

INSPECTION REPORT

MANORBROOK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Thornbury

LEA area: Gloucestershire

Unique reference number: 130978

Headteacher: Mrs L Thomas

Reporting inspector: Mr P Kemble - 7269

Dates of inspection: 19th-22nd June 2000

Inspection number: 215532

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Park Road
Thornbury
South Gloucestershire

Postcode: BS35 1JW

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Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr S Marlowe

Date of previous inspection: 17th September 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject Responsibilities	Aspect Responsibilities
Mr P Kemble	Registered inspector	Science; Information technology; Design and technology; Music; Special educational needs; English as an additional language.	Information about the school; How high are standards? – school’s results and pupils’ achievements; How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led? - leadership and management, accommodation; What should the school do to improve further?
Mr P Widdowson	Lay inspector		How high are standards? – pupils’ attitudes, values and personal development/attendance; How well does the school care for its pupils? – pupils’ welfare, health and safety; How well does the school work in partnership with parents? – links with parents/carers.
Mr J Sangster	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History Physical education Religious education Equal opportunities	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? – pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development How well is the school led? – efficiency, staffing
Mr M Woods	Team inspector	English; Art; Areas of learning for children under five;	How good are the curricular opportunities offered for pupils? – quality and range of the curriculum; How well does the school care for its pupils? – assessment; How well is the school led? – learning resources.

The inspection contractor was:

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The Registrar
Inspection Quality Division
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is an average sized primary school for boys and girls aged four to eleven years. It is one of several primary schools serving the town of Thornbury in Gloucestershire. There are 255 pupils on roll, consisting of 134 boys and 121 girls. Pupils' attainment on entry over time is above that found in primary schools nationally, but on occasions it is significantly lower than this. The percentage of pupils (7.84%) entitled to free school meals is below the national average. Forty-nine pupils (19.2%) have special educational needs, a figure which is broadly in line with the national average. Three pupils (1.17%) have statements of special educational need, a figure which is similar to the national average. The percentage of pupils (0.39%) from ethnic minority backgrounds is below the national average. Pupils are organised in eight classes. There are three classes in Key Stage 1 and four in Key Stage 2, and one class containing both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupils. All classes, except the Year 6 class, have mixed-age groups. The average class size is 31.9.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Manorbrook Primary School is a very effective school and serves its community well. There are strong links with parents and the school cares for their children very well. Relationships between pupils and teachers are very good. The quality of teaching overall is very good and, as a result, pupils' attitudes to their work and their behaviour are very good. Standards in English, mathematics and science are well above average at the end of Key Stage 1 and above average at the end of Key Stage 2. Curriculum provision is good and a very good range of extra-curricular activities extends pupils' learning. The promotion of pupils' personal development is very good. The promotion of pupils' moral development is excellent and that of pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development is very good. The headteacher provides excellent leadership and a very clear educational direction to the work of the school. She is very well supported by the governors, senior staff and subject co-ordinators. Teamwork amongst governors, teaching and non-teaching staff is very good and a key feature of the school's effectiveness. The school has an income which is above the national average and provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in English, mathematics and science are well above average at the end of Key Stage 1 and above average at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress.
- The quality of teaching is very good overall; teachers have high expectations and plan interesting activities which challenge pupils and sustain their motivation and interest.
- Pupils' are cared for very well; as a result, their attitudes to work, their behaviour, personal development and relationships with each other and with adults are very good, helping them to make good progress.
- The promotion of pupils' moral development is excellent; the promotion of their spiritual, social and cultural development is very good.
- The headteacher's leadership is excellent; she provides a clear educational direction to the life and work of the school. She has established strong links with parents and the community.
- Governors and teaching and non-teaching staff give good support to the headteacher and teamwork is very effective in promoting school improvement.

What could be improved

- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to follow their own lines of enquiry or plan their own investigations and experiments, independently or with others.
- Other than in English, mathematics and science, co-ordinators have few opportunities to assess pupils' achievements or the quality of teaching and learning in the subjects for which they have responsibility.
- Information technology is not used extensively enough to support pupils' learning.

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 September 1996. The school was reported as having serious weaknesses in aspects of leadership, curriculum and financial management. The new headteacher and governors have responded well to all the issues raised in the report and the school has made substantial improvements since then. All subjects of the National Curriculum have been fully implemented and are supported by good quality schemes of work. Procedures for assessing pupils' academic attainment are good and staff gather a wide range of helpful information on pupils' attainment and progress. Standards in English, mathematics and science have made a significant improvement at the end of both key stages since 1998 and are above the national average and the average of similar schools. The leadership and management of the school by the headteacher and governors have improved substantially. The procedures introduced by the headteacher to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning have made a significant contribution to raising teachers' expectations and the standards attained by pupils. The relationship between the school, its parents and the local community is much improved and the school serves its community well. In addition, the quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and is now very good overall. Standards in information technology, design and technology and religious education are an improvement on those reported in 1996.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	B	D	B	B
mathematics	C	D	C	C
science	C	D	B	B

Key

well above average A

above average B

Average C

below average D

well below average E

The table shows how standards have improved since 1998. Inspection evidence shows that the

standards of the current Year 6 pupils are similar to the 1999 above average standards in English and science, and are now also above average in mathematics.

Standards of attainment in information technology are in line with those expected of pupils of their age at the end of both key stages. Standards of attainment in religious education exceed the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus at the end of both key stages.

Standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 are well above those expected of pupils of their age in speaking and listening, reading and writing, mathematics and science. They are above those expected in design and technology, history and music and in line with expectations in art, geography and physical education. Standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 are above expectations in design and technology, history, music and physical education. They are in line with expectations in geography and below expectations in art. The good progress made in Key Stage 2 is from an average or below average base at the age of seven.

By the time they are five, children make good progress in their personal and social development, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development and exceed the standards expected of their age.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils, including the children under five, have very good attitudes to their learning. They enjoy coming to school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is very good overall, in class lessons, in the playground and on school visits. Pupils show considerable respect for their school and all adults. Occasionally, a small minority of pupils in Year 1 has to be corrected by teachers.
Personal development and relationships	Personal development is very good. Relationships between pupils and between pupils and teachers are very good. Pupils develop a mature approach to their work from an early age and co-operation in group work is of a high standard.
Attendance	Attendance is good. Lessons begin promptly each morning because pupils arrive on time.

Pupils' very good attitudes to their work and the life of the school make a significant contribution to the good progress that they make. They are keen to take on responsibility to help with classroom routines or carry out tasks around the school. Their mature attitudes are reflected in the work of the School Council and the high level of involvement pupils have in influencing school policy.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

The quality of teaching is very good overall in literacy at both key stages. It is good in mathematics and science. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and generally use what they know about pupils' achievements well to plan activities that match their needs. As a result, pupils of all attainments make good progress. Excellent and very good lessons were seen in lessons for the children under five, at Key Stage 1 and in classes containing Years 5 and 6 pupils at Key Stage 2. These lessons were characterised by enthusiastic teaching that motivated pupils and sustained their interest. Where subject knowledge is particularly strong, for example in literacy and music, lessons are often very good. Where pupils are given opportunities to work independently or in groups on activities that they have planned themselves, for example, in Years 5 and 6, pupils respond very well and make particularly good progress. In some lessons at both key stages, teachers take too long to settle pupils who become restless or inattentive and introductions to lessons are too long.

Taking into account all the lessons seen during the inspection, about three-quarters of them were good or better, including forty per cent which were very good or better. There were instances of excellent teaching at both key stages. The remaining lessons were satisfactory.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The breadth, balance and relevance of the curriculum are good. Pupils' experiences are successfully extended by a very good range of extra-curricular activities. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is very good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision is very good. The co-ordinator, class teachers and non-teaching staff work very well together to help pupils make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Provision for pupils' moral development is excellent. Provision for pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development is very good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare are very good. As a result, the school is a secure environment in which pupils develop confidence and very good attitudes to learning. Procedures for assessing pupils' academic achievements are good, but those for monitoring pupils' social development are largely informal.

The headteacher has established very good links with parents and the local community and these are having a significant impact on pupils' attainment and progress.

The school is a very caring community. Teachers have a very good knowledge and understanding of

pupils' academic and social needs. Pupils are successfully encouraged to become mature and responsible from their first few weeks in school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher's leadership and management are excellent. She is very well supported by the work of the deputy headteacher and the senior management team. Subject co-ordinators work hard and carry out their duties conscientiously.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors carry out their duties very well. They have a very good understanding of the issues facing the school over the next few years.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher and staff have good monitoring procedures to gather information about the effectiveness of policies and initiatives. Co-ordinators have a broad understanding of standards in their subjects, but most are not able to observe their colleagues teach to help them gain a deeper awareness of the quality of teaching and learning.
The strategic use of resources	Non-teaching staff and other adults are deployed very effectively to support learning in all classes. Very good use is made of the accommodation, the school grounds and the local area; resources are efficiently and effectively used to support the curriculum.

Teamwork is very well developed and makes a significant contribution to the consistent implementation of the school's aims, values and policies for the children under five and at both key stages. There is a good number of qualified and experienced teaching and non-teaching staff. The governors give a high priority to their training requirements. The absence of a covered link between the two buildings on the site means that important school routines, such as assemblies and use of specialist facilities, are often disrupted by wet weather. Resources are generally of good quantity and quality.

The income the school receives is above the national average, but the governors take considerable care to ensure that all funds available give good value for money and financial management is very good.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The quality of teaching is good. Their children like school and make good progress. Teachers expect their children to work hard and achieve their best. The school is well led and managed. Their children are encouraged to be mature 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some parents would like more homework and some would like less. Some parents do not feel they are kept well enough informed about their children's progress. Some parents feel that there are not enough activities outside lessons, particularly for the younger children.

<p>and responsible and behave well.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school works closely with parents. • Parents feel comfortable about approaching the school with problems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents of children in the Reception and Year 1 class would like the behaviour of a small minority of boys improved. • Parents in general do not like mixed-age classes.
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Inspection evidence supports parents' positive views. The amount of homework set is typical of most primary schools nationally and the school has a clear policy, of which parents have been informed. Formal and informal arrangements for parents to find out about their children's progress are judged to be good. The range of extra-curricular activities is judged to be very good, although inspectors agree that they mainly benefit pupils in Key Stage 2. Inspectors agree with parents that the behaviour of a small number of pupils in Year 1 is not typical of the rest of the pupils in the school and, although their behaviour has improved over time, it still requires continued attention. Inspectors understand why many parents are not happy with mixed-age classes but the alternative would be very large classes in some year groups. Like many of the parents who are not happy with these arrangements, inspectors consider that the school does as much as it can to keep parents closely informed about which classes their children will be in at the beginning of each school year.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Children under five make good progress in their personal development, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development and exceed the standards expected by the age of five.
2. The results of the 1999 national tests for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 showed that standards of attainment were well above the national average and that of similar schools in reading and writing. The 1999 results for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 showed that standards of attainment were above the national average and that of similar schools in English. Inspection findings show that standards of attainment of the current Year 2 and Year 6 pupils are similar to those of the previous year. Results of the 2000 national tests indicate standards similar to those of 1999 at the end of both key stages, although it is too early for national comparisons to be made.
3. In mathematics, the 1999 national test results for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 showed that standards of attainment were well above the national average and that of similar schools. The 1999 results for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 were broadly in line with the national average and that of similar schools. Inspection findings show that standards of attainment of the current Year 2 pupils are similar to those of the previous year. Standards of attainment of the current Year 6 pupils are better than the previous year and are above average. Results of the 2000 national tests indicate that these above average standards have been maintained.
4. In science, results of the 1999 teacher assessments of pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 showed that standards of attainment were well above the national average and that of similar schools. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher level or above was very high. The end of Key Stage 2 results showed standards of attainment above the national average and that of similar schools. Inspection findings show that standards of attainment of the current Year 2 and Year 6 pupils are similar to the previous year. Results of the 2000 teacher assessments and national tests indicate that the good standards have been maintained.
5. When considering trends over time between 1996 and 1999, standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1, as shown by the results of national tests, remained close to or below the national average until 1998. Between 1998 and 1999, results in all three subjects have improved significantly. This is due largely to the effect of substantial improvements in the quality of teaching, subject schemes of work and teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve. Results at the end of Key Stage 2 have risen broadly in line with the national trend, but with a noticeable improvement between 1998 and 1999, for the reasons similar to those at Key Stage 1. The good progress made in Key Stage 2 is from an average or below average base at the end of Key Stage 1.
6. The school has set realistic targets for pupils' attainments in English, mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 2. The results in 1998 and 1999 were very close to the targets set and the indications are that the targets set for the 2000 tests, which are higher than those of 1999, have been attained.

7. In English, pupils make good progress in reading due largely to the wide range of opportunities for pupils to read individually or in groups to adults. This generates a strong interest in books for the vast majority of pupils. Good progress is sustained in Key Stage 2, where the excellent work of teachers in promoting interesting and stimulating texts in the literacy hour establishes reading as an integral part of pupils' daily learning. Good progress is made in writing at Key Stage 1 as pupils are encouraged to write stories, poems, letters and accounts as part of their work in most areas of the curriculum. They develop good handwriting skills as a result. At Key Stage 2, teachers have used the literacy hour and other curriculum subjects well to give pupils opportunities to write at length and this helps to sustain the good progress they make. Writing is often of a high standard as pupils express views, feelings and emotions in their work. By the end of the key stage, handwriting is clear and legible, standards of spelling are good and pupils use correct punctuation and grammar in much of their work. Speaking and listening skills are above average and pupils respond well to opportunities to talk to the class, debate and discuss in groups and read poetry and stories with expression at both key stages.

8. In mathematics, pupils make good progress in numeracy at Key Stage 1. By the end of the key stage, they confidently describe the methods they have used to attain their answers. They recall number facts well in mental activity. They make good use of mathematical equipment to help them solve problems. Good progress is maintained through Years 3 and 4 at Key Stage 2. Progress is often very good in Years 5 and 6 where teachers take advantage of pupils' very good attitudes to their learning to provide interesting problems for them to solve.

9. In science, pupils make good progress at both key stages largely due to the many opportunities planned for them to investigate and experiment. Key Stage 1 pupils develop good skills of scientific enquiry as they respond to the effective use of questions from teaching and non-teaching staff. By the time they move into Key Stage 2, pupils have a broad knowledge and understanding of many aspects of science. This good foundation is successfully extended at Key Stage 2 and, by the end of the key stage, pupils have a clear understanding of how investigations and experiments must be carried out fairly so that results are valid. They show good observational skills and take considerable care over their work.

10. Pupils of all attainments, including gifted or talented pupils, receive regular challenge in their work and this is an important factor in the consistently good progress made by pupils in the vast majority of lessons. Teachers are successful at planning activities that meet pupils' needs and use questions very well to extend pupils' thinking over the course of a lesson. Pupils with special educational needs and lower attaining pupils are given good support individually or in groups by class teachers, the special needs co-ordinator and classroom assistants. Years 5 and 6 pupils are benefiting from an initiative to provide more opportunities for independent and collaborative learning, with pupils being given greater freedom to follow their own lines of enquiry.

11. In information technology, standards of attainment are in line with national expectations at both key stages and pupils make satisfactory progress, an improvement on standards reported at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils make good progress in response to whole-class or group skills teaching, but opportunities to use information technology in other subjects are missed. In religious education, standards of attainment exceed the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus at the end of both key stages and progress is good. This is an improvement on standards at the time of the last inspection. Pupils recognise the importance of knowing about faiths and cultures different from their own and they show respect for religion and different faiths.

12. In other subjects of the curriculum, standards of attainment are above those expected of pupils of their age at the end of both key stages in design and technology, history and music and are above those expected at the end of Key Stage 2 in physical education. Pupils make good progress. Standards are in line with those expected at the end of both key stages in geography, and at the end of Key Stage 1 in art and physical education. Pupils make satisfactory progress. Standards of attainment in art at the end of Key Stage 2 are below those expected, but pupils are making good progress in catching up on skills that were not developed originally at Key Stage 1.

13. The art curriculum and the quality of teaching is much improved since the previous inspection and pupils at both key stages receive good step by step instruction in skills and techniques. There are examples of work of a good standard displayed throughout the school. In design and technology, pupils are developing a good knowledge and understanding of the design and make process by working on projects relevant to themes in other subjects. In geography and history, pupils develop good attitudes to their work. They make good gains in the basic skills of using photographs, books, videos and real objects to draw comparisons and conclusions about life in other countries and in the past. Key Stage 2 pupils develop particularly good skills of historical enquiry. In music, pupils at both key stages make good gains in the standard of their singing. They receive regular opportunities to compose and perform and this helps them to be confident and express themselves freely in front of others. In physical education, pupils' good attitudes to their work promote good progress as they work hard to practise and refine their skills at both key stages. By the end of the Key Stage 2, pupils have a good understanding of the effects of exercise on their bodies and of the importance of physical fitness. Standards of attainment in swimming are above average.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

14. The vast majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs, have very positive attitudes towards school and these have a significant impact on their good learning and progress. Pupils enjoy coming to school and find the work interesting and challenging. A large number of pupils participate in the extra-curricular activities offered by the school and this successfully extends their personal and social development.

15. Pupils generally listen attentively and focus well on the tasks they are given. They work well independently and collaboratively in pairs and in small groups. Pupils readily engage in discussion and answer questions confidently and this helps teachers to assess what they know and understand. There is, however, a small minority of boys in Year 1 who, in some lessons, lack concentration and are not always on task.

16. Standards of behaviour are very good. In most lessons, pupils settle quickly and respond well to the teachers' instructions. During playtimes, pupils are lively and boisterous, but there is no evidence of rough or aggressive behaviour and no instances of isolation or harassment. At lunchtime, pupils are polite and well mannered and a social atmosphere prevails. Pupils move around the school in an orderly manner and open doors for visitors and other adults. Pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong and were involved in establishing the school rules, which are prominently displayed in the corridors and classrooms. Pupils consider the impact of their actions on their classmates and show respect for the feelings, views and beliefs of others. No pupils have been excluded since the previous inspection.

17. Relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults in the school are very good. Pupils share resources and are interested in what others have to say. A particularly good example of

pupils working collaboratively was seen in a Year 6 English lesson, when pupils showed excellent co-operation working on a presentation of the story of the Jabberwocky, where several original ideas were developed. Another example was observed in design and technology lesson in the class of Reception and Year 1 pupils. Pupils concentrated for extended periods of time as they shared ideas and materials and admired examples of good work highlighted by their teacher. Pupils are happy to approach staff with any problems or concerns they may have.

18. Pupils' personal development is very good. Two pupils from each class are elected to the School Council on a rota system and this provides an excellent opportunity for pupils to put forward their ideas and opinions on how the school can be improved. The meetings have formal agendas and minutes and involve some high quality discussion. A good example of the mature way that pupils decide on issues at council meetings is the vote taken on their own initiative to ban collections of cards that were the subject of a national craze. Across the school, pupils have individual classroom responsibilities. In Year 6, this is extended to providing librarians, assembly monitors, pupils to run the tuck shop, help in the school office and supervision of the younger pupils during wet playtime. The school has recently introduced a house system and a Year 6 boy and girl are elected as house captains. This effectively provides additional opportunities for pupils to take on significant responsibilities.

19. Attendance at the school is good and above the national average with a low rate of unauthorised absence. The majority of pupils come to school on time. Good attendance and punctuality have a good impact on attainment and progress. Registration procedures are correctly carried out.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

20. About three-quarters of all the lessons seen during the inspection were good or better, including forty per cent which were very good or better. There were instances of excellent teaching at both key stages. The remaining lessons were satisfactory. The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the previous inspection when fourteen per cent of lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory. Teachers have successfully improved their subject knowledge, the quality of their lesson planning and raised their expectations of what pupils can achieve.

21. The quality of teaching for children under five is very good. The teacher has a very good understanding of the under-fives curriculum and her expectations of what children can achieve are very high. Planning for the curriculum and for lessons is excellent. The well-balanced curriculum is delivered through detailed weekly and daily plans that cater effectively for the differing needs of children. Activities are closely linked to the national guidelines, or Desirable Learning Outcomes, and children work within the early levels of the National Curriculum when appropriate. Children are given the opportunity to play and work outside, where they are well supervised, although there is no secure play area specifically for these children. They have regular opportunities to work as part of a group. Lessons have clear objectives and the children know what they are learning and why. Assessments are carried out at intervals and the information used well to match work to pupils' needs. Non-teaching staff and other adults are used effectively to support children's learning during practical activities, but more use could be made of them to help the teacher with systematic observations of children's development. The role-play area in the classroom provides an effective stimulus for children's imagination.

22. At Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching is very good overall. Of the lessons seen, three-quarters were good or better, including about fifty per cent which were very good or better. A quarter of lessons was judged to be excellent. The remaining lessons were satisfactory. In the best lessons, the relationship teachers have with their pupils is excellent and they treat pupils in a mature, relaxed way. Pupils respond well to this approach and talk confidently in discussions and work well when unsupervised. This was the case in a literacy lesson in the Reception class, where the teacher took every opportunity to question pupils and promote their thinking. She had high expectations of her pupils, but the relationship was such that they responded well, tried hard to meet the challenges she set and made very good progress in their learning as a result. Teachers' enthusiasm and secure subject knowledge are significant factors in successful lessons. For example, in a literacy lesson in the Years 1 and 2 class, the teacher made it clear in her teaching that she was enjoying the text being studied. This motivated pupils to concentrate and become involved in the purpose of the lesson, which was to identify key words in the text and learn to write notes. As a result, pupils of all attainments made very good progress. Two teachers used their subject knowledge very effectively in a design and technology lesson for Reception and Year 1 pupils to help pupils make very good progress. The lesson was very well planned and resourced to cater for the varying needs of the pupils and the teachers had made good judgements as to what pupils could achieve in the time available. Their excellent technical support and perceptive questioning meant that learning continued at a very good pace and pupils' concentration and interest was sustained throughout the lesson. In lessons with shortcomings, but which are otherwise satisfactory, teachers take too long to settle pupils who are restless, for example on occasions in whole-class sessions in literacy and numeracy lessons in the Reception and Year 1 class. Insufficient use is made of information technology to support learning, particularly in literacy and numeracy lessons.

23. At Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching is good overall. Of the lessons seen, three-quarters were good or better, including about thirty-five per cent which were very good or better. Three lessons were judged to be excellent. The remaining lessons were satisfactory. The majority of very good or excellent teaching was observed in classes containing Years 5 and 6 pupils. In the best lessons, teachers set stimulating challenges for pupils in activities that are motivating for pupils. For example, in a poetry lesson for Years 5 and 6 pupils, the teacher presented a poem to pupils in a lively, positive way which immediately caught their interest and attention. Group activities were well resourced so that, for example, the pupils working with the teacher used a good selection of animal photographs as a stimulus to their own writing. The teacher had shared the purposes of the lesson at the start by writing them on a whiteboard and this helped pupils to be fully aware throughout the lesson of what they were doing and why. In a Years 5 and 6 class, the teacher had prepared a very good range of resources to support pupils' observations of root vegetables in a science lesson. The availability of resources and equipment of good quality and quantity, linked to interesting and well planned activities, resulted in excellent quality of learning for pupils. They worked very hard and persevered with demanding tasks and consequently made very good progress. Teachers use praise and encouragement very effectively to raise pupils' self-esteem and give them confidence to tackle difficult tasks. This is a characteristic of teaching in all classes. In lessons where there are shortcomings, but are otherwise satisfactory, teachers miss opportunities to extend pupils' learning with their questioning. For example, in the Years 3 and 4 classes, pupils are not always asked to explain how they achieved their answers during numeracy lessons or given time to respond to questions fully in religious education lessons. Occasionally, introductions to lessons are too long and pupils lose concentration and become fidgety, for example in a Years 3 and 4 class science lesson. Opportunities are missed to support pupils' learning with information technology.

24. The quality of teaching overall in literacy and numeracy is good. Teachers plan their lessons thoroughly and make very good use of the national guidelines. The quality of teaching basic skills of information technology is good in whole-class and group sessions. These are followed by opportunities for pupils to use the skills in practical situations. Due to the limited number of computers in each classroom, this means that some pupils wait some time for their turn to practise the skills. However, teachers manage this situation well on a rota basis. Teachers' use of information technology to support learning across the curriculum is satisfactory but there are times, particularly in the literacy and numeracy hours, when opportunities are missed for pupils to benefit from their use. In religious education, teachers' subject knowledge is good. In art, the quality of teaching is good. Planning is thorough so that pupils learn skills and techniques step by step. In design and technology, the quality of teaching is good and teachers incorporate activities well into other subjects. In geography and history, the quality of teaching in the few lessons seen was good. Teachers make effective use of photographs, maps, personal accounts, videos and visits to places of interest to make learning relevant and practical. In music, the quality of teaching is very good. Pupils are given regular opportunities to compose and perform and pupils make very good progress in the quality of their singing in particular. In physical education, the quality of teaching is good. Pupils make good progress as a result of step by step development of skills and effective use of the two halls and the extensive school grounds.

25. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The special needs co-ordinator provides well structured and sensitive support in classrooms and to pupils withdrawn from their classes. She, and the class teachers, follow the programmes of work outlined in pupils' individual education plans closely and this leads to pupils making good progress towards their targets. Support assistants play a significant role in pupils' learning and their work with individuals and groups of pupils is of a very high standard.

26. Teachers know their pupils and their families well and the strong link teachers have with parents and their children is a significant factor in the very good quality of learning. Pupils are given many opportunities to take responsibility in their learning, to make decisions and to express their views and opinions. These aspects are often promoted directly by teachers and help pupils make good progress. However, there are times when pupils could be given the chance to follow their own lines of enquiry or to use their skills, knowledge and understanding in more demanding practical situations. A successful start has been made in Years 5 and 6 to extend pupils' learning in this way and it is providing a good model for other teachers to follow at both key stages. Homework is used effectively to support pupils' learning in literacy and numeracy at both key stages. Teachers mark pupils' work very thoroughly and the comments they write often make it clear what pupils need to do to improve.

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

27. The quality and range of the learning opportunities for children under five and for pupils in both key stages are good. The school has a well-structured curriculum in place to meet the needs of all pupils including those with special educational needs. Statutory requirements are fully met. Provision for pupils' personal and social development is very good. Arrangements for health and sex education and drugs awareness are good. All subjects have schemes of work and long-term planning provides a well-balanced coverage of curriculum content over the school year. There is continuity in teaching and learning across the school. This is a marked improvement since the last inspection, when it was reported that curriculum coverage was inconsistent, there were no agreed schemes of work and statutory requirements were not fully met.

28. The curriculum for children under five provides a wide range of good quality learning activities, which successfully promote pupils' learning in language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development. Provision for pupils' personal development is very good. There is some limitation on social and physical opportunities due to a lack of outside play facilities. Provision caters effectively for the large proportion of children who are capable of working beyond the expectations of the national guidelines, called Desirable Learning Outcomes.

29. In all classes, literacy and numeracy are given priority and are taught for over half of the curriculum time available. Emphasis has been put on the provision of quality reading time and there are many opportunities for extended writing. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been implemented very well. Literacy lessons are very well planned with stimulating content, which effectively supports good progress in all classes. The National Numeracy Strategy guidelines are being used successfully to support teachers in their lesson planning and have helped to raise standards in mathematics at both key stages. Provision for science is very good and the National Curriculum Programmes of Study are thoroughly covered.

30. Teachers' planning for the year and for each term provides for effective links between subjects and this makes activities more relevant for pupils, for example in design and technology. Wherever possible, the curriculum is planned to deliver the content of two different subjects at the same time, for example aspects of science and mathematics, and this is effective and efficient use of time. Other examples include extended writing being achieved through a history visit to a Victorian school and art work supporting geography, with Rangoli hand patterns.

31. Teachers' planning is carefully structured to meet the needs of pupils of different prior attainment and pupils are generally challenged by their work. However, there are not enough opportunities provided at both key stages that take full advantage of pupils' very good attitudes and mature behaviour and enable them to use what they have learned to carry out independent enquiries of their own choice or to take part in collaborative projects. Members of staff are aware of this and recent planning for Years 5 and 6 pupils contains opportunities of this kind. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. All members of staff work well together to identify needs at an early stage and develop effective programmes of support in individual education plans. Consequently, pupils often meet their targets and move off the register of special needs. Effective use is made of outside agencies to extend the school's provision.

32. Pupils' experiences are extended effectively by a very good range of lunchtime and after school clubs, which are of particular benefit to Key Stage 2 pupils. The school has developed good relationships with the immediate and wider communities and there are regular and varied visits out and visitors in to extend the curricular provision. For example, in design technology, a class linked with a national aviation company as a stimulus for the making of flying machines. A number of grandparents came to the school and were interviewed about their experiences in the Second World War. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 take part in a residential trip to Weymouth. The school has constructive links with partner institutions. There are regular local meetings with staff from neighbouring primary schools for the purpose of curriculum development. An art teacher at the nearby secondary school runs practical courses for primary school teachers to widen their understanding of the subject. The school provides a good quality environment in which students training to be teachers can practise their developing skills.

33. Provision for pupils' personal development is very good. There is a well-structured programme of personal, social, moral and health education throughout the school, and very good opportunities both within and outside the curriculum to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is an improvement on the previous inspection, when the provision for this aspect was described as sound, although the quality of collective worship was reported to be good.

34. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. There is a very well-planned programme of collective worship, involving a range of teachers and visitors. The assemblies seen during the inspection offered pupils good opportunities for reflection. Effective use of stories from a range of traditions, such as the dramatised healing of the paralysed man from the New Testament or a Buddhist story emphasising the importance of everyone's contribution in the restoration of an image, creates opportunities for pupils to think deeply about what they have heard. The excellent singing, both of the choir and the whole school, helps to create a very good atmosphere for assemblies. Religious education introduces pupils well to a wide range of beliefs and encourages them to apply these to their own experience, for instance in the mourning of the recent loss of a friend and fellow pupil. Opportunities for reflection are provided in other areas of the curriculum, for instance in science and art, where pupils look at patterns in natural and man-made objects, or when pupils sit in a circle to discuss areas of concern with each other.

35. The school's provision for pupils' moral development is excellent. Issues of behaviour are raised in class discussions about rules, in the School Council and in the planned provision for moral education. Teachers successfully encourage pupils from under five onwards to understand what constitutes responsible behaviour and conduct in all aspects of their life in the school community. Stories and themes covering moral issues are regularly included in assemblies. Pupils become aware of their wider responsibilities through efforts to raise money for a good range of local and national charities.

36. Provision for social development is very good. There are very good opportunities for pupils to develop socially through the functions of the School Council, the wide range of extra-curricular activities, including a residential visit for older pupils, and by taking responsibility within their own class. Older pupils are able to develop a good sense of responsibility for younger ones, by helping in the Reception class, for instance during wet playtimes. Pupils of all ages have the opportunity to compose and say the grace which precedes lunch every day. The standard of co-operation amongst pupils in classrooms is high as they respond to teachers' successful promotion of group activities.

37. Provision for pupils' cultural development is very good and is promoted well through close involvement in the local community. Music, whether in lessons, instrumental tuition or in the extra-curricular choir and instrumental groups, is of a high quality. Pupils take part in country dancing. They have good opportunities to appreciate a range of art, including some from non-western traditions, such as the Rangoli patterns drawn by Years 3 and 4 pupils. There are good opportunities for them to appreciate other cultures through the range of world faiths which they study in religious education and by celebrating the skills of pupils within the school, although opportunities to visit places of worship of faiths other than Christianity are limited.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

38. The school provides a very safe and caring environment for all its pupils and staff, which helps to create a good learning environment. There is a detailed health and safety policy with termly inspections, including risk assessments. Governors monitor effectively action taken on issues that are identified. There are clear procedures for dealing with accidents and members of staff are qualified in first-aid. All accidents are carefully recorded. The school has a comprehensive policy on dispensing medicine in school, which is published in the prospectus. There is an effective child protection policy in place and staff are encouraged to discuss any concerns. Any incidents reported to the headteacher are systematically recorded.

39. The very effective behaviour policy contains a clear system of rewards and sanctions and these are applied consistently by all teaching and non-teaching staff. The school has an effective anti-bullying policy and pupils have had a significant input through the School Council in the production of a booklet dealing with bullying and how to cope with it. Assemblies are used effectively to support good behaviour and examples of pupils showing kindness and consideration to others are regularly shared with the whole school. Procedures for promoting and monitoring good behaviour have a significant impact on the quality of pupils' learning. Attendance registers are marked accurately and are monitored on a daily basis. The school secretary follows up any unexplained absence and there is very good liaison with the Education Welfare Officer.

40. The induction programme for children entering school is very good. The Reception teacher visits children at their pre-school placement and they have the opportunity to visit the Reception class to experience activities at the school and familiarise themselves with school routines. They start school in small groups, which helps them to settle into school life very quickly. There is very good liaison with the local secondary school. Arrangements, which include meetings and visits involving staff, and an induction day for pupils, promote a smooth transfer on to the next stage of education.

41. The school deals with drug awareness and sex education at an appropriate level for the age of the pupils and there is a programme for personal, social and health education. The personal support provided for pupils was particularly evident in the way pupils were helped to deal with the recent death of a pupil. Staff, governors and a wide range of support agencies, all played an important role in ensuring that the issues raised by pupils were handled sensitively and sympathetically.

42. Teachers know their pupils very well and have a good knowledge and understanding of their academic and personal development. There is, however, a lack of formal procedures for recording and monitoring personal development. Procedures for assessing pupils' academic achievement were reported as a major weakness at the time of the previous inspection. Since that time, significant improvements have been made and procedures are now satisfactory. Teachers have attended helpful in-service training on the effective use of assessment information and expertise is growing among the staff.

43. A whole-school assessment policy has been developed and approved by staff and governors. Effective assessments are made of the attainments of children under five soon after they start school. The information gathered is well used to provide for the needs of children in the Reception class. A comprehensive marking policy is in place and the positive effects of this are evident in the supportive and helpful comments written on pupils' work. Portfolios of examples of pupils' work have been assessed to match the levels of attainment in the National Curriculum. These are helpful to staff in their efforts to obtain consistency in their regular assessments of pupils' work.

44. An assessment timetable gives a helpful formal structure to a programme of specific assessments in all classes each term. This arrangement provides very useful data to help teachers identify the needs of individual pupils. It helps the senior management team and governors to track trends in attainment and to make adjustments to the curriculum provision in response. Information gathered on the needs of individuals, classes and year groups is carefully recorded in class assessment folders and in individual pupil folders. Most of the content comprises measurement of knowledge and understanding in the main subjects of English, mathematics and science. Recently, the termly assessment exercises in English and mathematics have been used to focus on one aspect of performance across the school. For example, in English, the most recent focus was on speaking and listening. As a result, every pupil has a target for improvement in that aspect of the subject.

45. This good use of assessment information to target specific skills requiring improvement is at an early stage of development. The headteacher and members of the senior management team recognise this and have made the continuing development of assessment one of the main priorities in the school development plan. Observation and recording of the process of learning, based on the progressive development of skills, are underdeveloped. Co-ordinators are beginning to put together and test out skills lists for subjects, such as physical education and information and control technology, but there are no whole-school systems in place for subjects other than English, mathematics and science. In these three subjects, teachers are able to set tasks in lessons which meet very closely the needs of individuals.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

46. The school has developed a very good partnership with parents and this has a significant impact on the quality of pupils' learning and the progress they make. The vast majority of parents express very supportive views about the work of the school and feel that it educates their children very well.

47. The school provides very good quality information for parents through the prospectus, the governors' annual report to parents and weekly newsletters. Parents are provided with regular opportunities to find out about what their children are learning and the progress they are making. They are provided each term with information on the curriculum to be covered by their children. There are regular informative curriculum evenings, which most recently have covered numeracy, assessment and reading. There is an effective induction meeting for new parents in the summer term. Two weeks into the autumn term, parents are invited into school to meet with the class teacher and see how their children are settling into their new class. Formal consultation meetings are held in the autumn and spring terms and there is an opportunity to discuss pupils' annual reports in the summer term. Pupils' annual reports provide good information on pupils' attainment and progress and include specific targets for improvement. Over eighty per cent of parents have signed up to the recently introduced home-school agreement.

48. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept closely informed of their children's progress and they are involved in reviews of individual education plans, including the setting of new targets.

49. Parents are very welcome in school and they are encouraged to contact staff should they have any problems or concerns. Teachers use the time at the beginning and end of the school day, when parents deliver and collect their children, very effectively for informal discussion. The home reading book is a very useful form of communication between parents and teachers, particularly for parents who do not visit the school on a regular basis.

50. Parents contribute significantly to pupils' learning, both in the classroom and at home. More than thirty parents regularly help in classrooms, hearing children read, supporting group work and giving general classroom support. Others with specific expertise, for example in information technology, art and country dancing, are effectively used to extend pupils' learning experiences. All parents who help in school are well supported and given appropriate advice and guidance. An active Friends Association organises regular social and fund-raising activities. The substantial funds raised are used effectively. For example, games have been painted on the playground, and computer, outdoor play and gymnastic equipment and books have been purchased, all of which have significantly improved school facilities.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

51. The leadership and management provided by the headteacher are excellent. She provides a clear educational direction to the life of the school and has made a significant contribution to the good improvement the school has made since the previous inspection. She has successfully established a commitment to high standards, which is shared by all staff. She has overcome many of the difficulties created by the amalgamation of the original separate Infant and Junior schools into one primary school and, as a result, teamwork amongst the staff on the two sites is very good. All teaching and non-teaching staff and members of the governing body are kept fully informed and involved in decision making. All staff follow the school's agreed approaches to pupils' personal and social development and teaching and learning and, as a result, pupils have very good attitudes to their work and behaviour and relationships are very good.

52. A significant factor in the headteacher's effectiveness is the close attention given to monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning. The headteacher maintains a regular programme of classroom observations. Discussions with teachers after observations identify strengths and areas for improvement. Targets for improvement are set and reviewed at a later date. If necessary, appropriate training is set up for teachers to develop further their skills or subject knowledge. The headteacher is very well supported in her monitoring role by the deputy headteacher and the members of the senior management team. They regularly review initiatives for school improvement in the school development plan, analyse school and national test results and assessments and monitor teachers' planning. In this way, the progress made by individuals and groups of pupils is carefully tracked and skills requiring improvement are identified. Consequently, pupils' standards of achievement have been significantly improved since the previous inspection and targets set since 1998 for pupils' attainments in the end of Key Stage 2 tests have been met.

53. Subject co-ordinators work hard and carry out their duties conscientiously. They lead the staff in reviews of their subject areas and this has been helpful in developing close teamwork and a consistent approach to the implementation of curriculum policies at both key stages. Most co-ordinators have a broad awareness of standards in their subjects, particularly in literacy, numeracy and science, through monitoring teachers' planning and looking at samples of pupils' work. Where co-ordinators have not had the opportunity to observe their colleagues teaching, for example in subjects such as information technology, music and physical education, their impact on standards has been less effective than those who have had the opportunity, such as the literacy and numeracy co-ordinators. However, the headteacher and senior management team are aware of this, and there is an initiative detailed in the school development plan to provide regular opportunities for co-ordinators to observe teaching.

54. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is co-ordinated very well. The special needs co-ordinator liaises effectively with all members of staff in the identification of concerns and the implementation of supportive action. A key feature of the successful provision is the termly special needs week, in which all teachers talk in detail with the co-ordinator about the pupils in their classes. This is successful in giving special needs work a high profile and ensuring that all teachers are given a significant amount of time to discuss their pupils' progress in all subjects in depth. The co-ordinator has effective links with learning support assistants, from whom pupils receive very good support in lessons. As a result of these good arrangements, pupils' individual education plans contain well-focused activities and are systematically and effectively monitored.

55. The members of the governing body fulfil their statutory responsibilities very effectively. They have a good understanding of the priorities facing the school over the next few years and make decisions accordingly. For example, governors are closely involved in analysing school and national assessment data to see where they need to place financial support in order to raise standards. They have supported the headteacher well in her efforts to improve the partnership with parents and to create more effective links with the local community. They have maintained the continued development and training of the teaching staff as a high priority in their aim to improve pupils' academic standards. They are very aware of the declining numbers of young children in the local area and how this might affect the school's future development. The school development plan is well documented and shows a close link between budget allocations and standards. The progress of initiatives is regularly monitored by governors, in conjunction with the headteacher and members of staff, and this makes a significant contribution to the positive relationships and teamwork that exist between governors and staff.

56. Improving the links between financial planning and planning for school development, and improving the quality of financial management, were key issues identified in the last inspection report. The headteacher and governors have been successful in tackling both of these issues. Financial planning is now very good. There are clear procedures for deciding priorities, to which all staff have an input. Governors work within the budget and a small contingency is held for planned expenditure on repairs and maintenance. Governors have a very good understanding of their responsibilities and monitor spending carefully through the work of the finance committee. The school secretary and headteacher carry out day-to-day financial management very efficiently. The recommendations of the last audit report have been acted upon, including the setting up of a register of governors' pecuniary interests. The school applies the principles of best value well, ensuring that decisions about expenditure are closely linked to raising standards.

57. The school has a very good balance of experience and expertise in its teaching staff. Good use is made of the well-trained support staff in lessons. At the time of the previous inspection, arrangements for the induction, professional development and appraisal of teachers were unsatisfactory. All of these issues have now been addressed effectively. There are very good systems for the induction of teachers, support staff and governors and new members of the teaching and non-teaching staff, including student teachers. The school has good links with the neighbouring teacher-training institution and provides very good support for students. Staff development and training have been extensive, focusing recently on the priorities of literacy, numeracy and information technology, and during the inspection the school was informed of its accreditation as Investors In People. Appraisal is carried out according to government guidelines. Staff development contributes very well to the overall effectiveness of the school and the raising of standards.

58. Accommodation in the two buildings on the site is used very effectively and efficiently to support pupils' learning. All available spaces have been utilised for specialist work, for example the music and special needs rooms, the after-school club and bays containing computers and library books. Classrooms are of a reasonable size and they, along with corridors and halls, are used effectively to display examples of pupils' work. Accommodation for the children under five is satisfactory. There is wheelchair access for disabled pupils at the front and rear of the Key Stage 1 building, but only from the rear of the Key Stage 2 building. This access is made difficult where metal sills protrude from the floor. The two halls are of suitable size for assemblies and physical education. There is no covered connection between the two buildings and bad weather often disrupts the regular movement of pupils and staff that takes place each day. Good use is made of the extensive school grounds to support learning for the children under five, and in science, geography and physical education.

59. Resources for most subjects are of good quality and quantity. They are in good condition, tidily stored and easily accessible to teaching and non-teaching staff and pupils. The headteacher and governors have linked curriculum priorities effectively with funding so that as each subject is reviewed, resources are audited and brought up to date where necessary. A good range of books and equipment to support the literacy and numeracy hours has been purchased using national and school funds. Information technology resources are of good quality and the number of computers and range of software are increasing. Resources for pupils with special educational needs are good. Teachers make effective use of the school grounds, visitors into school and visits in the local area and further afield to provide an added stimulus for pupils' learning in several subjects, including science, geography, history, music and physical education.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

To raise standards further, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- include more opportunities at both key stages for pupils to pursue their own lines of enquiry or devise their own investigations and experiments in independent or collaborative activities, similar to those being tried out in Years 5 and 6;
(paras: 10, 26, 31, 86, 94)
- help subject co-ordinators to gain a deeper knowledge of standards in their subjects and to identify more accurately specific skills or aspects of teaching and learning where improvements can be made by:
 - i) extending and supporting the co-ordinators' monitoring role, as planned, to include regular observations of their colleagues teaching;
 - ii) establishing formal assessment procedures, similar to those used in English, mathematics and science, in other subjects of the curriculum;
(paras: 45, 53, 100, 105, 111, 116, 122, 140)
- give pupils more opportunities to use information technology to support their learning in all subjects.
(paras: 11, 23, 24, 95, 119, 122)

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

- continue to improve the attitudes and behaviour of a small minority of pupils in Key Stage 1;
(paras: 15, 22)
- introduce formal procedures to monitor pupils' personal and social development to complement the good range of helpful information gathered by teachers on pupils' academic development.
(para: 42)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

47

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

26

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
17	23	37	23	-	-	-

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

YR-Y6

Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)

255

Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals

20

Special educational needs

YR-Y6

Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs

4

Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register

49

English as an additional language

No of pupils

Number of pupils with English as an additional language

0

Pupil mobility in the last school year

No of pupils

Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission

26

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

17

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.7
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	17	16	33

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	17	17
	Girls	14	14	14
	Total	30	31	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (68)	94 (70)	94 (75)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	17	17
	Girls	14	14	14
	Total	31	31	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (67)	94 (79)	94 (73)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	13	24	37

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11 (9)	9 (7)	12 (9)
	Girls	20 (7)	18 (7)	20 (7)
	Total	31 (16)	27 (14)	32 (16)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	84 (62)	73 (54)	89 (62)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8 (9)	12 (7)	12 (9)
	Girls	19 (7)	19 (7)	18 (7)
	Total	27 (16)	31 (14)	30 (16)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	73 (62)	84 (54)	81 (62)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (71)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	1
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	220
Any other minority ethnic group	2

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)	9.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26.9
Average class size	31.9

Education support staff: YR-Y6

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	96

Financial information

Financial year	1998/1999
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	£
Total income	409377
Total expenditure	407836
Expenditure per pupil	1789
Balance brought forward from previous year	14010
Balance carried forward to next year	15551

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	255
Number of questionnaires returned	70

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	55.7	37.2	7.1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	50	45.7	4.3	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	38.6	60	0	1.4	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	25.7	45.7	24.2	4.3	0
The teaching is good.	44.3	50	4.3	0	1.4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	27.1	58.6	10.1	2.8	1.4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	60	31.4	4.3	0	4.3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	50	47.2	1.4	0	1.4
The school works closely with parents.	38.6	54.3	5.7	1.4	0
The school is well led and managed.	68.8	31.2	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	48.6	50	0	0	1.4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	27.1	54.3	15.8	2.8	0

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

60. The quality of education for children under five is good and provides them with an effective base for future learning. At the time of the inspection, seven children were under five. Links between parents and staff are very good. Parents are provided with a good range of information and an effective induction programme prepares both parents and children for entry into school.

61. Children are admitted into the Reception class at the beginning of the academic year in which they become five. Almost all children have experienced effective playgroup provision. The attainment on entry of children over time is above average. The teacher and her assistant carry out thorough assessments over the first weeks of the term, and records show that the great majority of the children are already meeting national standards, called Desirable Learning Outcomes, for five-year olds at the time of admission. The teacher builds well on this good start. Overall, children, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in their personal and social development, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development and, by the time they are five, children have achieved beyond the national standards.

62. At the beginning of the year, activities are designed predominantly to consolidate the national standards. Some children are ready very quickly to accept the challenge of activities leading towards the early requirements of the National Curriculum. When the teacher judges this to be the case, then more demanding work is provided in the areas of experience concerned. At the time of the inspection all children were coping well with daily literacy and numeracy hours. This provision is meeting their needs. The remainder of the curriculum is planned effectively, with elements of the Desirable Learning Outcomes and the National Curriculum. All members of the class, including those who are under five, are working towards at least Level 1 of the National Curriculum in all subjects. This represents attainment above that expected for their ages and a considerable improvement since the previous inspection.

Personal and social development

63. Children make good progress in their personal and social development and, by the time they are five, exceed the standards expected of children of their age. The quality of teaching is very good. Teaching and non-teaching staff have very good relationships with the children and high expectations of their behaviour. Children learn how to behave in a community and consolidate their understanding of right and wrong. There is an interesting programme of activities, which successfully promotes pupils' personal and social growth. Children work well in pairs and groups, interact and share sensibly with each other, listen well in formal situations and are keen and confident to answer questions in front of their classmates. They persevere on teacher-directed tasks, such as the formal exercises on the computer. They concentrate well on self-selected activities, for example when playing with construction toys.

Language and literacy

64. Children make good progress in language and literacy and, by the time they are five, attain standards which exceed those expected of their age. They listen attentively to adults and to each

other, both in teaching and discussion times and when stories are being shared. They talk confidently and use appropriate language in role-play which, during the inspection, involved serving customers in their 'café'. All children have made a good start at learning to read and know the shapes, sounds and names of individual letters, know many words by sight and use pictures to help work out a text. Some are already reading sufficiently fluently to be able to retell the main points in a simple story and to talk about the characters in it. They enjoy using a wide range of texts, including reference books and poetry and take books home to share with members of the family. A useful reading record book keeps track of what children have read and any problems encountered. They are benefiting from the challenging work done in the literacy hour, when they discuss texts and learn about formalities of language. The quality of teaching is very good. In one lesson observed, the teacher skilfully focused on rhyming words. Children responded to the lively presentation with interest and enthusiasm and developed increasing confidence in handling rhyming couplets in a variety of situations. They learn to form letters correctly and are encouraged to write their own sentences with the support of an adult. Pupils work hard to produce their best efforts and are keen to practise their developing skills in letter formation, phonetics and sentence construction.

Mathematics

65. Children's attainment in mathematics is above that expected of children of their age and they make good progress. They count in tens to and from 100 and in units to and from 20. They subtract units from 10 and under, and some from 20 and under. They show confidence in dealing with vocabulary such as 'take away' and 'count back'. Study of their books show that they are learning to handle small sums of money, measure liquids, tell the time in hours and recognise and work with shapes. The quality of teaching is very good. Pupils' workbooks are regularly and supportively marked by the teacher. Mathematical development is effectively consolidated in other activities. For example, children count and measure during art and design technology work; use shapes in art and learn number rhymes in literacy.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

66. By the time they are five, children have made good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world and standards are above those expected of children of their age. The quality of teaching is very good and knowledge and understanding of the world is developed naturally in the course of other work. For example, during a workshop afternoon, both the teacher and the classroom assistant were working intensively, and very successfully, to ensure children counted, measured and used many different words about materials, making good links with science work as a result. Teachers' planning, classroom displays and lessons seen show that the children receive a varied, well-balanced curriculum each week. Basic skills of word processing are developing well. For example, a small group was observed working on computers, supported very effectively by a volunteer parent. They recorded interesting words from the story 'Rosie's Walk' on the computer screen. This involved use of the mouse and understanding the 'enter' command. On the classroom walls, 'Rosie's Walk' had been used again, to teach directional and simple map making ideas. Children are introduced to the historical idea of 'past' and 'present', by focusing on toys the children owned when they were very small. Children learn about the forces of 'pushing and pulling' and healthy eating. Children show inventiveness and competence in using construction kits, for example when building models of the local church or in selecting strips of material of different textures and colours to weave a pattern.

Physical and creative development

67. By the time they are five, children have made good progress in their physical and creative development and exceed the expectations of their age. They use tools, pencils, paints and small

construction apparatus with confidence. The quality of teaching is good, although physical development involving whole body movement is restricted largely to activities in the hall, as the class does not have an outside play area as an extension to the classroom. This was noted at the time of the last inspection and is still a deficiency. Children are given a wide variety of creative tasks using two- and three-dimensions. No music or dance was seen, but planning shows the pupils have a well-balanced programme of these activities. There are opportunities most days for imaginative play. The teacher has introduced a good record keeping system, checked by the children, to ensure they undertake a balanced range of self-chosen activities over a period. During the inspection, children were observed engrossed in role-play, carpet, sand and blackboard play. Through these activities, they were developing a good range of creative skills, although there was no adult intervention to challenge or extend their play.

ENGLISH

68. The results of the 1999 national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 showed that, in reading and writing, the percentage of pupils attaining the nationally expected level or above was above the national average. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher level was well above average in reading and broadly similar to the national average in writing. When compared with similar schools, attainment in reading and writing was well above average. Inspection findings show that the standards of attainment of the current Year 2 pupils are similar to those of the previous year and are well above average overall.

69. The results of the 1999 national tests for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 showed that the percentage of pupils reaching the nationally expected level or above was above the national average, and the percentage attaining the higher level was well above the national average. When compared with similar schools, results were above average. Inspection findings show that standards of attainment of the current Year 6 pupils are similar to those of the previous year and are above average overall.

70. Results of the 2000 national tests indicate standards similar to those of 1999 at the end of both key stages, although it is too early for national comparisons to be made.

71. When considering trends over time between 1996 and 1999, standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 2, as shown by the results of national tests, have risen broadly in line with the national trend. There was a decline in standards between 1997 and 1998, followed by a significant improvement between 1998 and 1999. These results represent an improvement on those at the time of the previous inspection at the end of Key Stage 2, when some aspects of English were judged to be similar to national expectations and handwriting was judged to be often unsatisfactory. The good standards at the end of Key Stage 1 have been successfully maintained since the previous inspection in 1996.

72. Speaking and listening skills are well above average at the end of both key stages and pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils listen well and are keen to share their knowledge and understanding. In a lesson concerned with breaking down compound words into their constituent parts, Year 2 pupils used terms such as 'prefix' and 'suffix' naturally as they discussed their work. Pupils are alert and interested and their contributions to discussion show they have listened carefully. By the end of Key Stage 2, the challenge of the literacy hour is considerable and pupils listen carefully for long periods. The quality of their understanding of what they have heard is clear when they share their ideas in plenary sessions. Many interesting and amusing metaphors for wild animals were developed by Years 5 and 6 pupils in

small groups in a lesson on poetry. In the same lesson, a group of pupils worked well together, sharing ideas about how to present Lewis Carroll's nonsense poem 'The Jabberwocky'.

Their sensible and mature discussion resulted in a confident and original performance to the rest of the class. A major contribution to the development of speaking and listening skills is made by lessons in personal, social and health education when the format often requires pupils to listen to each other and share thoughts and ideas with the group.

73. Reading standards are well above average at the end of Key Stage 1 and pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. In Key Stage 1, pupils are supported effectively by the structure of a reading scheme and the literacy hour. They are offered a wide range of different texts in shared reading sessions, and they listen with interest and participate enthusiastically, learning to read new vocabulary and to read aloud with greater fluency. All pupils have regular and frequent individual reading experience with adults in school, and through the well-supported home-school reading system. Record books testify to the regularity and frequency of this work. The importance of reading is stressed further in class through regular silent reading times, when books other than the reading schemes are available, and through teachers sharing stories with the whole class at the end of the day. Most teachers provide an environment that is rich in print and in which the book is a valued object. As a result, pupils develop very good attitudes towards books. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils read simple texts with understanding and a good level of accuracy. They talk about what is happening in stories and express opinions about characters and events. They have developed an interest in the work of certain authors and illustrators. They understand alphabetical order and are beginning to find words in an index.

74. In Key Stage 2, the accumulated experience of the past two years is evident, as pupils engage daily with many different types of text in the literacy hour. For example, in a lesson for Years 3 and 4 pupils, valuable thinking about the dilemmas faced in life was drawn from a text about a cheat. Pupils were able to develop the idea presented by the story into their own lives. In a Years 5 and 6 lesson, the work of the week was on poetry and the challenging tasks helped the pupils to use inference and deduction in making sense of the unusual language. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards are above average. Most pupils read avidly, fluently and with obvious enjoyment and talk with confidence about characters and events in stories and poems. Their reading programme is monitored so that they cover material of many different types over each term. The vast majority of pupils have developed a deep appreciation of the work of favourite authors. All know how to use the library and find references in non-fiction books. Pressures on curriculum time have reduced the opportunities for research and pupils are not well practised in using reference skills.

75. Standards in writing are well above average at the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. Reception class pupils are successfully encouraged to write their own sentences from a very early stage. This gives them confidence, and by the end of the year a good proportion are writing recognisable sentences. They learn the power of writing through literacy hour activities and the many activities the teacher plans to provide good models. For example, the pupils had written, together with the teacher, a story called 'Captain Rainfourhead's Search for Treasure'. This story was printed and bound and had become the most popular book in the class library. The younger pupils in Year 2 have produced a wide range of writing, including reports of a visit to a Victorian school, re-telling the 'Pied Piper' story; writing about the witches from 'Macbeth' after the visit of a theatre company and editing their own newspapers. In all of this work, pupils show above average handwriting standards, correct or phonically acceptable spelling and accurate use of basic punctuation. Higher attaining older Year 2 pupils produce extended and imaginative stories with more complex sentences. Some of them write to a very high standard for their ages. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards are above average. In

Year 6, the same wide variety of writing is found, crossing subject boundaries and including more sophisticated forms, such as discussion and persuasion. There are perceptive and well-written book reviews, appraisals of a visit to the Millennium Dome, recipes and vivid and imaginative completions of a story called 'The Great Elephant Chase'. For the great majority of pupils, handwriting is clear and readable, spelling standards are being improved by regular and challenging spelling work and punctuation usually includes appropriate use of speech marks and apostrophes.

76. The literacy hour structure is proving a very effective means of raising standards across the school. These lessons are improving pupils' concentration and pace of work and the structure of the programme are ensuring a very good range and balance of activity. There are times when teachers stick too rigidly to the suggested structure of a lesson and end an activity too soon in order to move on, reducing the quality of the experience.

77. The quality of teaching in English lessons in both key stages is good overall. Of the lessons seen, three-quarters were good or better, including about a third which were excellent. The remaining quarter was satisfactory. Almost all teaching seen during the inspection was in literacy hours. Lesson planning for these is detailed and learning objectives are always clearly identified. Subject knowledge and understanding are very good and represent hard work by teachers in finding interesting ways of teaching the detailed subject matter. Teaching is invariably challenging and pupils respond with interest and enthusiasm. Most teachers have very good, natural relationships with their classes and are rewarded with good attitudes and behaviour. Teachers know their pupils well and have considerable information about their previous attainment. They successfully group pupils in ways which help teachers provide tasks of a suitable level of challenge. As a result, most pupils make good progress, including those who have special educational needs. Supportive, helpful marking, which points out to pupils what they need to do to improve, is a strong feature of teachers' work and this has a positive effect upon standards.

78. The direct teaching required by the National Literacy Strategy is being tackled very well. Teachers are developing good questioning techniques when working with shared texts and this is helping pupils to acquire new knowledge and understanding. Teachers are fully active throughout group work sessions as they challenge and extend pupils' thinking and encourage good pace and concentration. They are sympathetic and encouraging in whole-class sessions at the ends of lessons, when pupils share their work with the rest of the class and understanding is consolidated.

79. The subject is very well led by the co-ordinator. Effective monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning by the co-ordinator helps her to maintain a good understanding of standards at both key stages. Assessment and recording procedures are detailed and linked closely to national standards and this helps teachers to plan a good match of activities to pupils' needs. There is a good stock of fiction and non-fiction books in the library areas and in classrooms and reading scheme materials are of good quality and quantity.

MATHEMATICS

80. At the time of the previous inspection, standards in mathematics were similar to those expected of pupils of their age at the end of both key stages. Inspection findings show that standards of attainment are now above average at the end of both key stages. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection.

81. In the 1999 tests for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1, results were well above the average nationally, and when compared with the average for similar schools. The performance of pupils in the 1999 national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 was close to the national average, compared with English and science, where results were above average. However, the 1999 Key Stage 2 results showed an improvement on 1998, and current standards of attainment are above average, continuing the upward trend.

82. At Key Stage 1, pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. By the end of the key stage, the oldest pupils in Year 2, in the mixed-age class with pupils from Year 3, know how to add, subtract and multiply. They use this knowledge well to solve problems, using numbers up to 1000, including some involving money. They know their 2, 5 and 10 times tables and recall these facts quickly. They understand how to construct simple graphs, for instance showing pupils' favourite colours, and how to interpret them. They correctly identify three-dimensional shapes. Pupils use co-ordinates to plot accurately the position of objects on a grid, for instance stations, using a London Underground map. Pupils of lower attainment add two digit numbers successfully. They recognise two-dimensional shapes, such as pentagons and hexagons. In mental activity, pupils successfully predict the number required to add to another to make it odd or an even. They competently explain the strategies they use when doubling numbers.

83. The good rate of progress made by pupils at Key Stage 1 is successfully sustained at Key Stage 2. By the end of the key stage, pupils understand the place value of numbers containing up to six digits. They competently multiply decimals by 10 and understand how to use fractions of different kinds. They have a good knowledge and understanding of the properties of three-dimensional shapes, and draw their two-dimensional forms, called nets, accurately. They construct and interpret bar graphs to show, for instance, the distribution of pupils' heights in the class. They use line graphs, for example to plot temperatures on an imaginary planet. In mental activity, they successfully estimate proportions in a pie chart. Lower attaining pupils interpret a line graph showing temperature, and with good classroom support, use information technology to convert the information they have gathered into a graph. Pupils apply their mathematical skills well to everyday problems, for example when converting money from one currency to another. They successfully identify patterns when subtracting a series of numbers.

84. Pupils' attitudes to their work are generally very good and make a significant contribution to the above average attainment and good progress found in all classes. However, a small minority of boys in Year 1 find it difficult to maintain their concentration at times during whole-class sessions, and their inattention affects the progress other pupils make. The vast majority of pupils behave very well. They listen attentively to teachers in whole-class sessions and work very well together during group activities. All pupils, including lower attaining and special needs pupils, work well independently.

85. The quality of teaching is good overall at both key stages. Of the lessons seen, sixty per cent were good or better and forty per cent were satisfactory. There were examples of very good teaching at both key stages. Teachers have a good understanding of the subject and this helps them to teach confidently concepts pupils find difficult. For example, during a lesson with a class of Years 5 and 6 pupils, the teacher used questions well to help pupils understand fully what they were doing as they constructed a line graph. Teachers plan their lessons together, using the framework of the National Numeracy Strategy, and this is effective in promoting a consistent approach to learning, particularly for pupils of similar ages in parallel classes. Activities are generally matched well to pupils' needs so that they are challenged by their tasks, a characteristic of the best lessons at both key stages. Teachers make good use of number songs to reinforce the learning of Reception pupils. Very good use is made of support staff and parent helpers to support pupils of all attainments in group activities. Praise and

encouragement are used very effectively to maintain pupils' motivation and interest. Where teaching has shortcomings, but is otherwise satisfactory, teachers are not quick enough to check the distracting behaviour of the small minority of Year 1 boys or inattentive pupils in Years 3 and 4. Opportunities are missed for pupils to follow their own lines of enquiry or to work independently or collaboratively on problem-solving activities, particularly at Key Stage 2.

86. The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection. There is now sufficient coverage of shape and space, as well as data handling, in teachers' planning, areas criticised in the last inspection report. Teachers are implementing the National Numeracy Strategy well, and this is having a positive effect on standards. Pupils are given good opportunities to apply their mathematics to everyday situations, which helps to make the subject more relevant and interesting. Teachers plan effective opportunities to reinforce numeracy in other areas of the curriculum, for instance when teaching pupils to put data into a computer program in geography, or when carrying out scientific investigations. The school has introduced good assessment procedures for checking what pupils have learned, which help teachers in planning the next stages of their work. The co-ordinator has a good understanding of the subject and provides good support for other teachers, although she does not have the opportunity to observe her colleagues teaching. Resources are of good quality and quantity, are well managed and easily accessible to staff and pupils.

SCIENCE

87. The results of the 1999 teacher assessments of pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 showed that the percentage of pupils attaining the expected level or above was above the national average and the average for similar schools. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher level was very high when compared with the national average and the average for similar schools. Standards were well above average overall.

88. Results of the 1999 national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 showed that the percentage of pupils attaining the expected level or above was above the national average and the average for similar schools. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher level was above the national average and well above the average for similar schools. Standards were above average overall.

89. These results are an improvement since the last inspection, when standards were reported to be similar to the national average at the end of Key Stage 1 and slightly below average at the end of Key Stage 2. Although it is too soon for comparative data to be available, the results of the 2000 teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 and the tests at the end of Key Stage 2 indicate that these standards have been maintained.

90. At Key Stage 1, pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. They are developing skills of scientific enquiry well as they respond to the effective use of questions from teaching and non-teaching staff. For example, pupils in the Reception and Year 1 class were observed working with objects made from different materials. Pupils confidently sorted plastic and wooden objects into sets and, with the help of their teacher, discussed at length what to do with objects made from both materials. They made good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the properties of materials as a result. By the end of the key stage, pupils have developed a wide general knowledge of many aspects of the subject. They know some of the constituents of a healthy diet. They are familiar with simple properties of magnets. They know that pushing and pulling are forces. Regular opportunities for pupils to investigate and experiment, for example to test the hardness of materials, help them to make good gains in their understanding and their ability to draw simple conclusions from their results.

91. At Key Stage 2, the enthusiasm for the subject generated at Key Stage 1 is successfully built upon and pupils make good progress. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 use their previous learning well in their investigations. For example, pupils in one class were observed making electrical circuits and introducing a range of different materials into the circuits to see whether or not they conducted electricity. Pupils of higher attainment built circuits competently and made sensible predictions, based firmly on knowledge gained in Key Stage 1. They were able to draw sensible conclusions from their results and discuss ways that the investigation could be extended. All pupils took care over the recording of their work, drawing neat circuit diagrams and labelling them accurately. By the end of the key stage, pupils have a clear understanding of how investigations and experiments must be carried out fairly so that results are valid. They show good observational skills and take considerable care over their work. For example, a class of Years 5 and 6 pupils was observed studying root vegetables. Pupils used magnifying glasses to look closely at the fine detail of root hairs on carrots and radishes, took careful measurements and recorded their results on well labelled diagrams. They made good use of their mathematical knowledge to choose the most suitable types of graphs to record the information they had gathered.

92. Pupils' attitudes to the subject and their behaviour in lessons are very good. On occasions, for example in the Years 5 and 6 lesson on the study of plant roots, they are excellent. The vast majority of pupils at both key stages show a mature approach to their work, listening carefully to their teachers and responding enthusiastically to their teachers' questions. They work hard and make good progress in their learning as a result. They handle equipment and materials very carefully.

93. The quality of teaching and learning are good overall. In the lessons seen, two were satisfactory, one was very good and one was excellent. Teachers have a secure subject knowledge and this helps them to teach with an enthusiasm which motivates pupils. They plan activities which are generally interesting and that challenge pupils of different attainments. They make very good use of non-teaching staff and parent helpers to support pupils' learning during group activities. In the example of excellent teaching in the Years 5 and 6 lesson, the teacher's excellent relationship with her pupils made a significant contribution to the high levels of discussion during the group activities. In lessons where there are shortcomings, but which are satisfactory, for example in the Years 3 and 4 lesson, introductions are too long and pupils of higher attainment work through activities which all pupils tackle before moving onto more demanding work. At both key stages, planning is very thorough and this leads to the step by step development of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. However, opportunities are missed, particularly at Key Stage 2, to let pupils follow their own lines of enquiry and set up their own investigations and experiments. Day-to-day assessment of pupils' achievements is used well to plan the next activity for pupils to undertake. Work is assessed formally each term and the results are used well to target individuals or groups of pupils to help them improve their work.

94. The subject co-ordinator has led the staff very well in improving the quality of teaching and learning at both key stages since the previous inspection. A significant factor has been the establishment of a good quality scheme of work, securely based on national guidelines. This helps teachers plan activities closely matched to pupils' needs and, as a result, pupils make good progress in lessons. The curriculum promotes regular use of investigations and experiments, based on key questions, such as 'Why do saucepans have plastic handles?' and 'Does air have weight?'. The subject is used well to promote pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. For example, very few work sheets are used and, as a result, pupils from Reception onwards are used to writing about their investigations and recording their results. Work sheets used are generally made by teachers, are of good quality and used effectively. The use of information technology to support learning in science is

satisfactory, but its use for pupils to write reports, construct tables and display findings is underdeveloped.

ART

95. Standards of attainment are similar to those expected of pupils of their age at the end of Key Stage 1 and pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. At the end of Key Stage 2, standards are below those expected of pupils of their age, but progress is good. This is because, in response to criticisms in the previous inspection report, there is consistency across the school now in the way that art is taught due to the establishment of a clear policy and the recent introduction of a skills-based scheme of work. Teachers and pupils are working hard to raise standards of attainment at Key Stage 2, but standards are limited by pupils' previous modestly developed skills. Standards of work displayed on walls, in sketch books, and seen during lessons varied from below to above what might be expected from pupils of their age.

96. Pupils make good progress at Key Stage 1. In the Reception class, pupils respond well to opportunities to use a variety of media and techniques. They learn to record what they see and are successful at expressing their own ideas. For example, a group of pupils was observed learning the principles of weaving as they made selections from a varied collection of strips of materials. They showed a good knowledge of the skill they had been taught and carefully selected colours that created a pleasing effect. Their previous work shows satisfactory examples of life drawing, printing, colour mixing and free painting. In Years 1 and 2 the wide range of experiences continues, with examples of a good standard based upon the paintings of Seurat and Dufy, and the torn and cut paper work of Matisse. Pupils have been strongly influenced by their introduction to these artists and their personal work shows a good knowledge and understanding of the techniques and styles of these famous painters.

97. In Key Stage 2, pupils have not had the benefit of the groundwork now taking place at Key Stage 1, but most pupils are making good progress as they respond to the improved provision. There is some scrappy and careless work in the sketch-books and folders of Years 3 and 4 pupils. They have not developed habits of concentration and attention to detail in their exploratory work. However, teachers are using the work of well-known artists effectively to stimulate pupils into making well-constructed and often powerful images in some of their finished work. The bold, dramatic re-interpretations of Picasso's 'Weeping Woman' are of a good standard and the same strength and conviction are to be seen in still-life drawings of groups of bottles. Years 5 and 6 pupils are making up quickly for the lack of structured work in earlier years and are responding well to the chances they have to experiment with media and then to apply what they have learned to their own work. Almost everything they do is supported by reference to the work of other artists, and this is having a positive impact on standards. Sketchbooks contain extensive biographical notes on artists, as wide a range as Leonardo da Vinci and Salvador Dali, and examples of experiments with chinks, crayons, pastels, paints, textures and collages. Pupils have evaluated their experiments, some of which are marked by teachers. There is still some acceptance of poor quality observation but, overall, sketch books are of good quality.

98. The quality of the small amount of teaching seen was good in both key stages and excellent in Years 5 and 6. Planning and preparation is detailed and thorough. There is structure and purpose to the work and pupils are expected to concentrate for extended periods and take care over what they are doing. A strong characteristic of the teaching is the powerful use of the work of other artists as a stimulus, and this is emerging frequently in pupils' work. For example, in Year 2, pupils studied several different seascapes before setting to work on the blending of blues, greens and black, and successfully transferred both textural and colour ideas into finished paintings. In Year 6, the paintings of Miro are

influencing pupils and elements of his design appear in their work, for example

in interesting designs in collage work. Teachers intervene with groups of pupils to make assessments, offer support and promote developments. Pupils are responding positively to the lively opportunities for experiment and personal work. They concentrate on what they are doing and work with interest and enthusiasm.

99. The subject is well led by the co-ordinator. The lively, structured programme of the new scheme of work is resulting in rapidly improving standards, particularly at Key Stage 2, as pupils' experimental work transfers into finished pieces. A good example is a townscape with figures made by a group of pupils in the style of Lowry. Whilst the school has successfully adopted a skills-based scheme of work, a means of checking pupil progress through these skills has not yet been devised. The co-ordinator monitors attainment by looking at completed work, but has not yet had the opportunity to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning. Resource provision has improved since the last inspection and is now adequate.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

100. Standards of attainment in design and technology are above those expected of pupils of their age at the end of both key stages. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. This is an improvement since the time of the previous inspection, when it was reported that standards were similar to those expected at the end of both key stages and pupils made unsatisfactory progress at Key Stage 2.

101. At Key Stage 1, pupils handle simple tools confidently. They know different ways of fixing materials together. For example, they talk confidently about which type of glue is most suitable for fixing pieces of paper or cardboard together. Pupils make good progress in making choices and in giving reasons for their choices. For example, a class of Reception and Year 1 pupils was observed constructing models of playground equipment, using a variety of materials, such as paper, card and plastic. The pupils selected the materials they wanted very carefully and talked confidently about why they had chosen them. Pupils of especially high attainment talked knowledgeably about the varying textures of the materials available and the fixing methods needed to ensure that they stayed in place. By the end of the key stage, pupils have a well developed understanding of how to follow their designs when making models and this is a significant aspect of the good standards achieved. They make simple evaluations of their work and suggest ways that it can be improved. At Key Stage 2, pupils respond well to their teachers' questions and suggestions and, as a result, their ability to evaluate critically their own work and that of others develops at a fast pace. By the end of the key stage, pupils make very good use of sketch books to produce initial designs and then transfer these to clearly labelled diagrams. For example, pupils in a class of Years 5 and 6 pupils showed a good understanding of the idea of a design brief as they drew up plans for a wall hanging with a 1960's theme. They sketched several ideas and made notes about possible materials, dimensions and methods of construction.

102. Pupils have very good attitudes to the subject. They concentrate hard on their tasks, even the most complex. For example, a Year 1 pupil persevered throughout a lesson as he made a ladder out of straws and adhesive tape for his model of playground equipment. He worked carefully to achieve what he had designed and the teacher was able to show other pupils how successful his patient workmanship had been. The standard of pupils' group work and discussions is excellent. Pupils at both key stages talk critically about each other's efforts in a developmental and helpful way and this leads to improved designs and models.

103. The quality of teaching is very good. The main characteristic is teachers' ability to question pupils in a challenging way, successfully motivating them to consider how they can improve their work. They use praise and encouragement effectively to stimulate pupils' continued interest. For example, in a lesson for Reception and Year 1 pupils, the teacher moved from group to group, pointing out successful fixing techniques and the imaginative use of materials. At regular intervals she showed the rest of the class how well individual pupils were dealing with difficult problems and this helped others to deal with their own construction problems. Lesson planning is very thorough. Teachers plan projects that last for several weeks, with required skills being taught lesson by lesson. This teaching method is very successful in promoting the step by step development of pupils' learning and culminates in pupils using their knowledge and understanding to design and make objects of good quality.

104. The subject co-ordinator has been successful in raising standards in the subject by leading staff in the development of an effective scheme of work. Projects are linked closely to other areas of the curriculum and this means that pupils understand what they are doing and why. Assessments of pupils' achievements are largely informal but teachers write detailed evaluations of pupils' work in the annual reports for parents. There is a good range of materials and equipment, which is well maintained and safely stored.

GEOGRAPHY

105. It was possible to observe only one geography lesson during the inspection, but discussion with pupils and an analysis of their written work show that standards of attainment at the end of both key stages are as expected for pupils of their age. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection, although that inspection found progress in Key Stage 1 sometimes unsatisfactory. This is no longer the case. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress.

106. At Key Stage 1, previous work of Year 2 pupils shows that they successfully compare different kinds of houses. They draw maps of the route from their home to school. Higher attaining pupils make thoughtful comparisons between their own homes and those in an Indian village. They correctly identify countries and capitals on a map of the United Kingdom. Pupils in a Years 2 and 3 class were observed listening to sounds of human activity on a tape-recorder. In discussion, they showed a good knowledge and understanding of the impact humans have on their environment. The majority of pupils show a satisfactory awareness that different places have different characteristics.

107. At Key Stage 2, pupils in Years 3 and 4 show a good understanding of the differences between life in Thornbury and an Indian village. They understand the reasons why people move from one location to another. Year 6 pupils have undertaken a survey of sources of water in the school. They worked together in groups to analyse what water is used for, and pupils spoke about the investigation with enthusiasm.

108. Pupils at both key stages enjoy their work and have good attitudes to the subject. Most pupils take care with their work and try hard to write and draw neatly.

109. The quality of teaching in the lesson seen was good. The lesson was planned well and the teacher used a good range of resources effectively, supplementing a tape-recording with photographs of different sources of noise. The teacher managed the class well, ensuring that other adults in the room provided effective support for groups of different attainment as they attempted to rank noises on a scale from 1 to 10. This, combined with pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour, led to good learning.

110. The subject has not had a high priority in the school's planning, due to the school's focus on literacy and numeracy, but it has been maintained well and the co-ordinator provides good support and guidance to colleagues. The co-ordinator has no opportunity to observe her colleagues teaching to fully assess the quality of teaching and learning, but monitors teachers' planning on a regular basis and samples of pupils' work. The co-ordinator has acquired a satisfactory range of resources and teachers make good use of visits to the immediate locality and further afield, for example with a residential trip for Years 5 and 6 pupils to Weymouth.

HISTORY

111. It was possible to observe only one lesson during the inspection, but additional evidence from pupils' written work, discussions with pupils and a study of teachers' planning, indicates that standards of attainment are above those expected of pupils of their age at the end of both key stages. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. At the time of the last inspection' no lessons were observed and no judgements made on standards.

112. At Key Stage 1, Year 2 pupils compare the old with the new in looking at features of a house, such as a kitchen range and cooker and, as a result, develop a good sense of the passing of time. They compare old toys with new toys and compile a personal toy history, identifying toys they have possessed at different ages. Year 2 pupils in the Years 2 and 3 class have a good knowledge of life in Roman Britain. They correctly identify provinces of the Roman Empire and places in Roman Britain. They have used their literacy skills well in writing extensively about the Celts. Pupils' writing, pretending to be a Roman soldier writing home from the province of Britannia, is of a good standard. Pupils have benefited from their visit to the Roman fort at Caerleon. They have a good appreciation of the uses of archaeological evidence, such as Greek pottery, to find out about the past.

113. At Key Stage 2, pupils in Years 3 and 4 show a good understanding of what life was like during the Second World War. They successfully use evidence from a range of sources, including talking to people who lived through the War, as well as learning from television programmes. Pupils acquire a good range of historical understanding and skills through teachers' imaginative use of resources and visits. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 show a good understanding of historical enquiry as they pose their own questions about the Vikings and attempt to find out the answers. They use their evidence effectively in writing about 'A day in the life of a Viking'. In their study of the Ancient Greeks, pupils have reinforced their literacy skills well by finding links between Greek and English words. Acting out and evaluating a Greek myth has successfully consolidated their knowledge and understanding of life in that historical period.

114. In the one lesson observed in the Years 2 and 3 class, the quality of teaching was good. The teacher used her secure knowledge of the subject to stimulate pupils' thinking by asking them pertinent questions about the different sources of evidence available to help them understand various periods of history. Lower attaining pupils were provided with good support by a student teacher, while others worked independently to identify sources of evidence for different events. This provided good consolidation of work done throughout the year on a range of historical periods, right up to a recent football international between England and Germany.

115. Teachers are making effective use of new National Curriculum guidelines to give a clear structure to teachers' planning. The co-ordinator has a good knowledge and understanding of the subject. Although the subject has had a low priority in recent planning because of the school's focus on literacy and numeracy, she has provided good support to colleagues and standards have been maintained. There are no formal procedures for checking pupils' attainment and progress. There is a good range of resources for the subject and they are well maintained and effectively used.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

116. Standards of attainment at the end of both key stages are in line with those expected of pupils of their age. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. At the time of the previous inspection, standards of attainment were reported to be unsatisfactory at the end of Key Stage 2. The school has achieved a satisfactory improvement in standards since then, largely due to effective teacher training, improved teaching methods and the identification in teachers' planning of more ways to use information technology to support learning in other subjects.

117. At Key Stage 1, pupils of all ages confidently use information technology equipment in their lessons. They handle the mouse and keyboard well. Many pupils respond to simple on-screen instructions competently without the help of an adult. Reception pupils learn how to delete or alter words and are beginning to become familiar with the positions of letters on the keyboard. By the end of the key stage, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of how to use word processing to improve the presentation of a piece of work, for example by changing the size and style of fonts or altering the colour of letters. Pupils in Year 2 successfully place borders around their work, enter information into a data base, save and print their work.

118. At Key Stage 2, pupils build on the skills established at Key Stage 1 when they produce stories, accounts, poems and letters in other subjects, such as literacy and history. Progress is no more than satisfactory because opportunities are missed for pupils to use information technology to support their learning in other subjects. Computers remain unused for long periods, particularly during the literacy and numeracy hours. Progress is better when pupils receive whole-class or group tuition in specific skills and techniques. For example, a group of Years 3 and 4 pupils benefited from good teaching on how to highlight words and phrases in a text and then change their colour and font style, cut and paste or delete them. By the end of the key stage, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the functions and applications of spreadsheets. They instruct a screen robot to move in different directions. They have a limited experience of more sophisticated forms of control technology. Pupils are familiar with composing and sending e-mails.

119. Pupils have very good attitudes to the subject and are keen to use information technology equipment. They work very well together when sharing equipment. Behaviour is very good. For example, Reception pupils were observed working in groups of three with the help of an adult learning how to delete and alter text. They waited patiently for their turn and watched what other pupils were doing. They listen well to teachers as they explain new techniques. Many pupils benefit from having computers at home and use them to complete their homework or search for information for class projects.

120. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers have had suitable training and are developing more confidence in using information technology to promote learning in several areas of the curriculum. Whole-class sessions on teaching specific techniques are particularly effective and pupils often make good progress on these occasions. However, pupils are not always arranged around the computer screen in the most effective way and some are too far away or other pupils block their view. Teachers are successful at making sure all pupils receive opportunities each week to use computers to reinforce the learning in whole-class lessons.

121. The subject is supported by a satisfactory scheme of work, which is helpful to teachers when planning their lessons. The structure of the scheme leads to the step by step development of pupils' skills between year groups and key stages, but does not identify a broad enough range of opportunities to use information technology in other curriculum areas. The subject co-ordinator has been successful in supporting colleagues in the maintenance of their information technology equipment and in the application of software. He is linking resources closely to skills' development and this is helping colleagues to have an increased knowledge of what software is available to support pupils' learning across the curriculum. The co-ordinator has few opportunities to see his colleagues teach or observe pupils other than his own using information technology in order to assess standards fully at both key stages. The co-ordinator has successfully led the trialling of formal procedures for recording and assessing pupils' achievements and there are useful plans in the school development plan to create a computer suite. Resources are of good quality and are well maintained.

MUSIC

122. Standards of attainment in music are above those expected of pupils of their age at the end of both key stages. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. This is an improvement since the time of the previous inspection, when it was reported that standards were in line with those expected at the end of Key Stage 1 and below those expected at the end of Key Stage 2.

123. The standard of singing is particularly high at both key stages. Pupils sing with enthusiasm in assemblies and in lessons. They sing with a good understanding of diction and rhythm. For example, in the weekly singing lesson for all the Key Stage 1 classes, pupils confidently sang an action rhyme at different tempos. They performed the song in sign language and showed a good awareness of beat and of performing together as a group. In a whole-school assembly, pupils sang tunefully together and followed their teachers' instructions very closely to perform loudly or softly when appropriate and with good diction. They sang well in two parts. The pleasure and enjoyment evident amongst both pupils and teachers during these lessons creates an atmosphere which makes a significant contribution to the promotion of pupils' spiritual and social development. The standard of singing of the school choir is very high. At Key Stage 1, pupils play percussion instruments confidently and perform a sequence of body sounds well. At Key Stage 2, pupils develop good listening skills. For example, a class of Years 3 and 4 pupils listened attentively to contrasting pieces of music and made interesting comments and observations about the moods and emotions they felt the music expressed. They then went on to compose short pieces of music played on percussion instruments to represent some of the emotions they had identified. Years 5 and 6 pupils listened carefully as groups of pupils in their class performed compositions emphasising the musical elements of pace, texture, pitch and dynamics. Pupils made helpful comments about how the performances might be improved.

124. Pupils show very good attitudes to the subject in lessons and in assemblies. They take part with evident enjoyment and behaviour is very good. They work very well together in groups when composing or performing. For example, Years 5 and 6 pupils were observed working hard to practise and refine their compositions. Pupils in each group played a variety of instruments, ranging from woodwind, string and brass to simple percussion, such as triangles and castanets, and the level of discussion was high as pupils shared ideas and tried to improve their compositions.

125. The quality of teaching is very good. Teachers make effective use of the subject scheme of work, which provides them with good support when planning their lessons. They plan a variety of activities in lessons, which is successful in maintaining pupils' interest and motivation. Assessments are largely informal, but teachers know their pupils well and plan activities which are generally successful in challenging pupils of different attainments. Lessons are well resourced and this means that pupils always have access to an instrument and an opportunity to perform during a lesson. Teachers are successful at motivating pupils and encouraging them to improve their performance, often through their own enthusiasm and example.

126. The subject is very well led by the co-ordinator. He is successfully using his own subject knowledge, expertise and experience to help teachers improve the quality of teaching and learning in their lessons. He has raised the status of the subject within the curriculum by extending the range of extra-curricular activities available to pupils and raising the level of expectation amongst teachers of what pupils can achieve in class lessons, assemblies and in standards of performance from the school choir and orchestra. The subject is well resourced and there is a good range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments, which are managed and stored effectively.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

127. Standards of attainment are in line with those expected of pupils of their age at the end of Key Stage 1 and above those expected at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1 and good progress at Key Stage 2. Standards are similar to those reported at the time of the previous inspection.

128. At Key Stage 1, Reception pupils develop satisfactory control of a ball as they roll it to a partner from sitting and standing positions. By the end of the key stage, pupils show satisfactory skills of throwing and catching. For example, Year 2 pupils were observed, in an indoor games lesson, learning to throw and catch a variety of balls and bean bags. About half of the pupils were able to catch a ball on the move. They worked together well throwing and catching the ball in pairs. They used these skills well in team games.

129. At Key Stage 2, pupils in Years 3 and 4 link a sequence of movements together successfully to reflect different emotions, such as happiness or sadness. By the end of the key stage, pupils have a good understanding of the effects of exercise on their bodies and of the importance of physical fitness. They show good skills of co-ordination as they jump backwards and forwards across a rope. Pupils are challenged effectively to extend their endurance, and only a few find it difficult to maintain the pace. By the time they leave school, the vast majority of pupils are competent swimmers, as well as having successfully learnt water survival skills.

130. Pupils' attitudes and responses to physical activity are very good. They enjoy movement and both boys and girls express themselves confidently in dance lessons. Pupils try hard to practise and refine their skills. Behaviour in lessons is very good. Although pupils are keen to start their lessons, a small number of Years 3 and 4 pupils take longer than expected to change and this loses valuable time

in the lesson.

131. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers plan thoroughly to develop skills step by step. The scheme of work provides good support in this respect and teachers follow it closely. In the best lessons, good feedback is given to pupils about how well they are doing and what they could do to improve. For example, in a lesson for a class of Years 5 and 6 pupils, pupils engaged in strenuous activity in a small circuit of jumping and throwing activities. The teacher used music well to assist pupils in warming up and cooling down at the beginning and end of the lesson. She structured the lesson well with periods of jogging and evaluative comments, which helped to maintain pupils' interest and motivation. In a dance lesson, the same class worked very well together in groups, sharing and discussing ideas, to create a fight scene. Once more the teacher's evaluative comments enhanced their learning and enabled them to make very good progress.

132. Although it was not possible to observe swimming or outdoor and adventurous activities during the inspection, the evidence shows that there is good provision for all Key Stage 2 pupils to swim at the local leisure centre. There is provision for problem-solving and other outdoor activities on the residential trip for pupils from Years 5 and 6. The school provides a wide range of extra-curricular sporting activities, as well as country dancing. Pupils have recently been successful in inter-school competition in football. They take part in a rugby tournament and local area sports. All these activities make a very good contribution to pupils' social development, as well as demonstrating the high level of staff commitment to the subject.

133. The co-ordinator has a good understanding of the subject, but has few opportunities to monitor provision in other classes. She is successful in helping and supporting staff in planning their lessons and making effective use of the good quality scheme of work. The co-ordinator has built up very good resources for the subject, which pupils treat carefully and enjoy using in their lessons. Effective use is made of the two halls, which provide good space for indoor activities, and the extensive outside grassed area, used for games and athletics.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

134. Standards of attainment at the end of both key stages exceed the recommendations of the locally Agreed Syllabus for pupils of their age. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. This is an improvement on the previous inspection, when standards were judged to be appropriate for pupils' ages, but progress was generally unsatisfactory. Pupils now make good progress in extending their knowledge of different religious traditions and in deepening their understanding as they move up through the school.

135. At Key Stage 1, by the end of the key stage pupils know about the significance of weddings to followers of different faiths, having compared ceremonies in a church, a mosque and a Hindu temple in some detail. They have a good knowledge of stories from the Old Testament, such as the finding of Moses in the bullrushes, and stories from the New Testament, such as the parable of the sower. In the one lesson observed, pupils showed a mature understanding of the parable of the prodigal son, recognising its message about the forgiveness of God and its implications for a Christian believer. This was in response to the excellent way in which the teacher prompted their thinking by her skilful use of questions. Pupils have a good knowledge of the main Christian festivals, such as Christmas and Easter. Year 2 pupils in the Years 2 and 3 class have extended their understanding of Islam well and have a good knowledge of the festival of Eid.

136. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils know about the six major world faiths represented in this country. They have a good knowledge of the three religions the school has chosen as its focus in Key Stage 2, Christianity, Islam and Hinduism. They understand the difference between the Old and New Testaments, and that Jesus was Jewish. Higher attaining pupils write more extensively about events in the life of Jesus. They have all studied the five pillars of Islam, and have a good understanding of the significance of Hajj, the pilgrimage to Mecca, to a Muslim. They have a good understanding of the symbolism of light in Hinduism, looking particularly at the festival of Diwali. Pupils know about some of the special books and places associated with the different traditions. Their understanding is reinforced by the very good range and quality of artefacts the school has acquired since the last inspection. Older pupils have investigated the difference between belief and fact, finding for themselves examples of each. They have applied what they have learned very sensitively to their own experience, for instance reflecting deeply and movingly on their feelings about a fellow pupil and friend who died recently.

137. Pupils have very positive attitudes to religious education, and they recognise the importance of knowing about faiths and cultures different from their own. They show respect for religion and different faiths. They listen well in lessons. Behaviour in lessons is very good and pupils listen intently to their teachers and to each other.

138. Only two lessons were observed during the inspection, one in each key stage, but from the level of understanding achieved by pupils, the overall quality of teaching is good. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and make good links with the teaching of different faiths. For instance, in a Years 3 and 4 class, the teacher drew pupils' attention to Hindu and Buddhist attitudes to living things, after pupils had discussed the different reasons for killing animals. In a Key Stage 1 lesson, pupils' knowledge of the parable of the Prodigal Son was reinforced well as they acted out the events in a drama lesson.

139. The subject is managed very well by the co-ordinator, who has ensured that teachers meet the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus in their lessons and are aware of new developments in the subject. There is no formal system for checking regularly what pupils know and understand, but informal assessments provide teachers with a satisfactory awareness of pupils' attainment and progress. Teachers generally plan their lessons well together with good support from the co-ordinator. However, there is some unevenness of curriculum coverage between the two mixed Years 3 and 4 classes. The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual and moral development. Opportunities to promote pupils' cultural development more fully are missed as the school does not make enough use of visitors to the school or visits to places of worship of different faiths to reinforce pupils' understanding of the part these faiths play in society.