfully use both pictures and phonic knowledge to work out unknown words. By Year 6, the most able are reading challenging books fluently and can discuss favourite authors, justifying their preferences well. However, a number of the older pupils are not able to discuss confidently the books they have read. Most pupils have a secure understanding of associated vocabulary, such as *author*, *illustrator*, *blurb*, *fiction* and *non-fiction*. The library is now sited in a classroom and this is a significant improvement since the last inspection. Most classes visit the library once a week to select books, but otherwise there is limited use of this good resource to promote reading standards and skills.

64. Pupils undertake a good range of writing through the school, and standards are above average in Years 1 and 2 and average in at Key Stage 2. Last year's work shows more able Year 2 pupils using joined handwriting, spelling well and using correct sentence punctuation and speech marks. Different styles, such as instructions, descriptions and recount, are used correctly and story lines are sustained. They achieve a good style and range of vocabulary in their poems on 'Colours of Day'. Accounts by Year 3 pupils of their visit to Cuffley Camp are of a good standard. The 'Titanic' focus in Years 4 and 5 last year included different styles such as a diary and report. The good range in Year 6 included poems, autobiography, reports, stories and letters. Good links with art are evident in their poetic responses to paintings, some of which use evocative language and imagery. Useful opportunities to improve literacy skills are provided through other subjects such as history. However, there is little evidence of more extended writing. Standards of handwriting and presentation are unsatisfactory overall, particularly in classes at Key Stage 2. Individual targets are just beginning to be agreed with the pupils to encourage improvement.

65. The quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good, and satisfactory at Key Stage 2. This is an improvement on the findings of the last inspection for Years 1 and 2. Teaching was unsatisfactory in one lesson at Key Stage 2. In a very good lesson in Year 2, pupils made very good gains in their learning about the features of non-fiction texts and how to write instructions. This was because the lesson was very well planned, technical vocabulary was reinforced, questions were at an appropriate level for pupils of differing ability and expectations were high. A good pace was sustained throughout and the activities for the different groups were appropriate. Good teaching in Year 1, engaged the class in listening to and interacting with a story, predicting what might happen. Year 4 pupils enjoyed the work on tabloid and broadsheet newspaper headlines and good teaching ensured they remained interested. Classroom assistants provide effective support for groups of pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make satisfactory progress. Where the teaching had weaknesses, these included lack of clearly focused objectives sometimes leading to inappropriate activities and unsatisfactory use of the final plenary to reinforce pupils' learning. Sometimes teachers allowed focused teaching time to be interrupted. The quality of marking varies, but there are few examples of reference being made to the purpose of the piece of work or giving points for improvement.

66. The Literacy Strategy is well established and, while a few aspects require improvement, overall it is having a good impact on standards. There is no scheme of work for speaking and listening to ensure all strands of the National Curriculum are covered. Useful tracking sheets are used to record pupils' attainment, group reading records are being introduced, and pupils' unaided writing is assessed each term. Reading records are maintained, but the use of the more recently introduced group reading assessments has not been consistently established. The subject is well managed by a new co-ordinator and there has been a good level of improvement to the subject. These improvements include a

large supply of books for the classrooms and for guided reading groups. These have all been colour coded, accorded to difficulty, are being enjoyed by the pupils and have been a major factor in the improved standards. Analysis of data is now being undertaken and this is leading to focused priorities for improvement. Time is being available this term for the co-ordinator to undertake monitoring, including work scrutiny and classroom observations, in order to raise standards further.

MATHEMATICS

67. In the national tests in 2000, Year 6 pupils attained standards in mathematics that were broadly in line with the national average. In the national tests for Year 2 pupils in the same year, results in mathematics were below the national average. These results were well below national averages at both Years 6 and 2 when compared with similar schools. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher Levels 3 and 5 were below the national average for pupils in Year 2 and well below at Year 6. However, in both cases, these results were an improvement on those of the previous year, and there has been a rise in results each year since 1997.

68. Test results have risen again in the most recent national tests, taken in 2001, most significantly in relation to the percentage of pupils achieving at the higher levels. Year groups vary in size, and some are small. This was the case with the Year 6 group in 2000 and is also true of the present Year 6. There have been differences in the relative performance of boys and girls in the tests, with boys achieving less well in the Year 2 tests but better than girls in Year 6 tests. The school is aware of these discrepancies through its analysis of test data. Whilst there was some higher achievement amongst the girls in the tests in 2001, the proportion was smaller than that found for boys.

69. Inspection evidence shows all pupils in Years 1 and 2 to be achieving well, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language, and pupils in Year 2 to be attaining standards above national expectations. This is higher than was found at the time of the last inspection. The Numeracy Strategy is well established in Years 1 and 2 and imaginatively taught. At the very beginning of the school year, more able pupils used mathematical vocabulary confidently, and some remembered the term *inverse operation*. They added 11 to a two digit number with a growing understanding and articulation of the rule: plus 10 and then add one. Most pupils remembered and used the words *add* and *subtract*. Many gave examples of the inverse operation for addition and subtraction sums involving numbers up to 20 and explained them in simple terms. During subsequent activities, most middle attaining pupils correctly identified ways of making 10 pence with different coins and confidently recorded which coins they used. In conversation with adults, they accurately completed more complex combinations of coins with different values. Most counted in twos, but some were not fully confident when predicting how many one or two pence pieces would equal 10 pence.

70. Pupils at Key Stage 2 achieve satisfactorily. Whilst the introduction of the Numeracy Strategy has also had a positive impact on the quality of teaching for these year groups, some staff are not yet fully confident with its use. Over time, the use and application of mathematical knowledge and understanding has not been securely developed. This is so for the pupils in the current Year 6, who are attaining standards which are similar to those expected nationally at this early stage of the school year. Work completed by some of these pupils when they were in Year 5, showed less evidence of higher attainment than the work of the previous Year 6 group. This work from last year and a small sample completed

this term show that most pupils are confident when identifying the place value of digits within numbers up to and beyond 1000. There is some evidence of estimation, for example, of angles. Able pupils calculate the perimeter of regular shapes and calculate the area of triangles. In a numeracy lesson, some more able pupils securely applied their knowledge of place value and tables to estimate answers to the multiplication of two and three digit numbers, and explained what they have done to reach their estimation. Middle attainers accurately rounded numbers up or down to the nearest 10, but could not apply their knowledge of place value to calculate estimations. During the mental mathematics session, most pupils lacked confidence and were slow to respond to calculations involving halving and doubling. More able pupils, however, doubled numbers including decimals to two places. Lower attainers, and those with special educational needs, doubled numbers correctly during discussion as a small group, but could not demonstrate this knowledge during the subsequent activity.

71. Evidence from lessons and from pupils' work shows the quality of teaching and learning to be good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory at Key Stage 2. One lesson at Key Stage 2 was unsatisfactory. Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs are often well supported during lessons by learning support staff. At its best, teaching is lively and interesting and captures pupils' attention. For example, in a numeracy lesson in Year 1, pupils responded enthusiastically to a very effective range of 'fun' activities, well matched to their age and delivered in a pacy style. They counted loudly or in whispers, drew numbers in the air and carefully counted as the teacher clapped, stamped or nodded different numbers. Pupils who were less familiar with the English language or had special educational needs were enthralled and keen to take part. Other strengths of this lesson included very good relationships with pupils and the use of these activities to assess what pupils understood and what they did not. Good use was made of these assessments to give help to individual pupils. In another numeracy lesson in Year 3, pupils were regularly encouraged to check their answers and explain their strategies. This helped them to develop their skills and confidence. The teacher used a valuable range of approaches to reinforce pupils' knowledge of the ten times table. The session moved at a good pace, but pupils were given time to explain how they had arrived at an answer. Subsequent group work was enlivened by the imaginative activity of 'posting' pupils' sums in envelopes.

72. Although work is generally well matched to pupils' abilities, this is not always the case. In other lessons, the pace of mental mathematical sessions was too slow. Opportunities to allow pupils to explain their strategies, or to explore concepts and so improve pupils' understanding and the application of their knowledge, were missed. As a result, pupils sometimes make insufficient progress. Although work is generally marked, there are only occasional comments about the mathematical content and how it could be improved. Pupils are expected to complete a satisfactory quantity of work, and in some classes these expectations are good. Expectations of presentation are not always high enough and the work of some of the oldest pupils is untidy. These were highlighted as issues in the last inspection.

73. There is a satisfactory balance of work across all aspects of the subject, with the greatest emphasis on number work. Numeracy skills are being encouraged and developed with increasing effectiveness, although the greatest impact is in Years 1 and 2. Additional material has been purchased recently to give staff a greater range of mathematical ideas and materials when planning work. There has been good recent improvements to the subject. Staff have willingly embraced the changes expected by the introduction of the National Strategy for Numeracy. All teachers plan to a common weekly format but not all staff at Key Stage 2 are fully confident with the use of the Numeracy Strategy's material.

There are satisfactory opportunities in other subjects, such as science and design and technology, to use numeracy skills, but there is limited use of information and communication technology, to develop data handling skills for example. Assessment systems are satisfactory. Pupils' progress through the school is now charted against National Curriculum levels and annual predictions made for future attainment. Analysis of national test results and local education authority information are increasingly being used to look for trends and areas for development, and pupils are beginning to play a part in setting targets for themselves. These improvements to assessment, however, are comparatively recent and have not yet made a full impact on the planning of future work. There are no formal whole-school procedures for collecting more detailed information about pupils' attainment to ensure that planning and teaching focus more closely on the needs of individual pupils.

74. The subject is satisfactorily co-ordinated with good support from the headteacher, and foundations have been successfully laid for the future development of the subject. There has also been a good level of involvement from the governor responsible for numeracy, who has visited lessons in all classes. Planning is collected and checked. However, there is little monitoring of pupils' learning or of teaching to assess the impact of developments or identify those areas where further improvements need to be made. The school is well aware of the need to develop this role and plans for improvement are already in place.

SCIENCE

75. In the national tests in 2000, pupils in Year 6 attained standards above the national average. These results were below the national average in comparison with similar schools. Results have been improving since 1997. The results of the most recent tests in 2001 show further improvement, particularly in the proportion of pupils achieving at the higher Level 5. Teacher assessments in 2000 of pupils in Year 2 showed standards to be below the average when compared with schools nationally, and well below when compared with similar schools. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 was well below average. Teacher assessments for Year 2 in 2001 also show some improvement on those of the previous year. From year to year, there is variation in the knowledge and skills of children when they start school. This has an impact on their attainment by the time they leave Year 2.

76. Inspection evidence from lessons, and from pupils' work completed last year, shows pupils in Years 2 and 6 to be attaining standards similar to those expected nationally, reflecting the findings of the previous report. There was limited evidence of higher attainment in the work of pupils in Year 6. Generally, all pupils grasp scientific knowledge well and, because of this, achievement is satisfactory overall. Year 6 pupils are also well prepared for the knowledge required for the national tests, but the curriculum does not foster scientific understanding or investigative work to the same degree. These limitations are due in part to the subject not having the same developmental focus over recent years as that given to English and mathematics. In response to this, the school has prioritised its development during this school year. Improvement to date has been satisfactory. A scheme of work has already been introduced. The new curriculum shows appropriate levels of work in all year groups and good progression from one year to another, and termly planning is of a good quality. Assessment systems have also been developed, although assessment is at an early stage of use and does not track the progress pupils make in developing scientific skills.

77. Pupils in the current Year 2 have a good recall of previous learning about healthy

eating. They know that milk keeps teeth and bones strong and understand that exercise is needed to keep our bodies healthy. Pupils do not make enough progress, however, in developing investigative skills, also found in teacher assessments in 2000, where the lowest standards were attained in this area of science. Pupils understand the notion of a fair test and can explain why this is necessary. They make sensible predictions for results. More able and middle attaining pupils explain the reasoning behind their predictions, stating that the car travelling down the ramp will travel further along the icy road because it will slide. In general, however, investigations are limited and the development of skills that enable pupils to carry out investigations is not systematically planned. Work is often untidily presented. While tables and charts are used to present results, there is little use made of the computer in science.

78. As with pupils in Year 2, those pupils currently in Year 6 show good recall of past learning. During a lesson, lower attaining pupils explained fully what they understood from previous work about ball and socket joints. By the end of the session, only a very few lower attaining pupils were unable to write a full explanation of how a hinge joint works at elbows, knees, wrists and fingers. Most pupils understood that some hinge joints are modified, allowing them also to twist. However, pupils had not fully developed the skills that would allow them to direct their own learning, to ask "why?" and "how?" questions, to work independently, devise testing situations or draw conclusions from results. They were dependent on the teacher's directions and, while they learn, they do not learn as much as they could. Samples of pupils' work from Key Stage 2, and in particular the Year 6 class who took national tests in 2001, revealed a more varied picture of standards than was indicated by test results. Standards in the work seen just reached expected standards and standards of presentation were below average. There was very limited evidence of any investigative work and an over-use of photocopied worksheets. Standards attained by more able pupils showed little difference from those of middle and lower attaining pupils, except that there were more examples of finished pieces. There was little evidence of learning that would lead to the attainment of higher than average standards, which suggested that practice assessment papers served the pupils well in helping them to confidently apply their knowledge in the tests. Because the development of skills has not been rigorously approached throughout the school, by Year 6, pupils are not able to make the most effective use of their scientific knowledge. Not enough use is made of information and communication technology to extend research skills or record information.

79. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. In one lesson at Key Stage 1, they were good. This lesson was well planned. The teacher's lively approach kept pupils interested and they concentrated well when asked to complete a menu showing a balance of food groups. Questions probed understanding and there was a good use of scientific vocabulary to increase pupils' knowledge. The teacher and learning support assistant worked effectively with individuals to ensure that all completed their work and achieved appropriately. There was good quality discussion with lower attaining pupils to help them complete their task. Useful links had been planned with the pupils' literacy work. Good questioning was also used in a lesson for older pupils at Key Stage 2. This was used effectively to make sure pupils had understood work from a previous lesson before moving on to new knowledge. However, work is not always challenging enough. Sometimes, work only consolidates previous learning for the most able pupils and does not extend them. As a result, they become restless and do not concentrate well. This reflects the lack of detailed assessment information about what these pupils already know and now need to learn.

80. The subject co-ordinator organises the subject satisfactorily, but has not had an opportunity to observe teaching or monitor pupils' work to identify in order to address those

weaknesses that affect standards.

ART AND DESIGN and DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

81. Evidence of pupils' work in art and design from last year, in addition to that seen of current work during this inspection, indicates that pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Those in Years 2 and 6 attain standards similar to those expected of pupils at those ages. There was not enough evidence from the previous year to make an overall judgement about standards or pupils' achievement in design and technology, but work in Year 6 pupils' sketch books from last year and that on display in Year 1 was to an expected standard in designing and making. These current standards reflect the findings of the last inspection report.

82. Pupils gain a satisfactory range of experiences in art and design, although the lack of more specialist equipment for aspects such as printing limits the range of work. This reflects the findings of the previous report. There is some interesting use of the work of other artists by older pupils and good curriculum links with other subjects. Most significantly, the systematic development of pupils' knowledge and skills about both subjects is now well supported by detailed medium term planning based on national guidance material, in addition to the local educational authority's scheme of work for art and design. All aspects of the design and technology process are included. However, this development is recent and older pupils in the school have not benefited from the progressive development of their learning in earlier years. As a result, older pupils sometimes have not had enough experience of basic art and design skills, such as mixing primary colours. The school reports that the teaching of design and technology has tended to be patchy in the past, although it is now represented in the planning for all classes.

83. During the inspection, pupils in Years 1 and 2 made careful observational pastel drawings of fruit and vegetables in connection with their work in science on healthy eating. Most pupils in Year 1 satisfactorily captured the basic shape and colours of each vegetable in their drawings. The work of more able pupils confidently reproduced colour and detail. This work was extended for the pupils in Year 2 by the introduction of blending techniques. All looked carefully at the fruits and worked hard at blending colours to match those they saw. Pupils in Year 2 last year used junk material to produce a three dimensional picture of African style masks inspired by the Dutch artist Karel Appel. They also used a computer art program to make pictures in the style of Andy Warhol. Last year, pupils in Year 1 made imaginative and individually designed hand and stick puppets during a design and technology project. They joined materials by stitching or sticking. During the inspection, Year 1 pupils made gingerbread men. This activity was closely linked with mathematics as they weighed ingredients, and with literacy work as they followed instructions to shape the dough and add facial features. Planning indicates that pupils in Year 2 give good attention to health and safety when preparing a fruit salad.

84. Work in folders from last year and on display in classrooms, shows that pupils in Year 6 had sensitively explored water colour techniques for land and seascapes in the style of Turner. Year 6 pupils also looked closely at a wide range of paintings by different artists. From this study, they devised appropriate questions they might ask the artist about the meaning or style of the paintings. Earlier design and technology work on puppets in Year 1 was extended for pupils in Year 6 to producing more complex designs for string puppets. In their designs, Year 6 pupils completed labelled diagrams, listed tools and measurements and gave instructions on how to construct a puppet. More able pupils completed these

instructions with good detail. Self portraits by Year 3 pupils are linked with work in history on Tudor portraiture. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 had made and painted coiled clay pots and produced colourful paper and thread weavings. They had used paintings by George and Gilbert as a stimulus for poetry. However, during the inspection a significant proportion of the current Year 4 pupils in an art and design lesson were not confident in combining primary colours to make green, orange and purple. During last year, pupils in Years 4 and 5 also made hand puppets as a design and technology project. These were well finished with careful neat stitching and imaginative decoration.

85. There is not enough evidence to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching and learning in either subject. However, during art and design activities, pupils in Years 1 and 2 had been well prepared for their observational drawing tasks and had been given a wide variety of fruit and vegetables to interest them. As a result, Year 2 pupils worked industriously and with enjoyment. However, teaching was unsatisfactory in a lesson in Year 4. This was because time was not well used and too little work was covered. Neither were pupils given the opportunity to explore, predict, or discuss what happened when they mixed primary colours. This inhibited their progress. No teaching of design and technology was seen.

86. Both co-ordinators have a clear view of how their subject needs to improve and their management is satisfactory. Whilst neither subject is currently at the forefront of the school's priorities, they have contributed subject planning for the school's improvement plan, produced subject policies and are monitoring whole-school planning. However, their monitoring role is under-developed. To date they have not had the opportunity to check or support teaching or learning in either subject, although time has been allocated this term to start this work. Assessment systems have not yet been established for either subject.

GEOGRAPHY

87. Since the last inspection, standards in geography have been maintained so that overall attainment is at the expected level in Years 2 and 6. Achievement is satisfactory. Whilst there are some examples of good teaching in geography, pupils do not make better than satisfactory progress because geographical skills are not developed well enough and opportunities to carry out geographical enquiry are limited to classes where teachers are more confident with the subject. Because current planning from the revised curriculum for geography includes more attention to the development of skills and there is good capacity for further improvement in standards.

88. By the end of Year 2, pupils draw and label plans of island habitations. They compare and contrast the benefits of living on an island with the mainland. As part of this study, pupils think carefully about the characteristics of the environment and what are its advantages and disadvantages. They understand that because people live on an island their lifestyle is different, and empathise with others to explain their reasons for choosing where they would prefer to live. Within this topic they discuss the importance of communities and develop social understanding. Teaching is satisfactory overall across Years 1 and 2, and there are many good features, including good links with literacy. In their marking of work, teachers ask pupils questions and make comments that encourage them to think further about geographical issues.

89. The good cross-curricular elements of work in Years 1 and 2 are carried through to Key Stage 2. Combined history and geography work about Ancient Greece in Year 3 promotes learning about maps and world societies. In work on Kenya in Year 5, teachers make good

use of initial assessments of what pupils know to guide future planning. When asking the question “what do I think I know about Kenya?”, teachers evaluated the extent of pupils’ previous learning, identified weakness or misunderstanding and planned appropriate future work. By Year 6, geographical themes make a significant contribution to literacy. Pupils write letters concerning environmental issues. They study newspaper articles to find out the negative and positive factors of changes to the environment. They think about the language that is used to express preferences. In addition, there is good exploration of personal and social issues through this work. Pupils understand the effect of water and air pollution. They learn about the impact of extreme weather conditions on people. The year 6 teacher, as co-ordinator for the subject, has a good understanding of the importance of placing geographical learning in the context of everyday life. Her enthusiasm for the subject breeds enthusiasm in the pupils. However, geography is not systematically taught across all classes at Key Stage 2, and this inhibits the development of pupils’ independent planning and research skills.

90. The subject is satisfactorily managed. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge. She has encouraged good work in the local area and pupils have been involved in a number

of local projects, including a waste recycling project as part of a link with an international company. The introduction of “Charlie Bear”, who travels the world and is photographed in each location, has developed a whole school “mini-project” that helps pupils to think about other countries, distances, people and travel. Parents are also involved with this travelling bear, which is a simple, but positive move in involving them in their children’s schoolwork. However, the co-ordinator has had little opportunity to observe the work of other teachers or evaluate its impact on standards. There are no procedures for assessing pupils’ progress.

HISTORY

91. Inspection evidence indicates that the standards attained by the end of Year 2 are above national expectations and in line with expectations at the end of Year 6. This is an improvement since the last inspection in Years 1 and 2, and is due to good teaching which emphasises pupils’ acquisition of skills as well as knowledge, and so enables them to achieve well. There is less evidence of skill development at Key Stage 2 and pupils’ achievement is satisfactory. This reflects the findings of the previous report.

92. The current focus at Key Stage 1 is famous people and pupils have a good knowledge of a wide range of historical figures and what it means to be famous. For example, Year 2 pupils suggested such ideas as being ‘important’, ‘popular’, ‘appearing in magazines’ and ‘having to sign autographs’. In an excellent lesson, they learned about the life and times of Florence Nightingale. The teacher dressed in role and the children formulated very sensible and relevant questions on things they would like to find out from her. They were very interested throughout the lesson, and some reported that history was a favourite subject.

93. Last year, pupils in Year 1 invited their grandparents to school to ask them questions about when they were at school, comparing it with today and developing a sense of change over time. Their study of toys was enhanced by a visit to the Bethnal Green Museum of Childhood. Year 2 pupils’ study of The Great Fire of London last year showed good understanding of why the fire spread so quickly and why it was difficult to put out. Sources of evidence included Samuel Pepys’ diary. Writing, as though through the eyes of a child at the time, provided good literacy development. The visit to St Alban’s Abbey Education

Centre, where they experienced a Victorian school day, enabled the pupils to experience first hand the classroom conditions of the time.

94. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are enjoying the current study of Tudor times. In a good lesson in Year 4, they were very interested to learn about Henry VIII, his marriage to Catherine of Aragon and the subsequent break from the Roman Catholic Church. Last year's work shows evidence of some good literacy links, such as the letter home from a sailor in Tudor times. The Year 3 visit to Verulamium last year provided valuable first hand experiences as they studied the Romans. The older pupils studied Victorian Britain. However, much of the work was knowledge based, often from information sheets provided by the teacher, and there was limited evidence of pupils using a range of sources of evidence to develop interpretation and enquiry skills. However, when studying Ancient Greece, pupils did undertake individual research.

95. Only two lessons were seen during the inspection. Features of the excellent teaching seen in Year 2 were a lively approach, providing first hand evidence by dressing up in costume, very good knowledge of the subject, excellent involvement of the pupils through effective questioning and high expectations of behaviour and work. Very good teacher knowledge was seen again in the good lesson in Year 4 and the pupils listened attentively. From the evidence of previously completed work, teachers' marking is limited and comments do not refer to the pupil's developing historical knowledge or skills. Some of the work at Key Stage 2, was poorly presented or unfinished.

96. The recently revised curriculum map now ensures coverage and prevents pupils repeating certain units of study in mixed age classes. An improvement since the last inspection is the use of a scheme of work, but the policy requires updating in the light of recent developments. Planning shows assessment opportunities, but there are no whole-school procedures for assessing and recording pupils' progress. Resources for the subject are satisfactory, but there are few artefacts to provide first hand evidence. Management of the subject is satisfactory, and the co-ordinator is aware of what each class is doing in history, but has not yet undertaken any formal monitoring.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

97. Whilst standards have improved at Key Stage 1 since the previous inspection, so that pupils in Year 2 are now reaching expected levels in information and communication technology (ICT), they remain below average for pupils in Year 6. This is because pupils do not regularly use computers, and their day-to-day work in other areas of the curriculum includes few opportunities to make use of ICT. Little teaching of ICT or use of computers was seen during this inspection and so it was not possible to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching or learning. There has been satisfactory development overall since the last inspection and ICT continues to be one of the school's key priorities for improvement. Recently introduced planning is of good quality. It covers all aspects of the subject and systematically plans the development of pupils' knowledge and skills. Training is planned to improve teachers' knowledge and expertise. There is also a useful checklist for assessing pupils' attainment. Where teachers are more confident with the subject, these improvements are beginning to make a positive impact. However, whilst resources have been improved, they are still insufficient to aid good learning and teachers are not yet confident enough with their use.

98. Standards in ICT in Years 1 and 2 are broadly in line with expected levels and pupils make better progress than pupils at Key Stage 2 because they use computer technology more frequently. More able pupils in Year 1 use the mouse confidently to open and close

programs. They talk accurately about how to save their work and explain how to print it. Pupils use word processing to produce their names and addresses. Older pupils change the font and colour of the text. In Years 1 and 2, use of the computer and an appropriate range of software are planned as part of topic work. For example, pupils draw pictures using an art program. They use the computer to store information in graph format. However, progress is limited by teachers' lack of subject confidence. There are missed opportunities to work with a wider range of technological equipment such as cameras and tape and cassette recorders. Pupils do not make use of computers for research or to make other devices work and move. Until very recently there has been little assessment of what pupils know and can do and so enable teachers to plan lessons to extend the learning of more able pupils, or ensure that skills development is secure for the lower attainers.

99. It was clear from discussion with pupils in all year groups at Key Stage 2, that they do not often work on a computer and, with the exception of more able pupils, find it difficult to say how ICT helps them in their learning of other subjects. There are some examples of its use: pupils in Year 6 made good use of the Internet to explore databases about British Columbia in their geography work, and they consolidate tables knowledge in mathematics through computer games. However, skills are not systematically developed. As a result, middle and lower attaining pupils need high levels of teacher support to carry out simple actions, such as to cut and paste, or to make basic decisions about how to communicate information.

100. The co-ordinator is well aware of her training needs and has managed the development of the subject satisfactorily. Her monitoring role, however, is under-developed.

MUSIC

101. Pupils throughout the school attain standards expected for their age. This is an improvement since the last inspection when standards by the end of Key Stage 2 were below average. The new subject co-ordinator plays the guitar and piano well and is able to lead pupils in whole-school music activities. In singing, she sets a good example for pupils. Resources have been improved and there is a new curriculum in place. These factors have improved provision and there is a good capacity for further improvement. In general, all pupils make satisfactory progress and are encouraged to think of ideas, practise and perform. Teaching is satisfactory overall.

102. In a well taught lesson in Year 1, pupils sang well in tune and individuals were confident enough to sing answers in response to the teacher's sung questions. Assessments of pupils' learning from the previous lesson were well used to make changes to the current lesson and so ensure that skills were developed further and pupils' effort improved. This resulted in better rates of learning and improved standards. The teacher had very high expectations. The pupils responded positively to these, behaving well and confidently giving helpful suggestions how they could improve their singing skills. Pupils were invited to imagine themselves as part of a real orchestra and think about the way they would behave. This enabled the teacher to explain the role of the conductor and link this with why they must listen and follow instructions carefully. The pupils named the tambourine, sleigh bells and maracas played in the song and the teacher introduced the cymbal and the castanets. There were good links with science, as pupils used hearing and touch to identify different instruments.

103. Singing at Key Stage 2 has improved since the last inspection. In assembly, pupils sing very well. Only one or two of the oldest pupils do not readily join in. The words of

songs are used in wall displays around the school. This encourages pupils to learn words better, and helps them to understand lyrics. As result of this understanding, they sing with more feeling and enthusiasm. In Year 6, pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning. In a satisfactory lesson, good use was made of the scheme of work to support teaching. The teacher admitted her own difficulties and this built a very positive atmosphere for learning where pupils were not afraid to make mistakes. They quickly created rhythms and patterns and most pupils confidently performed alone in front of the class. The final whole-class performance was very accurate. They understood notation and note length and maintained a constant beat with a variety of complicated rhythms. More able pupils confidently carried out independent work. However, the learning of these pupils was limited because the teacher's lack of specialist knowledge meant that planning was followed too closely and activities were not extended to give some pupils enough challenge.

104. The new curriculum is already ensuring that teachers without musical expertise can teach their own classes. However, not enough emphasis is placed on the development of musical terminology and improving pupils' literacy skills to enable them to talk about their work and use technical vocabulary. Co-ordination is satisfactory. The co-ordinator is a music specialist and has started to identify areas for improvement and help teachers to develop their practical skills. Resources are adequate, but insufficient use is made of databases for musical research or programs for composing and amending compositions.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

105. There is not enough evidence to make an overall judgement about standards in physical education in either Years 2 or 6. Last time the school was inspected, standards were below expected levels in key aspects and skills for pupils in Year 6. Since then, the subject has been given a higher profile across the school. All aspects of the subject appear in detailed medium term planning and physical education activities feature on the weekly timetables of all classes. Useful curriculum links have been established with subjects such as science. Small games equipment has been increased. However, these developments are comparatively recent and, whilst they are beginning to influence the development of skills for pupils in Years 1 and 2, they have not had enough impact on the achievement of pupils at Key Stage 2. For example, games skills remain below the nationally expected level for pupils in Year 6. However, the school reports that most pupils are able to swim at least 25 metres before they leave the school.

106. Pupils in Year 2 were attaining appropriate standards in a dance lesson. They increasingly co-operated with instructions, responding particularly well after watching a demonstration by other pupils. They were very responsive to the evocative music and became absorbed in carefully mirroring their partners' movements. They performed with growing confidence, control and expertise. Their evaluative comments were beginning to focus on the quality of the movement. Basic skills are being well taught in Year 1. During dance, these pupils begin to put together a sequence of movements. In gymnastics, many skip, most balance well and some hold their shape still. They also learn how to carry apparatus safely. However, skills have been less well developed over time at Key Stage 2. Although pupils in the current Year 6 are developing increasing ball control during games activities, a significant minority lack confidence or precision and most have a limited awareness of the use of space either to attack or defend. These pupils make simple evaluative comments about sportsmanship and teamwork, but cannot analyse their progress in developing skills.

107. There is not enough evidence to make an overall judgement about the quality of

teaching and learning. However, the teaching observed was satisfactory. Pupil demonstration and music are used well to influence how pupils move. For example, in the Year 2 dance lesson, the quality of movement was instantly transformed when pupils watched others demonstrate slow, sustained and carefully observed mirrored movements. Music helped create a quiet and absorbing atmosphere in which pupils worked with sustained concentration. Subject knowledge and confidence have been satisfactorily extended through new curriculum planning. Teachers largely ensure that they encourage pupils to evaluate their work and pay appropriate attention to safety, and they help them understand the effects of exercise on their body. Sometimes opportunities are missed to involve pupils in discussion about how to improve their work, or occasionally teachers try to cover too many ideas during a lesson. At other times, some games activities involve too many pupils at one time to allow all to be fully active throughout the activity. Physical education is now satisfactorily co-ordinated by the headteacher who has expertise in the subject. This has helped to bring about improvements. The quality of teaching and learning is not yet being monitored although planning is checked. The further development of the subject is suitably phased within the school's overall improvement plan together with other foundation subjects. There are no assessment procedures.