

INSPECTION REPORT

**BISHOP HENDERSON CHURCH OF ENGLAND
VOLUNTARY AIDED PRIMARY SCHOOL**

TAUNTON

LEA area: Somerset

Unique reference number: 123852

Headteacher: Mr John Holmes

Reporting inspector: Mr R E Helliwell - 5535

Dates of inspection: 11 -14 March 2002

Inspection number: 198105

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:	Foundation - voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Henderson Close Taunton Somerset
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr John Blackmore
Date of previous inspection:	October 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr Robert Helliwell	Registered inspector	Science; English as an Additional Language; Design and Technology.	What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
Mr Peter Brown	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development; How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mr Tom Prosser	Team inspector	Mathematics; Physical Education; Special Educational Needs.	
Mrs Marjorie Archer	Team inspector	Foundation Stage; Music.	
Mrs Gay Wilkinson	Team inspector	English; Art and Design.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
Mr Gordon Tompsett	Team inspector	History; Geography.	
Mr Peter Sudworth	Team inspector	Information and Communication Technology Equal Opportunity	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Since the previous inspection in October 1997 the roll has increased and now Bishop Henderson Primary School is very much larger than most primary schools: it caters for 425 girls and boys in roughly equal numbers from the ages of 4 to 11 years: the school is oversubscribed. There are 14 classes, two per year from Reception to Year 6. At the time of the inspection there were about 33 pupils under the age of five. Children begin school in September of the school year in which they become five. There is little turnover and most remain until they leave for their secondary education in Year 6. The school is situated to the south west of Taunton. The area has some affordable housing and some rented accommodation, but mostly comprises privately owned detached, semi-detached and terraced houses. Some children travel to school from further afield. There is lower than the average number of children whose families are entitled to claim free school meals. Sixty-three pupils are registered as having an Additional Educational Need and of these, two children have statements of Special Educational Need. That number is similar to most other schools. At entry, the children have above average knowledge and understanding by national comparisons. Six pupils have English as an additional language but only two, who are in the Reception Year, are in the early stages of acquiring English.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school. It is effective in many aspects. Standards in National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2 are above national averages in English and broadly in line with standards in similar schools. Although results were below national averages and worse than similar schools in mathematics and science in National Curriculum tests in 2000 and 2001, the work in class of the present Year 6 is much higher than that. It is above national expectations in mathematics and in line with them in science. Most teaching is of good quality, leadership and management are good on the whole, standards of behaviour are good and aspects of spiritual development within the secular curriculum are exceptional. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- In most subjects, the standards of pupils' work are above average.
- Most teaching is of good quality; music teaching is of a very good standard.
- Nearly all pupils have very positive attitudes towards school, and behaviour is good on the whole.
- There is outstanding spiritual development with many good opportunities provided within the secular curriculum to reflect and experience feelings and deep interest.
- There is very good moral development.
- Standards of art and design work are very high.
- Parental links are very strong.
- Attendance is well above the national average.

What could be improved

- Standards in information and communication technology and in design and technology are below those expected at the end of both key stages.
- The regular assessment and tracking of pupils' progress is weak in Key Stages 1 and 2 and at times this has led to insufficient challenges, particularly for higher attaining pupils.
- The management of mathematics, information and communication technology and design and technology is unsatisfactory.
- Standards in mental mathematics, particularly for the higher attainers, are not high enough.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in October 1997. On the whole it has maintained its previously high standards, slipped somewhat in a few aspects and improved a little in a few. The higher than average standards of pupils' work, particularly in reading and art work reported at the previous inspection, have been maintained. Rates of attendance have improved steadily. Parents' views of the school are on the whole stronger now than when the school was last inspected. There is now better provision for information and communication technology, although pupils' attainments are not as good as reported before in comparison with the new Curriculum 2000. Nevertheless, most are making steady progress now, thanks to improved opportunities in using computers and new teaching arrangements. Standards have improved in history and in music. Insufficient work has been done since the previous inspection in assessing the standards of pupils' work and in improving subject leadership. The newly re-organised meetings with parents have found favour because parents say they are better informed of their children's attainment and progress.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
English	A	C	B	C	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
mathematics	C	D	E	E	
science	A	B	C	D	

At the end of the Foundation Stage standards are above average: children make steady progress in the Reception Year. Steady progress is maintained and, at the end of Key Stage 1, standards are also above the averages expected. At Key Stage 2, standards in National Curriculum tests have declined in recent years, particularly in mathematics. However, pupils' work seen during the inspection shows standards are higher in English, mathematics and science this year than tests results in 2000 and 2001. Reading standards in particular are good. Mathematics tends to be the weaker subject because mental and oral work has not been introduced as consistently and coherently as recommended by the National Strategy. It recommends daily sessions at the outset of the mathematics lessons. The school attained its targets for English and mathematics, but those for mathematics were set too low. The targets for 2002 are more realistic and ambitious. Standards of work are well above average in art and design and above average in history, geography, music; they are average in physical education and below average in information and communication technology and in design and technology. However, taken as a whole, work in the school is usually of a good standard.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very positive attitudes, the vast majority say they like it here.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good on the whole, with a tendency to be somewhat better in class than when moving about the building and outside.
Personal development and relationships	Good on the whole.
Attendance	Very good - much above the national average.

Although behaviour is good on the whole and sometimes very good in some lessons and assemblies, there is a little tendency for it to slip at lunch times and during breaks from the highest standards of behaviour seen in classes. Nevertheless, there is no cause for concern. One parent however, questioned whether behaviour was as high in quality during lunch times. Inspectors are of the opinion that the contrast is there, but that there is nothing of a serious nature. The school is a settled and orderly community.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Good

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

Teaching in English and mathematics is usually of good quality, but there is insufficient consistency in the provision of oral and mental work in mathematics, consequently pupils are insufficiently sure and quick in this aspect. The school's provision is not as frequent as recommendations within the National Numeracy Strategy. The teaching of reading is particularly good with much knowledge and understanding of how to teach this aspect being matched well to recommendations within the National Literacy Strategy. Most teaching in the Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is of good quality. A little is outstanding. Overall at inspection, nearly all teaching was judged satisfactory or better and a fifth was judged very good or better; in only one lesson was it judged unsatisfactory. Teaching is of much the same quality across key stages. The exception is in music where it is more consistently of a very good standard. Teachers plan well and have good relationships with pupils and, in class, demand suitably good standards of regard and consideration for others. They also meet most pupils' needs, particularly the lowest and average attainers and those with special needs. Taken as a whole, teaching is somewhat weakened by some lack of challenge to higher attainers. However it is not always the case in all subjects and all lessons. In only one lesson during the inspection was teaching judged to be unsatisfactory: this was in geography. Most pupils respond well in lessons, try hard, concentrate well and are productive.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. There are some very useful cross-curricular links and the curriculum is broad and interesting, backed up by visits and other first-hand experiences.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN)	Provision is good. Pupils with SEN make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language (EAL)	There are two children in the Foundation Stage with EAL; they are making steady progress and receive a small amount of extra support. Four more children speak another language, but are fluent in English.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	These aspects are good on the whole, but provision for spiritual development within the secular curriculum is excellent. Opportunities for moral development are very good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There are good standards of care and good measures for child protection. However, the routine assessment of pupils' work is not precise and regular enough in Key Stages 1 and 2 to track and measure pupils' progress term by term nor sufficiently informative to influence curricular plans.

The suitably broad curriculum is weakened a little because design and technology is not covered in full with sufficient regularity. The attempts to interest the pupils in the curriculum are often successful. Some parents questioned whether there were sufficient extra-curricular opportunities, but the range offered is much broader than many other schools. All teachers and assistants know the pupils well and attend to their personal development well, particularly with regard to their health and safety. The school works very well in links with parents in this and other aspects, but there is little extra provision, nor any clear procedures yet in place for identifying and assisting pupils who are gifted or talented. Parents have raised considerable amounts of money to help the school and this has been put to excellent use in the provision of additional computers.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	On the whole, leadership and management are good aspects, with much success in implementing the school's aims. However, there is some failure on the part of head and senior team members to call people with responsibility to account.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors have a good grasp of the school and discharge their duties fully.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Those with leadership responsibility are fully aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses through using appropriate data and have been able to improve some

	matters.
The strategic use of resources	Resources are used well, and extra funds are successfully sought to assist with the school's development. Parents have played a substantial part in the provision of extra resources for ICT.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are more than adequate. In particular, very good value for money is given by the successful deployment and good skills of classroom assistants. The head's strong leadership in spiritual development has led to a very good match between the school's aims and its outcomes. The grasp of the principles of best value is sound, but not rigorously linked to school development planning.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • They believe the teaching is good. • The school is well led and managed. • The recent innovation of meeting parents with pupils to discuss target setting is strongly supported. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some doubts about homework were expressed.

The questionnaires and incidental conversations show that nearly all parents have strongly positive views of the school. All statements were 79% in agreement or better and more than 35% were returned, showing a high level of probability that the views expressed are those of the vast majority. Of the twelve questions asked, ten produced more than 50% responses in strong agreement. There was some doubt about homework, but a variance in opinion as to whether there was too much or too little. The school says it is prepared to be flexible and provide some pupils with a little more if parents make their wishes known. In the cases of a few of the highest attainers this may be beneficial. There is enough homework set for the present needs of the school. In the written comments, some parents say that they are disappointed that their children are denied access to the extra-curricular activities because of the need for their children to attend after-school care placements. All comments, oral and written have been relayed to the school without reference to the particular sources.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Children enter school with standards of attainment that are above the national average and make steady progress in the Foundation Stage, so that at inspection the vast majority of children was on course to attain or exceed the standards of the Early Learning Goals. Already, most talk confidently and competently, and many read simple words and sentences, understand numbers to 10 and beyond and have some knowledge of the world around them. They grow in personal confidence and are settled and behave well.

2. National tests and teacher assessments show that at the end of Key Stage 1 standards are above national averages in reading, writing and mathematics and that standards are broadly the same as similar schools.¹ Over recent years standards have remained at similarly good levels. Reading is the strongest subject and this is well above the national average, most pupils read fluently and with confidence and tackle new words well, relying on a good grasp of phonics. Most pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are good. In number work, however, there is insufficient sureness and speed in recollection of basic number bonds and in mental strategies to manipulate numbers. In science, standards are broadly average. Work in pupils' books and their skills when they read broadly reflect the standards attained in National Curriculum tests in reading and writing. Also, work is usually well presented and much care is taken in its setting out. In all other subjects² standards attained are above average except for physical education, which is of an average standard, and information and communication technology and design and technology, which are below average. Standards of work in art and design are very high: most pupils are skilful in their selection and choice of colours and careful in observation of artefacts and locations. Art and design is successfully linked to other subjects such as history and geography, but information and communication technology plays less than an expected rôle in pupils' artistic expression. Nevertheless, there are some good examples of links between other subjects and information and communication technology with signs that this aspect is improving.

3. Most pupils make steady progress through Key Stage 2, and presently most are on course to attain or exceed the standards expected by the end of the key stage. Standards of literacy are good with reading skills particularly strong. In 2001, standards in National Curriculum tests in English were above national averages and broadly the same as similar schools. In mathematics, standards were well below national averages and similarly low when compared to schools with the same proportions of free school meals. In science standards are the same as national averages but below the average of schools with which this one is compared. There is a tendency for standards to have declined in recent years in national tests. The school's explanation is that there was a large influx of pupils into the Year 6 cohorts taking tests in 2000 and 2001, and a higher than usual proportion of pupils with special educational needs. However, work in class in the present Year 6 shows that standards are on course to return to previous good levels in mathematics and that pupils with special educational needs are making good progress. Numeracy skills are good, but with less sureness and speed in recalling number bonds and manipulating numbers mentally - as at Key Stage 1. Taken as a whole, the standards of pupils' work in class are good, with work tending to be better than national tests show. In science, work is of an average standard with pupils showing that they have a good grasp of scientific knowledge, but too rarely explain their knowledge and findings scientifically by

¹ Similar schools are those nationally with similar proportions of free school meals

² The core subjects are: English, mathematics and science; other subjects are: art and design, design and technology, geography, history, information and communication technology, music and physical education. Religious education was inspected separately because this is a church school.

answering the question 'Why?' and linking explanations to previous knowledge and understanding. In other subjects, standards of work in Key Stage 2 are on course to be similar to those at the end of Key Stage 1, i.e. above average in most subjects except for physical education - average; art and design- very good; and information and communication technology and design and technology - both below average. Skills are improving in information and communication technology, thanks to more opportunities for regular teaching recently introduced in this Key Stage. In design and technology there are a few good examples of work but planning, teaching and work in evidence do not show full coverage of the subject by all years, and there is insufficient planned for a year's work in most classes.

4. However, overall, the picture is one of most pupils making steady progress in most subjects across the key stages, with pupils with special educational needs making good progress and those with higher attainment occasionally making slower than expected progress. Pupils with English as an additional language make steady progress. As in Key Stage 1, work in Key Stage 2 is very well presented by most pupils, with topic booklets in particular showing good evidence of the work covered and good standards on the whole. Punctuation and grammar are mostly of a satisfactory or good standard, with handwriting of a good, italic script in most cases. Standards of work and rates of progress are similar between boys and girls. Compared with the previous report standards in most subjects have been maintained at similarly satisfactory or good levels, but music and history have improved, and information and communication technology and design and technology have declined.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

5. Pupils display a very positive attitude to school. They are enthusiastic to learn and hold their teachers in the very highest regard. They wholeheartedly support the many extra-curricular activities on offer and demonstrate strong commitment to the school and to what it has to offer. This commitment is apparent across the whole age range and is reflected in the very high levels of attendance, which characterise the school.

6. The behaviour of most pupils is good and similar to the standards reported at the previous inspection. In class they are attentive, well mannered and respectful. Movement around the school is usually orderly and nearly all pupils play well in a manner that is constructive and considerate. They display appropriate respect for adults, other pupils and property. During the course of the inspection no cases of oppressive behaviour such as bullying, racism or sexism were seen. Pupils show a very good understanding as to the impact of their actions on others. They are highly aware about how other people's feelings can be hurt. Every possible effort is made by them to be fully sensitive to the needs of others. Pupils of all ages show a good respect to others whose values and beliefs might be different from those of their own. At lunch times occasionally the good standards of behaviour in class slip somewhat as a few pupils forget the high expectations placed on them in class in the freer atmosphere of recreational activity. However, there is nothing of a serious or sustained nature and nothing of concern. The school remains at all times an orderly and settled community. One parent commented that there might be a contrast in the behaviour at lunch times. Inspectors saw no reason to believe that there is any matter of serious concern.

7. The level of initiative and personal responsibility shown by pupils is satisfactory. They support fellow pupils by providing 'a circle of friends' when required, and take the initiative in organising fund-raising events for the benefit of various charities, the 'School Swim Against Cancer' being a recent example. However, there are few chances when they are encouraged to think things through purely from pupils' perspectives and to contribute to, rather than always assist in, areas in which school life might be improved.

8. Relationships with adults and fellow pupils are good, consistently displaying well-developed levels of social skills. Pupils are able to converse with adults and each other with maturity and confidence.

9. Attendance is very good, substantially exceeding national averages and the level of unauthorised absence is very low. Punctuality is similarly very good and thereby allows full utilisation of the school day. Registers are taken quickly, without fuss, and are completed in full compliance with appropriate regulations. Attendance is a major strength of the school and makes a very positive contribution to the quality of learning: it has improved since the previous inspection.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

10. Taken as a whole, teaching is of good quality and sustains the steady progress of most pupils at standards mostly above the average. Teaching was reported to be good also at the previous inspection. Eighty-one lessons were seen at inspection, many for the full lesson, particularly in English and mathematics. In most lessons teaching was of good quality, but in music it was mostly very good, and in one lesson outstanding. Teaching in the Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1 was always judged satisfactory or better, with more than half good or better. More teaching was assessed as very good or better in Key Stage 1 with the strongest teaching in Year 2. In Key Stage 2, teaching in all but one lesson was judged satisfactory or better with teaching judged to be good or better in two-thirds of lessons.

11. At both key stages, the subjects were taught to a similarly good standard - except for music mentioned above and in science, mathematics and physical education where it was mostly satisfactory. The teaching of literacy skills was mostly of a good standard; particularly good examples were seen of good support for pupils in developing the full range of reading skills advocated by the National Literacy Strategy. Numeracy skills were often taught well, but without the same levels of provision advocated by the National Numeracy Strategy. Consequently, although standards are good the pupils are not so quick in their recall of number facts and of their manipulation of numbers. The teaching of information and communication technology seen at inspection was mostly of good quality, but is a recent improvement in provision. As such it has not yet impacted fully on pupils' standards, but the full programme has yet to be covered. Therefore, such aspects as e-mailing and research using the Internet are not yet being taught.

12. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is well supported by classroom assistants whose skills are good and who are well managed by most teachers. This group offers good value for money in both supporting pupils' personal development and enhancing their attainment. Consequently, pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Most teachers combine well their support for pupils' personal development and their learning. Pupils with English as an additional language, and in the early stages of English acquisition, are provided with a little extra support and make steady progress.

13. All teachers plan well and ensure that their work covers the appropriate Programme of Study. The very good and excellent lessons, of which there were 16, showed very good assessment of pupils' prior attainment and suitably challenging tasks for all pupils, including the highest and the lowest in the group. Expectations were kept suitably high and in music teaching in particular the combination of the teachers' very good knowledge, high expectation of what pupils should achieve and good advice on pupils' attainment resulted in high standards and sustained effort. At times the quality added to the spiritual dimension of learning where pupils' emotions are engaged in an enjoyment of successful expression in the subject.

14. Relationships between nearly all teachers and pupils are positive and suitably consistent demands are made of pupils' good behaviour and attentiveness to their work. Therefore, all classes are usually calm and the working atmosphere is conducive to pupils' learning. This most clearly shows in work samples and in the artwork on display, nearly all of which show good levels of productivity, care in presentation and good coverage of the subjects being taught. Most teachers make successful efforts to interest their pupils in the work by linking it to expeditions, points of interest and encourage a good pace to learning. Consequently, many pupils say they are interested in their work and nearly all try hard with their work.

15. At inspection, teaching in information and communication technology was judged good. It benefited from the employment of a specialist assistant with skills in this subject. This is a recent innovation. During the lessons seen the pupils were acquiring new skills at good rates, but they have yet to learn sufficient to bring them up to the expected standards of Curriculum 2000. Also, insufficient use is made of the skills of information and communication technology to improve other subjects, such as art and design and science. Nevertheless, there are some good examples of links already occurring.

16. The use of regular classroom assessment is unsatisfactory. Assessments based on observations of pupils' work are made in the Reception classes and there are instances of development in some classes for assessment in English and music, but in most subjects there is too little. Although nearly all pupils' work is marked regularly with positive comments, there is no consistent system of regular assessment and so no well-considered information is at hand to modify and influence the next plans for teaching. Also, the newly introduced system of setting targets for individual pupils is used inconsistently across the school and is not sufficiently influencing daily planning. When work is assessed and compared with the National Curriculum Levels expected for pupils' ages, as sometimes occurs, the information is not used well to identify those pupils whose work matches the examples. Thus opportunities are lost for identifying the important curricular targets which classes and groups need to cover in their lessons in order to move them on.

17. Although they are not formally recorded, curricular targets are more precisely identified and taught in art and design thus ensuring the work progresses to more advanced knowledge and skills. So, in this subject most pupils make very good progress. Good progress in music lessons is also based on accurate and skilful assessment of pupils' progressive attainment. For pupils with special educational needs, staff members are clearly aware of assessment processes, and as a matter of policy endeavour to identify pupils early as soon as it appears that any extra help might be needed. Thus teaching is suitably modified for this group. Close links exist between the school and local nurseries, and many pupils' needs are identified and noted prior to their admittance to the school. However, in most subjects work is not so carefully analysed to ascertain Levels and skills acquired nor are the next curricular steps identified with such good precision. Thus, individual's progress is not capable of being tracked term by term in English, mathematics and science.

18. Teachers set homework in accordance with the school policy, most is related to reading - where it has a good effect in helping and sustaining the high standards. Many pupils were able to say how and when they were supported in their reading at home. Other home-works included spellings, finding out about topics and learning number bonds. There is sufficient set for the school's needs. However, a few parents say that they would like more, and this sentiment has been conveyed to the school by the registered inspector. The headteacher says the school is prepared to be flexible and that parents should make their wishes known if they would like more for some children. A few higher attainers, in particular, might be supported more precisely if this were the case.

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

19. The quality and range of the curriculum for the children in the Foundation Stage are good. Activities and experiences are properly based on the national guidelines called Early Learning Goals. Reception class activities are well planned and these provide appropriate support for children's development in the areas of learning³ of the Foundation Stage curriculum.

20. The curriculum for pupils at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is good. It is broad, balanced and relevant and in the main meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. It is socially inclusive and provides equality of access and opportunity for all pupils, including those with English as an additional language, to learn and make sound progress. The National Literacy Strategy is incorporated well into curricular planning and is reflected in the structure of literacy lessons. Pupils' literacy skills are also developed in other subjects throughout the school; for example reading for information and writing for a range of purposes in topic work. The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented, although the regular practice of mental mathematics is not consistently used in all classes in ways recommended by the National Strategy. There is an appropriate emphasis on literacy and numeracy as part of the school's initiative to raise standards. However, information and communication technology skills are insufficiently used across the curriculum to support other subjects and the full Programme of Study is inconsistently taught in design and technology.

³ Areas of learning for the Foundation Stage are personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development.

21. As reported at the previous inspection, the curriculum is planned effectively to provide pupils with an appropriate range of interesting and relevant learning opportunities. The overall time allocated to subjects is appropriate in both key stages, except for design and technology, where there is insufficient planned to achieve the coverage required. The school places a high emphasis upon pupils having first-hand experiences and therefore all pupils have frequent opportunities to make visits both within the local community and further afield. The school makes good use of a range of visitors, including artists and performers, and pupils in Year 6 have the opportunity to undertake a residential visit as part of their work in history. These experiences broaden the pupils' knowledge and help them to develop a more sensitive understanding of life and events both past and present. Many pupils are able to recall with pleasure some of the outings they have experienced and say how this makes them interested in their learning. Curricular mapping has been well devised to emphasise good links between various subjects and to identify progression in knowledge and understanding in order to support pupils' learning. An exception to this is information and communication technology. The school's aim to establish a curriculum which is relevant and based on interesting, first-hand experiences is well achieved.

22. Good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs. Their needs are identified accurately and effective procedures are in place to help the pupils to make progress. Teachers are provided with an individual education plan for each pupil and this helps them to devise work that is properly suited to their needs. The contribution made by the learning support assistants is good for they are well informed of the pupils' targets and work in partnership successfully with the pupils, striving to improve and attain the goals. The special needs co-ordinator has established a sound structure to support the special needs work and she closely monitors pupils' progress. The outcome of this good provision is seen in the achievements of the pupils and the way they are included properly in all aspects of school life.

23. The curriculum includes good provision for personal, social and health education to prepare pupils for adult life. Drugs awareness and health education currently are taught within the science curriculum. There is a sex education policy and this is taught in Year 6. The school also has a library of supportive books on this aspect of pupils' development that are available for parents of Year 5 pupils to borrow. Assemblies, class discussions, 'Circle Time' and 'Friendship Circle' activities are used effectively to encourage pupils to think about trust, responsibility, caring for and sharing with others, as well as fostering their self-confidence and self-esteem.

24. There is a very wide range of out of school activities and these both enrich the curriculum and support pupils' social development. They include a range of music activities such as choir, string group, orchestra and jazz band; and gymnastics and country dancing. Team games activities such as football, netball and badminton make a positive contribution to pupils' social development and the development of team spirit as well as to standards in physical education. Some parents expressed a concern that their children were unable to access this well-regarded range of extra-curricular events owing to the need for child care arrangements in the evenings after school, which are located elsewhere. Although there is no statutory responsibility for the school to provide after-school care facilities, parents' comments have been conveyed to the head teacher and governors. A few parents comment that the range of activities is mainly sporting. Nevertheless, inspectors judge that opportunities here are as good or better than in most other schools.

25. The school has developed good links with the community including pre-school providers and other schools. There are good links with the local secondary school that involve both pupils and staff. Regular meetings for staff take place to promote curriculum continuity and progression as well as visits, which support effective transfer procedures. The school participates in some events hosted by the secondary school, the orchestra of which visits regularly to play for the pupils. The school participates in friendly sporting events with local primary schools. A number of positive links with industry and educational institutions have been established. For example, links with local businesses are used to facilitate class visits in connection with topic work. These activities suitably enhance the curriculum.

26. Provision for pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development is good overall; the school has successfully maintained the high standards reported at the previous inspection. The ethos is one that places high value on fostering each pupil's unique qualities in an atmosphere of mutual respect and care.

27. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is excellent. Music is played in the school hall as staff and pupils start each day and this, together with the very high quality of pupils' work that is well displayed around the school, successfully exemplifies the school's aim of helping pupils to 'externalise the world of the imagination'. Work across the curriculum, in particular in art and design, English and music, provides very many opportunities to increase pupils' spiritual awareness. The emphasis upon pupils working from first-hand experience, such as drawing and painting from close observation of the natural and man-made

world, provides visual and auditory experiences for them to experience a sense awe and wonder at its marvels and mysteries. In English there are many chances for pupils to express empathy with others, to wonder at daily occurrences and to imagine how people in history might have felt in different situations. The use of artefacts and songs in music and in assemblies provides opportunities for pupils to reflect deeply on the world's events and on feelings. Many aspects of the curriculum offer engage pupils' deep interest and sense of personal fulfilment.

28. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. The school's behaviour policy places a strong emphasis on positive rewards and praise, and these make a substantial contribution to promoting pupils' moral development. Teachers often show pupils the differences between right and wrong and place a high value on truth and honesty and personal relationships; and as a result pupils' understanding of right and wrong is good. This is well reinforced by staff who provide good rôle models by demonstrating respect and care for others and commitment to their work. These aspects contribute to the school being a calm and orderly community.

29. Provision for the social development of pupils is good. There is a strong sense of community within the school and all staff members foster this positively. Teachers and support staff set a good example to the pupils through their work as a mutually supportive team and in the way that they value the individual efforts of all pupils. In all classes, pupils are provided with opportunities to take responsibility that they accept willingly. The focus of the first-hand experiences, which the school provides, is the development of co-operative and decision-making skills. For example, this is well exemplified in the many instances of collaborative work in art and design that pupils produce. Boys and girls work well together. The school participates in both local and national events, such as singing for local senior citizens and charity fund-raising that successfully encourage the pupils to think about their place in the community as well as the wider world.

30. Pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. They make visits to places of interest including museums, historical sites and other places of interest, and there are visits to the school by a range of visitors, including community members, artists and performers. Some topics contribute to pupils' understanding of other cultures, as for example the topic 'India', which provides Year 6 pupils with the opportunity to experience the music, art and food, of a non-western culture. Overall this aspect of the curriculum is weak. There is insufficient recognition of Britain as a mixed cultural heritage with many customs, beliefs and traditions that are not founded in British cultural heritages.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

31. Procedures for ensuring the health and safety of pupils are good. A safety improvement programme is effectively monitored through a sub-committee of the governing body, which effectively ensures the full and correct implementation of health and safety procedures. A health and safety policy has been issued which, although lacking details about organisation, does meet statutory requirements. Procedures for accident reporting and investigation are properly in place, and arrangements for fire prevention and control are good. Staff members have received some first aid training and are fully aware of relevant health and safety requirements. On a visit to the local swimming baths health and safety procedures were fully and properly implemented, including both transport and swimming pool arrangements. Risk assessments have been undertaken, particularly with respect to external school visits.

32. Arrangements for child protection are good. The headteacher is the member of staff with designated responsibility and he exercises his duties with diligence and care. Other members of staff have been fully and properly familiarised with the relevant child protection procedures. All people on school premises during the day, or helping with school trips, are now subject wisely to police clearance. This procedure is effective in consolidating the school's child protection arrangements.

33. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory. This is less good than at the last inspection when procedures were said to be good. Assessments are made largely on the basis of yearly tests. However, despite the fact that teachers know their pupils well, pupils' curricular progress is not tracked in systematic and coherent ways. There is insufficient information to give clear pictures of

attainment and progress from Year 1 onwards, in ways that can be used to target groups and individuals throughout the years. An exception to this is the good monitoring of the progress of pupils with special educational needs because the co-ordinator for special educational needs has ensured that within each classroom there is suitable written guidance on the most frequently occurring special needs. She has provided good quality, individual education plans with clear targets, as well as a well-judged programme of work for the pupils. Properly, learning support assistants record pupils' successes and failures on a daily basis, and relay any issues to be considered during teaching sessions. Consequently, nearly all pupils with special educational needs make at least satisfactory progress and many make good progress.

34. The procedure for monitoring and supporting the pupils' academic progress at the end of Years 2 and 4 is satisfactory. The good use of results from baseline assessments and Key Stage 1 tests enables additional support to be targeted to those who most need it, and this is effective. Pupils with special educational needs and those with additional literacy needs are well supported as a result. The Edinburgh Reading Test scores are used in an attempt to predict National Curriculum results at the end of Key Stage 2.

35. Arrangements for the support and guidance of pupils' personal development are sound and appropriate to their needs. Teachers are effective in providing feedback to pupils concerning their academic and social progress. Where necessary, teachers provide effective counselling and further support is available from the headteacher and vicar.

36. Very effective procedures are in place to monitor and further improve attendance levels. Unexplained absences are quickly followed up, and the school is highly pro-active in publicising the importance and value of regular attendance in the brochure and newsletters. Teachers regularly emphasise to pupils the need for punctual arrival at school.

37. Procedures for promoting good behaviour have been successfully established and are very effectively implemented. A strong emphasis is placed on the development of pupils' self-esteem, and this strategy is very successful in curbing anti-social behaviour. A suitably detailed behaviour policy has been prepared, which is fully understood by teachers and pupils alike. The school has developed effective strategies for combating all forms of oppressive behaviour. Documented procedures are in place and these are fully understood and, where necessary, implemented by teaching and other staff.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

38. The school is held in very high regard by parents. On the whole, parental opinion has strengthened since the previous inspection. At the previous inspection, the returned questionnaires showed strong support for only one response. At this inspection, 10 out of 12 responses were judged 'strongly agree' by more than 50%. Parents judge that the school provides a high quality education delivered by a competent and committed teaching staff. Management and leadership are judged to be good, and the school is believed to provide a safe and secure environment in which learning can flourish. Parents say that the school maintains a very high quality of communication, particularly with respect to their children's progress. The inspection team fully endorses these positive opinions.

39. A few parents raised concerns about homework in written comments. Also, at the pre-inspection meeting with the registered inspector opinions about homework were expressed. Opinion was divided as to whether there was too much or too little. The inspection team judges there to be sufficient on offer to meet the school's current needs. However, a few parents whose children are of the higher attainment group may be accurate in their assessment that there is insufficient for their particular children's needs. The school is aware now of this concern and is prepared to be flexible if approached by parents who have this concern.

40. Parents and school have successfully established a very strong partnership, and this relationship constitutes a major strength. Parental involvement is encouraged in all facets of school life, and this participation greatly assists pupils' quality of learning and personal development. Many parents regularly help in classrooms, and this assistance is deployed effectively. Help is also given with other school activities, including educational outings and excursions.

41. Fund-raising and social events are co-ordinated through a very active Friends' Association, which succeeds in raising considerable funds for the enhancement of educational provision. For example, £18,000 has been given to purchase new computers, benches and teaching aids. The school says it is very thankful for this more than usual level of assistance.

42. The quality of information provided to parents is very good. The school brochure is attractively designed and provides the required, suitably detailed and useful information. Regular newsletters are issued which effectively update parents about current and future developments. The governing body's Annual Report to Parents provides a very good summary of events during the previous academic year and includes all information required under statutory regulation.

43. A written progress report is provided to parents annually which details pupils' progress in each subject and also provides good quality information concerning pupils' personal development and individual targets. The reports are 'reader friendly' and provide a very good summary of progress achieved during that academic year. They meet statutory requirements. One parent questioned the school's apparent reluctance to reveal the particular Level at which their child was working during the year. Currently, the school does not assess the Levels being attained during the year or at times other than the end of Year 2, Year 4 and Year 6. Inspectors judge that it would enable the school more precisely to track pupils' progress and assist the setting of individual and class targets if it did so.

44. Parent evenings are held each term, and these provide a very good opportunity for parents to be updated about their child's progress and to raise any issues or concerns that might exist at that time. At the meeting with the registered inspector, many said the evenings had been re-modelled recently and valuable improvements made. Now, parents are consulted in the setting of their children's targets in October, and these are reviewed with them in the following March. An overall review of progress during that academic year takes place at a further parents' evening in June. Many parents much welcome these improved meetings, because they update parents well about their children's academic progress and personal development. However, they provide less than a clear picture of progress against the National Curriculum expectations, and a few parents voiced their wish to know these, particularly in the important core subjects of English, mathematics and science.

45. Parents make a very positive contribution to children's learning, both at school and at home. Involvement in school activities makes a positive contribution, and is further strengthened by the considerable help and encouragement given to many children with their homework. Assistance is given to parents as to how they can best support their children's learning at home, and many take careful note. The partnership with parents is suitably formalised through the 'Home-School Agreement', which details the respective responsibilities of all parties. All parents have signed this document.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

46. The school is well led and managed. This is the view also of most parents and is similar to the qualities judged at the previous inspection, although parental opinion has strengthened since that time.

47. The head teacher provides a very strong lead in achieving the school's aims of having a very strong spiritual dimension and an interesting and varied curriculum based on many first-hand experiences such as visits and practical demonstrations. The newly established system of having four assistant head teachers is now yielding results, and broadening the acceptance of responsibility for the school's improvement across the key stages. Governors very much support the approaches advocated and the emphasis of care for the individual, which was reported earlier. Governors discharge their duties well, covering all their statutory duties. The broad range of link visits they make, and their good committee structure gives them a broad and

accurate picture of the school. They are in full support of the headteacher, and are much appreciative of teachers' and support staff's efforts.

48. The headteacher, senior staff in the leadership team and governors have been successful in maintaining most of the high standards reported at the previous inspection. Improvement since the previous inspection has been steady, and the school is sound in its own self-evaluation with the leadership aware of its strengths and comparative weaknesses. The establishment of a senior team of four assistant headteachers provides good potential for the school's further improvement. As recommended by the previous inspection team, the curriculum is now well planned to include a clear progression in skills and knowledge through a good quality curricular framework. In addition, the schemes of work recommended by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority have been used as support in this planning. Teaching staff targets are now included in the management of performance, which is properly established and in use, with useful plans in hand to include teaching assistants in a system of performance and review. However, there has been some tardiness in a few aspects of improvement. For example, the current school development plan, which ends this year, does not show the setting of clear and prioritised curricular and financial targets, which the previous inspection team recommended. Without these, governors and headteacher are at a disadvantage in being able to assess the value for money which they give. The new plan, appropriately, is awaiting the completion of this report.

49. At this inspection, head and governors showed a good understanding of financial matters. The school budget is used well to save and gain such new provision as the computer suite and a new classroom to enable two classes to be established in each year group without the need to mix academic years. Good value for money is sought when undertaking expenditure and governors have a sound grasp of the four tests of good value - challenge, compare, consult and compete.

50. However, governors do not sufficiently call to account all those with responsibilities in checking up on their plan's successes. Although they have asked for a report from the science co-ordinator recently, and call for reports from the special educational needs co-ordinator each term, they did not quickly enough establish procedures following the previous inspection when they were asked to monitor the rôle of all subject co-ordinators more effectively. This has contributed to an unsatisfactory management of mathematics and to mental and oral mathematics being less well implemented than recommendations in the National Numeracy Strategy. It has contributed also to the unsatisfactory management of design and technology which has meant that the full Programme of Study is not taught with sufficient regularity across the school to ensure that at least average levels of attainment are achieved. To some extent the previous inspection also drew the school's attention to such matters by calling for the evaluation of the quality of completed targets. Similarly, headteacher and members of the senior leadership team have not called all people with responsibilities to account, and thereby failed to identify ways in which those with responsibilities may be supported in the discharge of their duties. Many subject co-ordinators do not have action plans, which state targets and time-scales for their subject's improvement. Without these it is difficult to gain a clear picture of the desired improvements and measure how effective the proposed strategies are in raising standards, or what help is needed in making gains. Some people with responsibilities have, either in written form or in clearly stated and pursued intentions, some clear subject goals. For example, in science the introduction of a more systematic curricular framework and in English several initiatives have helped focus on its teaching in cross-curricular topics. However, the quality of subject management varies from unsatisfactory to very good. Yet without clearly stated and discussed action plans for each subject's management, the governors and head teacher are not in a strong enough position to judge whether they achieve good value for money.

51. Some teaching quality is monitored both formally, when observations are recorded, and informally through planning and regular, short-term and informal observations. This is often successful - as in the case with artwork, where there is a universal approach brought about by closely monitored teaching and supportive, but clear feedback. This has maintained the high standards seen at the previous inspection. This standard of subject management is not seen in many subjects. There is too little monitoring of teaching

quality by head and senior team or co-ordinators across the full range of subjects to provide clear advice and guidance about desirable improvements. For example, teaching is not monitored systematically in all subjects, or frequently enough in mathematics, science and information and communication technology, and in several foundation subjects such as design and technology. This has meant that teachers are without sufficient support in some desirable improvements, such as mental mathematics or scientific enquiry.

52. In most subjects there is unsatisfactory measurement of standards against the national expectations. This is not the case in English where reading and writing are regularly assessed, but even then, individuals and groups are not measured against progress in National Curriculum Levels. Where too little exists, it prevents a completely competent evaluation of standards against the national norms and prevents the school from being a better than satisfactory self-monitoring institution. Currently, the management of mathematics and science does not provide guidance on assessing standards against national expectations, and in English the assessed work is not compared with pupils' achievements.

53. Accommodation and resources are more than adequate. There are sufficient teachers with suitable qualifications who are well backed up by a competent team of assistants. Most subjects are resourced at least adequately and there have been improvements in the provision of computers since the previous inspection. The grounds are attractive, and the buildings well maintained and well presented. Recent additions to buildings have meant that the school is able to operate on a two-forms per year basis and parents say they approve of single academic year classes. All this helps to support the positive school ethos.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

54. The governors head teacher and staff should:

1. **raise standards in information and communication technology and in design and technology by:**

- ensuring that the full Programme of Study is taught consistently in design and technology; (Paras. 20; 51; 99)
- checking regularly on attainment and progress in design and technology; (Paras. 51; 99)
- checking regularly on pupils' attainments and progress in information and communication technology ; (Para. 115)

2. **improve the assessment and tracking of pupils' progress in Key Stages 1 and 2, particularly in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology by:**

- matching work samples to levels of the National Curriculum and to pupils' achievements and recording these regularly; (Paras. 16; 17; 52; 73; 87; 115)
- matching work and teaching more suitably to pupils' prior attainment, especially to pupils with higher than average attainment. (Paras. 72; 77; 79; 81; 82; 99)

3. **improve subject management by:**

- calling to account more regularly people with curricular responsibilities, especially in mathematics, information and communication technology and design and technology; (Paras. 50; 99; 115)
- monitoring action plans and success criteria for all subjects on a regular basis; (Paras. 48; 50)
- checking arrangements for the assessment of pupils' work in all subjects against nationally expected levels; (Paras. 43; 87; 109)
- ensuring that teaching is monitored regularly; (Paras. 51; 80; 87; 109; 130)

4. **raise standards in mental mathematics by:**

- increasing pupils' speed and confidence in recall of mathematical facts and number bonds; (Para. 76)
- improving pupils' strategies in mental mathematics; (Paras. 76; 78)
- improving the consistency in times provided for mental and oral mathematics; (Para. 80)

- monitoring mathematics teaching and providing supportive feedback to teachers. (Para. 80)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	81
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	97

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	14	38	26	1	0	0
Percentage	2	17	47	32	1	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Reception	Y1 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	56	369
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		16

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Reception	Y1 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	63

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	46
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	21

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.9
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	30	26	56

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	24	24	26
	Girls	26	25	26
	Total	50	49	52
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (88)	88 (86)	93 (98)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	24	26	26
	Girls	26	26	26
	Total	50	52	52
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (88)	93 (97)	93 (97)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2001	29	31	60

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	18	17	26
	Girls	28	23	28
	Total	45	40	54
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	77(83)	67 (83)	90 (96)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	16	16	22
	Girls	27	26	27
	Total	43	42	49
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	72 (79)	70 (85)	82 (83)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	2
White	360
Any other minority ethnic group	3

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	16
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26.5
Average class size	30

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	16
Total aggregate hours worked per week	321

Financial information

Financial year	2001
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	£
Total income	792006
Total expenditure	817053
Expenditure per pupil	1738
Balance brought forward from previous year	38832
Balance carried forward to next year	13785

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

850

Number of questionnaires returned

347

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	66	28	4	2	1
My child is making good progress in school.	58	38	2	1	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	55	42	1	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	40	39	15	5	2
The teaching is good.	65	31	3	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on	57	38	4	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	74	22	3	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	59	39	1	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	58	33	6	1	2
The school is well led and managed.	63	30	5	1	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	59	36	2	1	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	47	37	7	1	8

Other issues raised by parents

Several written comments and a few letters were received. A few parents raised their concerns about after-school care facilities being unavailable on site, which debarred their children from attending extra-curricular activities. Some letters raised only concerns about the school and some letters sought to underline how successful the school was and how well it was received by the parents and community. Comments about homework were divided between there not being sufficient and there being too much. Inspectors judge that there is sufficient for the pupils' present needs, except that a few higher attainers might benefit from a little more. The school says it is willing to be flexible and will listen to individual parent's concerns about homework. One parent questioned standards of behaviour during lunch times. Inspectors found that there was a small contrast between the high standards of behaviour in class and those at lunchtime. However, the difference was slight, and there was nothing to be concerned about during the inspection. The school remained an orderly and settled community. With ten questions receiving more than 50% strong agreement and the least positive response being related to homework, it is clear that the vast majority of the parental community is positive in support of the school. All matters raised have been relayed to the school, but not

attributed to particular sources. Comparing these responses with those reported at the previous inspection, parental opinion about the school has strengthened.

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

55. The standard of provision for children in the Foundation Stage (the Reception classes) has been maintained at the good level found at the last inspection. Induction procedures are very good. Children make weekly visits in the summer term before being admitted, and attend school on a part-time basis at first, to allow assessments to be carried out of their attainment on entry to school. These show that overall attainment is above the county and national averages. Children make steady progress in their learning, and by the end of the year most have attained the Early Learning Goals, and some have exceeded them. The planning and assessment of children's work are good. Teachers and assistants keep detailed records and observations and know their children very well. They have a sound understanding of how young children learn, their need for time to complete work, and for opportunities for independence and investigation. The quality of teaching is at least satisfactory, mostly good and very occasionally very good. This maintains the above average standards in aspects such as reading and quickly develops social and speaking skills. Teaching and support staff well work as a team, which results in the provision of a welcoming, supportive environment and consistently good expectations. Links with parents are very good and many help in class making a substantial contribution to children's learning. A 'sharing' book records reading progress and maintains communication between home and school. A small separate and safe outside play area has recently been provided for the use of children in the Reception classes, and classrooms are light and spacious and well organised.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development.

56. This area is well managed, most teaching is good and so children make steady progress to sustain the above average standards of the majority at entry. Nearly all children are keen to come to school and they settle quickly. They are given interesting things to do and know that they are liked and welcomed. The good system of 'planning sessions' gives children the opportunity to select their own activity within a broad range, and many are able to concentrate for long periods and to play co-operatively with others. There are fewer planned opportunities for them to co-operate on projects, to make independent decisions or to show initiative. Children are considerate, can take turns and share equipment. They help those who need it, speak politely to their teachers and to each other and are well behaved.

Communication, Language and Literacy.

57. Most children make steady progress in this aspect of their development. Many attain and some exceed the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Reception year; on the whole teaching is of good quality. Because this aspect is usually well taught the standards at entry, which are above average on the whole, are maintained. Teachers give children opportunities to speak and to listen in a variety of situations. They are able to discuss the moral aspects of 'Jack and the Beanstalk' and to consider whether Jack was good or bad; there are a variety of views. There is a listening corner with taped stories where they play and rewind tapes independently. Children listen carefully to their teachers and to their peers in class and in assembly. In whole class periods their development is well managed, but in free choice sessions there are too few opportunities for children to interact with an adult. At these times teachers frequently listen to children read, rather than working alongside them intervening sensitively to extend or enrich their language and learning. Children demonstrate an enjoyment of print and a growing awareness of letter names and sounds. They use the terms 'author' and 'title' correctly. They are able to identify similarities and differences in several versions of 'Jack and the Beanstalk'. They enjoy listening to stories. The higher attainers can read a simple text confidently and with expression such as: "'Oh no!" said Dad'. These children are beginning to be aware of punctuation and make comments such as, 'There's an exclamation mark.' and 'There's a full stop.' Children of all levels of prior attainment are enthusiastic readers and there are many books in class to which

children have contributed. Children make satisfactory progress in their skill to write simple text phonetically, and some can spell a number of simple words correctly. Sound phonics teaching supports this. A good selection of writing materials is provided in a designated writing area where children make lists, write letters and make little books. A modified form of the National Literacy Strategy is used for those children who are at the appropriate stage of development.

Mathematical Development.

58. This is usually well taught and children make good progress in this aspect of their development. Most are on course to attain the Early Learning Goals by the end of the year, and some have already attained certain aspects. The majority of children recognises writes and counts to ten, and a minority works happily to twenty and above. Good use is made of number songs and rhymes to support this and to raise awareness of counting on and back. They enjoy '10 green bottles' or '5 little ducks', and teachers make good use of practical apparatus when singing them. Children can draw or give the correct number of objects to match a number, and are beginning to understand the concepts of more and less through the comparison of different sets of objects. Much of children's learning is oral and is consolidated through the playing of board and dice games, such as 'snakes and ladders' or 'dominoes'. The correct mathematical language is always used. Children learn about shape and can compare and order objects of different sizes, and photographic evidence suggests that they have experience of making graphs, of cooking and using computers in their work. There little evidence to show that children use their mathematical knowledge to solve practical problems or in conjunction with other curricular areas.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World.

59. Good provision is made for development in this area and with good teaching children make steady progress in developing their good knowledge of the world. A scrutiny of their work shows that they make visits out of school such as to the post office, and that people from the community visit school. Children learn about growth and change in a comparison of themselves as babies and as they are now. They study the outside environment, look at living things and make maps. In both classes, tanks of tadpoles and frogs' spawn capture children's interest and enable them to notice differences and change. They use magnifying glasses for more detail. Children use the computer well, both in class to support other areas of their work and in the new computer suite. For example, they operate the mouse and the keyboard correctly to create a picture of Jack and the beanstalk with giants of various sizes! They maintain interest, concentrate well, make good progress and are happy to talk about their work. A very good class book 'Moving Toys Instruction Book' contains work of above average attainment.

Physical Development.

60. Children move confidently, both in their classroom and in the hall where they learn to use space carefully and safely. They are proficient in their use of a wide range of materials and tools. They operate the computer mouse with precision and use pencils, crayons and brushes correctly. They manipulate both large and small building blocks well. Children have limited opportunities for climbing and vigorous play owing to the fact that the play area outside has no climbing equipment. They are able to use climbing apparatus in the small hall adjacent to their class on occasion, although this was not seen during the inspection. There are also a number of bikes and other wheeled vehicles in a storage shed by the paved area but these are mostly used at play times: they were not in use during the inspection week. A curriculum for the outside area as part of the learning environment has not yet been developed. On the whole teaching is sound and progress steady for all groups.

Creative Development.

61. Children make good progress in this area of their learning, and the teaching is usually of good quality. The spacious classrooms and practical areas make a positive contribution to the opportunities for creative development. Some activities are integrated into topic work such as the painting of a beanstalk, where small groups of children mixed their own greens very competently with powder paint, clearly familiar with colour mixing procedures. Paintings of spring flowers and of wheeled vehicles and close observational pastel

drawings of holly enrich the environment. All are carefully mounted giving the children's work suitable status. There is photographic evidence showing that children make large junk models of cars and collage pictures focusing on texture and colour. Children work with good levels of concentration. In music lessons children learn the names and properties of untuned percussion instruments and consider when to play loudly or softly. They can select instruments appropriate for a task, such as to represent the giant or Jack. They sing songs with pleasure and listen to music in class and in shared assemblies.

ENGLISH

62. The overall attainment of pupils in English is above national expectations by the end of both key stages. On the evidence of lessons observed, a scrutiny of work and pupils heard to read, pupils are on course to attain above national expectations in English by the end of both key stages. Progress overall is sound. The school has maintained the good standards reported at the previous inspection.

63. At Key Stage 1, in the 2001 National Curriculum tests, the percentage of pupils achieving Level 2 or above in reading was well above the national average. In comparison with similar schools, the percentage achieving Level 2 or above was above average. In writing, the percentage of pupils reaching Level 2 and Level 3 was close to the national average. In comparison with similar schools the percentage achieving Level 2 or above in writing was below average. There are no differences between the attainment of girls and boys.

64. At Key Stage 2, in the 2001 National Curriculum tests, the percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 or above in English was close to the national average, and the percentage of pupils achieving Level 5 was well above the national average. In comparison with similar schools the percentage achieving Level 4 or above was above average. Apart from the slight dip in 2000, trends over the period 1997-2001 are above the national trend. In the 2001 tests girls performed better than boys.

65. In both Key Stages 1 and 2 pupils, with special educational needs make good progress and the provision made to meet their needs is good. Teaching linked to individual education plans, the setting of precise targets and skilful support from teaching assistants contributes to their successes. Teachers have a good understanding of the needs of these pupils.

66. Standards in speaking and listening are average at the end of both key stages. By the end of Key Stage 1, the majority of pupils listens attentively to teachers, other adults and each other and makes appropriate responses. Pupils are eager to participate in whole-class and group discussion. They express their ideas clearly and confidently and maintain the general flow of discussions. They ask relevant and sensible questions and show sensitivity to the needs and ideas of others when making responses. They use appropriate language to talk about stories, discuss grammatical features and empathise with characters and events. The highest attaining readers read aloud with good expression taking account of punctuation and features of print. By the end of Key Stage 2, progress in the acquisition of speaking and listening skills continues to be sound. Pupils show an appropriate understanding of formal language structures and can take account of different contexts and audiences when making comments or asking questions. They express themselves confidently and fluently using a suitably wide range of vocabulary and take good account of the contributions made by other pupils. The majority reads aloud from self-chosen books with good expression that shows sound comprehension. The well-planned whole-class discussions that are a part of literacy lessons contribute to the progress made by pupils throughout the school.

67. In both key stages an appropriate emphasis is placed on reading and by the end standards are above average overall. In Key Stage 1 pupils listen to a variety of stories, poetry and non-fiction books attentively. They respond appropriately to questions about plot, events, characters and vocabulary and can make personal responses to the stories they are studying. They develop their understanding of the difference between fiction and non-fiction. By the end of the key stage most pupils read with appropriate fluency and expression. When reading unfamiliar words they use good phonic strategies to work out what the word says. They use personal dictionaries appropriately and are beginning to develop sound study skills. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils read a variety of texts fluently and with enjoyment and, if required, use self-correction strategies effectively. Year 6 pupils were also observed making good use of dictionaries to check on the meaning of vocabulary. They read aloud with lively expression showing good comprehension. Most pupils can identify

the central meaning in stories they are reading and can refer to textual evidence to support their judgements. The highest attainers make mature responses to ideas expressed in the books they are reading and can empathise with characters and events. Most pupils use an appropriate range of linguistic terms with understanding when discussing texts and demonstrate a sound understanding of syntax and grammar. They scan texts for information accurately and select information appropriately in order to make judgements. They have good study skills. They have a good understanding of dictionaries and thesauri and can use these to support their work. Pupils in both key stages enjoy and talk positively about reading and the daily, whole-school quiet reading sessions make a successful contribution to these positive attitudes. Many pupils are members of their local library. All pupils take books home either to share with parents or read on their own and home-school reading diaries provide an effective means of communication between parents and teachers. Pupils are heard to read regularly in school and teachers keep careful records of individual pupil's progress. The school is currently trying out group reading records in Key Stage 1 and these make an additional good contribution to tracking pupils' progress. Following evaluation of the trial period it is the intention to introduce these across both key stages. Phonic skills and spelling are systematically taught throughout both key stages.

68. Handwriting is taught regularly and systematically throughout: pupils are taught italic handwriting from the beginning of Key Stage 2. By the end, most pupils write fluently and many are beginning to develop a personal style. Pupils take care with any written work and are eager to present their work well.

69. In both key stages, pupils write for a variety of purposes and audiences including imaginative fiction, personal writing, poetry, play scripts, reports, factual accounts, instructions, letters, lists, note taking and labelling. The school makes very good use of topics to provide interesting opportunities for pupils to write for different purposes: writing is integrated well into all aspects of the curriculum. In Key Stage 1, pupils are beginning to plan and reflect on what they write. They are beginning to write with greater complexity and most have a good understanding of basic punctuation. The content and quality of pupils' imaginative writing is good and words are well chosen for effect. For example, a Year 2 pupil wrote, 'We were tiny compared to all the shimmering stars. I felt like I was a speck of dust in space'. Pupils take spellings home to learn and are regularly tested on these. They are beginning to develop the skills to use dictionaries and thesauri to support their writing. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils successfully plan their writing and write extensively, using complex sentences and paragraphs in an appropriate style. Their writing often shows a sensitive and imaginative selection of vocabulary. For example, one pupil describing the moon wrote, 'White fish in a net caught by her entrancing silvery mirrored light. A meagre reflection of the sun's fiery brilliance, queen of the night'. Whilst another pupil described the sun as 'dragging its huge weight across the blue pool of the sky'. Much of their writing reflects their work in other curricular areas. For example, Year 5 pupils suggested the phrases 'a collage of feathers' and 'blushing comb and wattles' to describe a cockerel, reflecting their close observational drawing of a cockerel done previously. In both key stages, most pupils' written work is drafted and then copied out for insertion into topic books. However, the focus of drafting emphasises proof reading, often done by teachers, rather than content. Because they know their work is to be copied out, pupils do not always apply their knowledge of spelling rules and patterns when writing first scripts. There is also some confusion about the drafting process, and pupils often spend too much time on rubbing out when drafting, even though they know that they will be copying out the corrected piece of work later, rather than focusing upon aspects of composition and structure.

70. In both key stages there are good opportunities for pupils to apply their literacy skills. Pupils write for a range of purposes in subjects other than English, for example fictional narrative in history and explanatory writing in geography and science. Speaking and listening skills are developed in discussion activities related to all areas of the curriculum as well as in role-play and drama. Pupils were not often observed to use computers to support their learning during the period of the inspection, although there were some examples of word processing in pupils' past work.

71. Overall, pupils' attitudes to learning are very good in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. They are well behaved and apply themselves with good concentration, purpose and interest to any tasks they are set even when not directly supervised. They co-operate well and help each other both formally and informally in discussing aspects of their work. Their response in the English lessons observed was positive and lively.

72. The quality of teaching in English is good overall with some instances of very good teaching in both key stages. Many opportunities are provided which focus on deep meaning and feelings and expressions of wonder and imagination: this subject contributes substantially to pupils' spiritual development. Where teaching is good, teachers make effective links between previous work and new learning, set clear time targets for what pupils are expected to learn during the lesson, maintain a brisk pace and have high expectations for pupils' behaviour. All teachers have a good understanding of the subject and plan lessons with learning objectives that take account of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study and the National Literacy Strategy. However, lesson planning does not always identify how the needs of the highest attaining pupils are to be met and what the learning expectations are, and therefore these pupils are not always sufficiently challenged. Good records are kept of pupils' progress in reading and writing and these, together with test results are used to inform individual targets. Pupils' work is regularly marked and in some cases annotated with comments that help pupils to make progress, although this is not consistent practice across the school. The work of classroom assistants in providing additional support during literacy activities makes a valuable contribution to pupils' attainment and progress and teachers plan appropriately for this support. Homework in spelling, reading and writing is given regularly and there is sufficient for the school's needs.

73. The subject co-ordinator, who has been in post for approximately eighteen months, has very good subject knowledge and is enthusiastic about and committed to raising standards in English. There is a sound policy in place and this, together with the well-established National Literacy Strategy, is used to inform planning and ensure continuity and progression. The subject leader has recently introduced a half-termly literacy-planning grid that is used by all staff and monitors these to ensure that work is consistent with the National Literacy Strategy. She has also introduced a literacy overview for each cross-curricular topic, also completed by all staff. Standardised and optional tests are also monitored and evaluated and the co-ordinator has a satisfactory understanding of the issues that need to be addressed to raise standards. She has developed annotation guide sheets for writing and teachers use these to assess pupils' writing each term and to set targets. She has a portfolio of levelled pupils' work that is helping her to develop an overview of strengths and weaknesses. As a result she has a good understanding of what needs to be done to raise standards. Work samples are not used to compare pupils' work with National Curriculum Levels although she intends to introduce group target setting to support greater differentiation in teaching. Training in issues related to literacy form part of the school's in-service programme. Literacy resources are good and these are appropriately organised to meet the needs of each key stage. All classes are well resourced with a satisfactory range of general reading material as well as having graded readers for home-school reading. Because of the recent development of a computer suite, there is no school library to support learning and books are dispersed into classrooms. The school hopes to develop a new library in the future. Resources are used well and make a positive contribution to the quality of pupils' learning. The school undertakes a range of activities to promote English, including such activities as 'Book Weeks'. Apart from in one Year 2 class there is little display celebrating pupils' ideas and achievements in English.

MATHEMATICS

74. In the National Curriculum test results at the end of Key Stage 1, pupils achieved standards that are above the national average in comparison with all schools nationally. The number of pupils achieving the higher levels is in line with national averages. These results show a substantial improvement since the previous inspection. In 2000 and 2001, at the end of Key Stage 2 in the national tests, the number of pupils achieving the national average was below national expectations. These results are below those attained at the time of the last inspection. In the lessons observed, reviewing pupils' work and discussion with pupils, the standard of work at both key stages at the time of this inspection is assessed overall to be above the national expectations. Work in the present Year 6 is much better than tests results in the two previous years. A part explanation for the difference in the levels of work now being seen and the results achieved in national tests is that there is evidence to support the school's explanation that there was a substantial element of pupils with special educational needs within the cohorts that undertook those tests. The increases were the result of an influx of a large number of pupils into the previous two Year 6 classes after new buildings provided extra places.

75. At Key Stage 1, pupils at all levels of attainment have a good understanding of number and manipulate numbers effectively. They have a good grasp of place value in number and can accurately add ten to numbers. Higher attaining pupils add tens and units to other tens and units 'with carry over'. They have a sound mental recall of subtraction number bonds and use these accurately. Pupils make good progress in their knowledge of multiplication tables and show a good grasp of fractions by dividing shapes into halves and quarters. Pupils identify shapes, such as triangles, different types of quadrilaterals and circles. They match shapes well and know the names of common regular polygons. They identify accurately and name solid shapes, such as cube, sphere and cuboid and competently point out and count the number of faces, edges and vertices (corners). Higher and average attaining pupils tell the time accurately to quarter and half past the hour but lower attaining pupils are generally limited to times on the hour.

76. By the age of eleven, the majority of pupils works confidently with large numbers. Most have a secure grasp of place value and of the four operations. They have developed good skills in working with numbers to two decimal places and higher and average attaining pupils work well with these numbers. Pupils competently round numbers to the nearest hundred and ten, and are able to use their knowledge of place value to arrange numbers in ascending order. However, many, although they have a good grasp of number and are able to explain how they have carried out mental calculations, do not have sufficiently quick recall of number bonds, or strategies for use in solving numerical problems. Pupils classify shapes accurately, for example according to the number of sides or whether they all have straight sides. They have good understanding of angle as a measure of turn and apply their knowledge well to such topics as bearing and direction. Pupils use tally marks well when collecting data and produce and interpret accurate bar charts. When given data they are good at answering questions from charts. Most pupils carry out experiments to establish if an event is likely or unlikely to happen and apply this understanding to other theoretical situations.

77. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is mostly good with an example of very good teaching being observed in a Year 2 class. The pupils learn well through constant discussion with teachers. This challenges the pupils' mathematical knowledge and enables teachers to evaluate the pupils' replies to ensure that they understand. Teachers then swiftly offer questions to develop the next stage of their learning. Lengthy lessons in Key Stage 1 are used well by teachers to bring pupils together to discuss common difficulties and to evaluate work. This strategy is an effective use of time, which enables pupils to maintain their concentration. Lessons are usually concluded by well-managed plenary sessions, which consolidate pupils' understanding. Planned activities focus on learning mathematics, and time is not wasted through unnecessary writing and colouring.

78. In Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. No unsatisfactory lessons have been observed. Some teachers successfully engage the pupils during mental mathematics but this is not consistently used effectively and mental mathematics sessions are too frequently slow, lacking in challenge and having insufficient interaction between the teacher and pupils. Sometimes teachers engage in a lengthy instructional monologue. This hinders the pace of the lesson and results in insufficient time for pupils to work at challenging tasks, which in turn leads to frustration for pupils who concentrate well and work hard when they have challenging, interesting assignments.

79. The teachers use the National Numeracy Strategy to plan their lessons and most set work that is suitably matched to pupils' needs. However, the school's day to day assessment procedures, which should ensure that the needs of all the pupils and especially the above average and highest attaining pupils within Key Stage 2 are met, are not well identified. Consequently, the curriculum provided for some of these pupils does not contain enough challenges. Targets are set, but they are used with insufficient rigour to influence standards. In about a third of lessons mental and oral work are slow in pace and low in challenge, and the objectives of the lesson are not made known to the pupils. Tasks are provided, but there is no indication given about teachers' expectations by the end of the session. This results in a number of lessons where pupils work at a slow pace in parts, and are easily distracted or drawn into a social conversation with their friends. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported within lessons and have activities well matched to their needs, and these two aspects help to ensure that they make good progress.

80. The co-ordination of the subject is unsatisfactory. There is not a full commitment to raising standards across the whole attainment range, and the subject leader does not ensure that this takes place. For example, not all mathematical sessions begin with mental and oral work and this aspect does not take place as frequently as recommended by the National Numeracy Strategy. Some monitoring of the teaching of mathematics has taken place, but not to a sufficiently high standard, and a number of issues already identified in this report should have been noted and remedied earlier. Although the school has already identified the need to improve the teaching of mental and oral mathematics, no strategy has been put in place to match this concern. The progress made by the pupils at this time is steady but these pupils have the potential to make good progress and as a result raise standards further across the school.

81. Resources to support the teaching of mathematics are sufficient and of reasonable range. Mathematics is used in science, history, geography and design and technology, but there is insufficient reinforcement and application to develop mathematics in other subjects. Very little information and communication technology is used to enhance the pupils' learning.

SCIENCE

82. In science, pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages according to National Curriculum tests and teacher assessments. Progress is steady for nearly all groups, but those with special needs make good progress when supported in class by an additional adult. Higher attainers make only steady progress because they are not always challenged in line with their prior attainment. However, the high standards reported at the previous inspection in national tests have not been maintained at the end of Key Stage 2. Work in science shows that average standards at least are to be expected, although in 2001 attainment was worse than the average for similar schools. Work in 2002 reverses the trend and, if pupils perform in line with their work, average standards overall will be attained, in line with slightly rising standards nationally. Pupils' work is very well presented at both key stages and contains accurate information about such aspects as magnetism, changes, the properties of materials and classifications of plants and animals. Information and factual accounts are of good quality and well presented. There is a good emphasis on approaching science through scientific enquiry and descriptions of investigations and experiments are logically and clearly recorded. There are a number of ways in use to record the results of investigations, including line graphs, but too little use is made of information and communication technology.

83. However, on the whole, work is weakened by lower than expected achievement in scientific enquiry, particularly for higher attainers. This is because pupils do not frequently record Level 3 responses in Key Stage 1 and Level 5 responses in Key Stage 2. If they did, the quality of the work would be improved, particularly for the higher attainers. For example, in work in the Key Stage 1 there is too little use and explanation of the correct scientific vocabulary nor are enough reasons given for patterns in experiments which have been observed. There is too little explanation in simple scientific terms about what has been seen. At Key Stage 2, work lacks sufficient comment about conclusions to relate investigations to scientific knowledge, or explanations of why things have happened in repeated tests. There is little discussion recorded of how investigations and experiments could be improved. In both key stages, asking, discussing and recording 'Why?' is often missing. Consequently, progression in the acquisition of skills and knowledge related to scientific enquiry is steady, rather than rapid, particularly for higher attaining pupils.

84. Most teaching seen during the inspection was of good quality. Six lessons were seen, two in Key Stage 1 and four in Key Stage 2. In the two lessons at Key Stage 1 teaching was of good quality in one and very good quality in the other. At Key Stage 2, teaching quality was satisfactory in two lessons and of good quality in the other two. Taking work samples into account, and noticing the ways in which teaching could be strengthened in all lessons with regard to providing more challenges for the higher attainers regarding scientific enquiry, the picture is one of sound teaching on the whole across the school with most pupils making steady progress.

85. In the best teaching, the planning and very good management of other adults resulted in all groups having available the good support of another teacher, assistant or student. The class teacher taught the

whole group well and managed her time well so that she was able to check on the progress in knowledge and understanding of all groups during the practical investigations. There were many good, practical examples to show how we know that sounds travel and these practical demonstrations helped to engage the pupils' interest and increase their knowledge. There was, for example, extreme fascination in observing in the water tank that sound vibrations cause waves. Only for a few pupils, whose prior attainment was high, for example already having some ideas of how the ear captures sounds and passes the information to the brain, was progress only steady. For most it was good. The pupils' records of the investigation were well supported by a good quality 'framework', which had versions related to different levels of pupils' prior attainment. However, there were too few opportunities in the frameworks for the higher attainers to ask 'why?' and explain what they saw in relation to what science they already knew from other sources. Nevertheless, the teacher did take the opportunity of posing more challenging questions when she checked up on each group.

86. To some extent this was the case with all the science teaching seen. For example, in another lesson steady progress was made, but the highest attainers only consolidated previous knowledge at Level 4 and did not explain the reasons for what they observed about thermal conductors. Consequently, they did not explain why they made particular predictions of what was likely to occur in the graphs they were using to record thermal loss. The work samples also showed that pupils were recording facts and information, making predictions and describing fair tests without explaining why. Thus work was more often at Level 2 and not the expected higher Level 3 at the end of Key Stage 1, and at Level 4 at Key Stage 2, rather than the expected higher Level 5.

87. The management of science is satisfactory. A new good quality curricular plan has been introduced and training provided for all staff. This has helped to maintain the good approach in teaching much science through investigation and experiments – now called scientific enquiry in Curriculum 2000. Planning has been assessed to ensure that the full Programme of Study is being covered. Work has been looked at and test results have been discussed. However, work is not assessed at regular intervals by comparison with National Curriculum Levels and so it is impossible to determine a set of curricular targets, which would help teachers to improve the quality of pupils' work as the year progresses. Although there are clearly planned intentions to continue to support science, and usefully these plans have been discussed with governors, there is no written action plan, which sets out clear and measurable outcomes for the subject's improvement. Without these it is difficult to be sufficiently self-monitoring and to judge whether plans are successful in raising pupils' attainment. Also, the improvement in teaching is assisted by monitoring teachers' plans. It is further supported by helpful in-service training but hindered by there being too little observation of teaching coupled with supportive feedback. Teachers are also hindered, without the regular assessment of pupils' work in comparison with National Curriculum Levels to monitor progress during the year and to identify curricular targets. There is no portfolio of work samples in use to judge standards, and the subject leader and members of the leadership team give too little direction to teachers.

88. Resources are adequate, well stored and maintained and benefit from the inclusion of some models and good quality charts. However, although some good use is made of information and communication technology, there is insufficient guidance given about how it might be used to illustrate teaching points, deepen pupils' interest, explore the 'wow!' of scientific observation nor how it might help pupils to record some of their work in science. Nevertheless some useful links are occurring to measure and record temperature changes, for example.

ART AND DESIGN

89. Attainment in art and design is very high at the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 and pupils, including those with special educational needs, make very good progress. Judgements are based on the lessons observed, a scrutiny of work on display, teachers' planning and discussion with the headteacher who

has overall responsibility for the subject. The school has improved on the standards reported at the previous inspection.

90. In both key stages, the major focus for pupils' work in art and design is recording from first-hand experience. A wide range of experiences is provided through which pupils are taught key skills and learn about using different media such as paint and pencil. They have extended opportunities to work in depth, and this is reflected in the quality of their work. Teachers make extensive use of the school grounds, the local environment and visits to places of special interest to provide pupils with rich and stimulating experiences. These visits, together with use of the school's collection of stuffed animals and birds and those regularly borrowed from the museum service, provide a wide range of starting points for pupils' work. Pupils in both key stages frequently work in small groups to produce a shared piece of work as well as working on their own, and produce life-size drawings and paintings. Because of the school's emphasis upon the integration of subjects within planned topics pupils' work in art and design both informs, and is informed by, work in other subjects, particularly English.

91. Key Stage 1 pupils experience a range of techniques and materials. They spend considerable time looking closely at a variety of objects and then recording their impressions. For example, some Year 1 pupils worked individually looking closely at a variety of old household objects and then selecting either pastels or pencil crayons to draw what they could see. They knew how the materials they were using behaved, for example one pupil was able to describe how he had created a particular effect saying, 'I used the pencil, the side of it, to shade it'. They showed a developing sense of colour and the effects of light and shade and were able to select colours carefully to record fine detail. In Year 2, pupils develop and refine their skills of observational drawing of natural and man-made objects and many pupils produce drawings that show finely detailed observations. They create subtle tones through careful and perceptive mixing of colours. They can apply knowledge from one activity to others where the stimulus is the same but different media are used. For example, they drew leaves they had collected, then used tissue paper layers to reflect the colours they could see and then used their observation of shape and colour to create leaves out of fabric and thread. They use different media with growing skill and appreciate their different values in relation to their own work.

92. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a very well developed repertoire of skills and techniques and can apply these to different aspects of their work. They use pencil and pastel with very good control and skill in observational drawings of natural objects. In these they have the ability to show light, shade, texture and tone. For example, Year 6 pupils used pastels to draw a rabbit from observation using delicate gradations of colour and line to reproduce the fur. As part of a visit to Uffculme Mill they made detailed pencil drawings of buildings. Later they used these and their recollections of colour to produce bold and powerful architectural paintings, in which paint was mixed skilfully to recreate the gradations of tone in brickwork. In their work on 'Impressions of Impressionism' they demonstrate a genuine and personal response to different techniques such as 'Pointillism' (painting in dots of colour).

93. In the lessons observed pupils showed a keen interest and enjoyment in the artwork they were involved in. They worked hard, applying themselves with very good concentration, and all took pride in producing work to their highest standard. They are able to collaborate to very good effect to produce work of great sensitivity. The work they undertake makes a very good contribution to their spiritual and cultural development.

94. Four lessons of artwork were observed, all in Key Stage 1. The timetabling arrangements during the inspection prevented any being observed at Key Stage 2. In two lessons teaching was judged sound, in one good and in another very good. Teachers plan and organise their work well and use a variety of appropriate activities and resources to enthuse the pupils. In the best teaching, skills and techniques are taught systematically with clear instructions and good exemplification. Teachers use pupils' finished work to good effect and the standard of display is very good throughout the school. This makes a strong contribution to the ethos of the school.

95. The headteacher, who manages the subject, is enthusiastic, knowledgeable and secure in his view of the importance of art within the school's curriculum. There is a good policy in place that takes full account of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study and a rationale and both these documents support teachers in their planning, provision and teaching. Monitoring of teachers' termly planning ensures that resources are available to support planned work, and there is a very good range of centrally stored and readily accessible materials. He regularly monitors pupils' work and uses this to work with teachers and support staff to develop further their skills, awareness and understanding. He regularly uses reproductions of the work of artists in collective worship to demonstrate particular themes; for example, an Elizabethan portraiture or the work of Vermeer when talking about the use of symbols in Christianity.

96. Art and design is a significant strength of the school and makes a substantial contribution to pupils' spiritual development.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

97. Owing to the timetable for the inspection week, only one lesson of design and technology was seen. A full scrutiny of pupils' work, all work on display, the curricular plan and discussion with the subject leader led to these judgements. There were a few examples of pupils' work in design and technology. However, taken as a whole, pupils' knowledge and understanding is below average at the end of both key stages. All groups make slow progress on the whole. The highest standard was found in pupils' models of musical instruments that were displayed in Year 2. These were made following the previously drawn up plans of the pupils. Pupils had been helped to select the materials they thought appropriate to use and an evaluation of the final model was shown. Pupils could recall well how they had made these 'home-made' instruments and a good link to science had helped the theme of 'sound' being studied in that subject and later on the same instruments were well used in music. Thus, each subject, whilst still retaining its special features, had contributed to pupils' learning, developing knowledge and understanding. This is a good example of a profitable cross-curricular link. In other years, some satisfactory standards in making models were seen, but the recording of pupils' planning and evaluation was often missing. For example, the models of medieval houses in Year 3. In addition, there was insufficient work planned for a year's programme in all years, and the amount of work presented in the planning and work samples was inadequate.

98. In the one lesson seen, good attention was paid to teaching health and safety in the use of implements such as saws. Sawing techniques were well demonstrated. The lesson was satisfactory on the whole. However, there was too little emphasis on pupils' planning and evaluation, and insufficient opportunity for pupils to plan and design their own work, to reason why particular resources are appropriate for a task and to evaluate the success of their design. Class room materials and equipment were of good quality, but in this lesson there were too few tools available which led to a slowing in the pace of learning when pupils had to wait for their turn to use saws.

99. The leadership in the subject is unsatisfactory. Although the subject leader has the necessary technical skills, and shows some interest in the subject, he has not provided clear enough guidance on the standards expected nor monitored the development of pupils' skills across the year groups adequately. No records are kept of pupils' work, even in photographic form, perhaps using digital cameras for example, so that teachers and pupils can evaluate and assess their work. Consequently, it is difficult for teachers to know if they are aiming sufficiently high, particularly for the highest attainers. Unlike in history and some other subjects such as art and design where work is monitored to ascertain the match between the curricular plan and the pupils' efforts, there is no monitoring of work taking place. Neither is there any record or portfolio in use by which to judge standards across the school. Few plans, and no plan of action are in place. The governors and leadership team have contributed to this unsatisfactory state of affairs by not calling subject

leadership sufficiently to account. Staff members are offered guidance when it is requested, but this unsatisfactory state of affairs overall undermines standards. Resources are adequate, but sometimes poor use in class, when the whole group are under instruction, leads to time wasting when pupils take turns with equipment and slow their pace of learning.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

100. Because of the nature of the timetable during the inspection, only three lessons of history and two geography lessons were seen. Judgements therefore are based on an analysis of pupils' work, displays, interviews with teachers and discussions with pupils in the five lessons. Because history and geography are often taught simultaneously in relation to topics they are reported on together.

101. The standards achieved by the pupils at 7 and 11, in both subjects, are above average for their ages. In history and geography both boys and girls, including those with special educational needs make good gains in their learning. The school has maintained the good standards seen in geography at the last inspection and improved them in history. Pupils' achievement is good because of teachers' good planning, well-judged use of resources, and the deep thought and hard work that has gone into the preparation of the school-based programme. Nearly every topic that is studied is preceded by an appropriate and relevant visit. This first-hand experience provides a great interest for nearly all pupils and consequently they learn at good pace. The detailed planning ensures good coverage of the subjects' content and the necessary progression of skills taught.

102. The pupils enjoy both subjects; they behave well and have good positive attitudes. These attitudes have been maintained from the previous inspection. Both areas of study make very good contributions to the social, moral and cultural knowledge of the pupils.

103. In history by age eleven, the pupils develop their knowledge and understanding of the lives of people in the past; for example, by looking at clothes worn in the past, from visits to places of local historical importance, looking at houses, transport, schools and household objects from the past. They use photographs and compare past and present lifestyles. The teaching technique of putting pupils into the real life historical situations brings the past alive and makes the subject more interesting. At age eleven, most pupils have a sound knowledge of key dates, periods and events in British history. The skills of looking at photographs and objects from the past and finding out what they can tell us about it and their reliability as sources of accurate information are taught well and understood.

104. Recently, Year 2 pupils have visited a Victorian school and through a questionnaire to parents found out about schools 20-30 years ago. Through both rôle-play and the responses from parents pupils have acquired a good understanding about life in schools in the past and the differences with today.

105. Only three lessons of history were seen. Teaching was of very good quality in one and good in the other two. The teaching motivates the pupils who, in turn apply themselves very well, complete a good quantity of work and show much interest in their work. This was illustrated in the very good lesson where the teacher interested the pupils well in the task of discussing and looking for sources of evidence to improve their sense of time, what life was like for the poorer people in Victorian England and the changes that have happened.

106. In geography map-work is taught throughout all years and results in a good progression of skills in using and reading. This has been achieved by thorough planning and good teaching. Year 6 pupils have a good knowledge of the world, the continents and the different climatic zones. They discuss environmental issues and comment on ways to improve their local area. They are familiar and confident in the use of atlases and globes. Currently, they are studying India and looking at the contrasting life-styles. Work seen in the other classrooms indicates that much work on environmental issues has been completed.

107. Only two lessons of geography were seen. In one lesson teaching was unsatisfactory in quality and in the other good. Where the teaching was unsatisfactory, preparation was inadequate, pupils were poorly managed and levels of expectation were very low; consequently, the pupils did not pay much attention, behaviour was unsatisfactory and very little learning was achieved. Where the teaching was good, the teacher gave clear instructions, had good control and the thorough preparation and good direct quality instruction achieved the lesson objectives.

108. Teachers' planning in both subjects indicates that very good use is made of local resources, visitors and visits, which greatly enrich the curriculum. Very good use is made of the local museum service with loans of historical artefacts. Also, there are very good, planned curricular links between history and geography and other subjects: with numeracy - through co-ordinates in map-work; with literacy - through written and spoken presentations of ideas; with science and information and communication technology - in the studying physical processes of evaporation and condensation; and with art - in displays of finished work.

109. Both subjects are led by enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinators who have a good grasp of the curricular requirements. Both subjects benefit from a well-planned and very interesting curricular approach. This ensures that work is very often linked to well-selected visits and sites of geographical and historical interest. Both subjects have good year plans, which show good progression in skills and knowledge through both key stages. Procedures for the assessment of standards by comparison with National Curriculum Levels and expectations are unrefined but in the early stages of development: presently this aspect is unsatisfactory. In addition, there is too little observation of teaching and insufficient guidance on how to maintain or improve teaching.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

110. Standards in information and communication technology have not improved substantially since the previous inspection nor kept pace with the increased demands in the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. Standards overall are below expectations by the end of both key stages and progress has been unsatisfactory since the previous inspection in comparison with other schools. Now however, pupils' progress is beginning to accelerate with the introduction of the new computer suite and the specialist and skilled teaching. Overall, pupils' current progress is satisfactory but there is some leeway to make up. Accommodation for the subject is now good with a well-equipped suite, which is shortly to be improved further with demonstration facilities. The school makes some good use of information and communication technology across the curriculum, but some aspects of the National Curriculum such as 'e-mailing' and research using the Internet, although planned, are not yet being taught. Insufficient discussion takes place to enable pupils to evaluate their work or to improve their understanding of the place of information and communication technology in the modern world. All pupils have a weekly taught lesson

111. By age seven, with adult help and direction, pupils create questionnaires using word-processing techniques, as when they asked their parents about their school experiences when studying history. They use a data-handling program to input and analyse hair and eye colour. They are able to program a moving toy to cover specific distances and change its direction. They are gaining in control of the mouse and beginning to use both hands to type. They can with help merge text and graphics and they can write in different fonts and select letter size. Their artwork is of good quality and they use the fill tool and different sizes of brushes for particular effects. They rely much on the skills of the specialist teacher, however, for successful outcomes and operation of the programs and have not yet acquired a great deal of independence.

112. By age 11 pupils have done a little work on sensing techniques. With help, pupils use a program to sense temperatures over short intervals of time. They create conditions for these to change so that the difference in temperature can be observed on the monitor and they print out the graph. They can highlight and move text, resize text boxes and format their writing in different styles, such as repeated triangular shapes when they write in poetry or prose. They use word-processing techniques to create their own chronicles of the 'War Gazette' and the 'Victorian Times' to record their history work. They are beginning to make use of the digital camera. They scan in their own photographs and can merge text and graphics. They can use control techniques to draw regular polygons. They produce and draw temperature graphs to compare the temperature of Bombay and London and print these off in different formats. However, pupils

are not secure in these processes and few can work independently and with confidence. Occasionally, pupils use the class-based computers to make links with regular class work, such as estimating the number of degrees in angles. However, it was rare to find pupils using class-based computers during the inspection week. Artistic work saved on to the hard drive was of a high quality, such as the fine detail in the drawings of their work on the Egyptians.

113. The specialist teaching arrangement has not been operational long enough for it to make a marked improvement in standards or on pupils' overall progress. However, the technician researches the programs well and has very good subject knowledge. Lessons are suitably paced, instructions are very clear and tasks explained effectively. The relationships between the teacher and the pupils are very good so that pupils are confident both to ask and answer questions. Five lessons of information and communication technology were seen during the inspection. Teaching quality was sound in one and good in the remainder.

114. A particularly good feature of work in information and communication technology is the link made with other subjects which heightens the relevance of the work for the pupils. As a result, pupils enjoy their information and communication technology work. Some pupils have recorded in graphical form the amount of stretch of a rubber band when propelling a toy car and the distance travelled when studying forces in science. They quickly settle to their task. They are enthusiastic, take much interest in what they are doing, and are keen to do well. This is partly a result of the relevance of what they do and the cross-curricular links, but also due to the overall good quality of teaching in both key stages undertaken by the information and communication technology technician.

115. Overall, the co-ordination of the subject is unsatisfactory. Whilst a scheme of work is in place and based suitably on national guidance, the undated policy has not been amended to take account of the new computer suite, which has been operational for four months. This situation is unsatisfactory. The co-ordinators do not have an action plan for the subject, and so are without clear objectives and time-scales against which to measure the success of the new arrangements. In addition, responsibilities in the shared co-ordination are unclear. Record keeping systems are only just being tried out in Key Stage 1 and the position in Key Stage 2 is unsatisfactory. There is no portfolio of work to help staff judge the standards, quality and appropriateness of pupils' work in comparison with national expectations. The co-ordinators have been called insufficiently to account by governors, head and senior team. Hardware and software resources for the subject are good and the school is grateful for the help of parents in raising necessary finances.

MUSIC

116. Standards of music are above average at the end of both key stages. This is an improvement on the standards reported at the previous inspection. Pupils of all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs, make good progress.

117. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils sing well. They know about notes being higher and lower and loudness and softness in music. They understand something of how music is organised and that clear enunciation is needed in singing to improve its performance. They are familiar with the properties of tuned and untuned percussion instruments, can name them and select those appropriate for a particular task. They use correct musical terminology. They learn to compose their own accompaniments to particular pieces of prose or poetry and to record their compositions using graphical notation. In a very good Year 2 lesson, pupils worked very well in groups to compose a sound accompaniment to a poem, 'The Big, Big Sea'. Each group collaborated in choosing their own instruments, in making decisions about the content of the piece and in recording it visually before later playing it to the class. Pupils listened intently to their peers and were able to make evaluative comments. They undertook the task with the utmost seriousness and were very proud of the results. These pupils also chose to use some of the instruments that had been made in a design and technology lesson.

118. By the end of Year 6 all pupils have had a wide range of musical experiences and for most attainment is above average. Pupils sing well both in class lessons and in assembly, properly striving to improve their performance through careful attention to enunciation, high and low notes, differences in volume and the holding of notes at the end of appropriate phrases. In a very good lesson, pupils played their own finished improvisations based on Indian instruments, working successfully with each other and aware of the effect that their personal contribution was having on the whole. The feeling of involvement and concentration in the lesson was palpable. This is work of a high standard. Across the key stage, pupils sing and play a wide variety of compositions from the more usual to those with unusual rhythms and form. This imaginative selection of types of music excites pupils and helps to sustain their interest and enthusiasm. In another very good lesson younger pupils built up layers of different rhythms played as a round.

119. There is a weekly school choir, orchestra, jazz and string group. These groups help to attain the above average standards reported here. The choir is open to all pupils in Years 5 or 6 of whatever level of prior attainment, and it is planned to extend this to include younger pupils. Peripatetic musicians teach a variety of instruments to about 50 pupils each week, and when pupils have reached a certain level of competence they join the orchestra, which is taught by the subject leader. Individual instrumentalists often play as the pupils enter or leave assembly, which provides practice for the performers and is a good example to their peers.

120. Of six lessons observed at Key Stage 2, teaching in five was of a very good standard and in the other it was excellent. Only one lesson was seen in Key Stage 1 and in this the quality of teaching was very good. Planning at Key Stage 1 shows that, overall, teachers have sound subject knowledge and teach their own music. At Key Stage 2 the music subject leader teaches all classes. She is a musician who has high expectations for the pupils' musical attainment. She is imaginative and thorough in her approach and believes strongly that music should be enjoyed. Pupils respond accordingly, greatly enjoy their music and make good progress.

121. The planning of music is imaginative and pupils are given a broad range of experiences, which cover all aspects of the Programmes of Study. Teaching ties work in with class topics wherever possible. For example, the imaginative playing of Indian instruments was linked with one class's topic on India, and when work on the Tudors was being covered in history, the music teaching studied Elizabethan instruments. Assessment is informal, unrecorded and not related to individual pupil's levels of attainment but it is accurate and used to judge pupils' attainment as they strive to achieve the high expectations being set and so can be seen to inform future teaching. Thus it is satisfactory.

122. The quality of resources is good. Instruments are stored in the small light carpeted hall where lessons are taught, are well organised and accessible. The use of information and communication technology is at an early stage of implementation, but the program 'Compose World' has just been bought suitably to enhance the learning of pupils in Key Stage 1 and 'Music Studio' for those in Key Stage 2.

123. The quality of music is enhanced by the school's good relationship with the peripatetic music service, by musicians who visit school and by the school's involvement in the community and in local musical events. Music makes a substantial contribution to the ethos of the school and to pupils' spiritual development.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

124. During the inspection five lessons in total were observed. One lesson was observed in each of Years 2, 3, 4 and two in Year 5. Judgements in relation to standards are based on the evidence seen in lessons, from a scrutiny of planning, information gained from discussions with school staff and pupils and informal observations of extra-curricular activities. All groups make steady progress, and most pupils are on course to acquire the standards expected at the end of both key stages: standards are average overall.

125. In the dance lesson observed in Year 2, pupils used slow movements but these were not fully expressive and did not show enough individual interpretation. Pupils lacked variety in their sequences and used too little effort to sustain the activity at above average levels. Good relationships existed amongst the

children who worked well in partnership with one or more class companions. Planning for the lesson was clear and followed closely and so the lesson progressed successfully. Good use was made of pupils to demonstrate their activity and there were good links with their work in literacy. However, too much time was spent in discussion and pupils were inactive for far too long periods of time. Pupils work with enjoyment and made sound progress.

126. For pupils between the ages of seven and eleven, progress is satisfactory and standards observed in lessons are in line with those expected nationally. In a lesson in Year 3, most pupils were able to work in a sequence, control small movements such as twist, turn, jump and land with good control. A few had more advanced skills. In Year 5, pupils worked co-operatively in pairs and after discussing their activities developed the sequence to a higher level. After listening to instructions they put together a creeping dodging movement sequence containing two long, medium and high actions and incorporated a change of direction. By the end of the lesson, pupils devised and performed dances using a range of patterns and movements and use appropriate skills.

127. In a swimming lesson for Year 4 at the local pool, the general level of supervision was good. Pupils' standard of work is in line with national expectations for their ages and records indicate that nearly all are on course to be able to swim 25 metres by the age of eleven years.

128. Pupils enjoy their physical education lessons. They change their clothes quickly and are eager to participate and learn. They recognise that they get more enjoyment out of their activities as skill levels increase. Therefore, pupils work hard and concentrate well during practice and routine elements of lessons.

129. In the lessons observed, teaching was satisfactory or better. Teachers plan their lessons well with clearly stated learning objectives. Most contain a good range of activities. Teachers use a range of imaginative warm up exercises. In all classes, clear routines have been established which result in good use of lesson time. There is appropriate emphasis on health and safety. Teachers give clear instructions and are

positive and encouraging and focus well on individual pupils, identifying good work and offering help when needed. However, there is a tendency for otherwise sound or good teaching to be diminished in quality by a recurring weakness in the balance between periods of instruction, when pupils sit and listen, and periods of activity when pupils move around and try out their own ideas. Pupils do not undertake sufficient physical activity over the period of a lesson when this occurs.

130. The school is well resourced. It has a number of lunchtime and after-school clubs for sport and pupils benefit greatly from these provisions - they contribute to the standards achieved. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and keen to improve subject. However, there is no action plan with clear targets against which to plan and monitor improvement, and too little observation of teaching takes place. Planning for lessons is not scrutinised. No systematic assessment procedures are in use by which to judge pupils' progress. Governors, head and senior team have not sufficiently called subject leadership to account and offered support.