

INSPECTION REPORT

DUXFORD C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL

DUXFORD

LEA area: Cambridgeshire

Unique reference number: 110798

Headteacher: Sue Dorrington

Reporting inspector: Peter Sudworth - 2700

Dates of inspection: September 24th-27th 2001

Inspection number: 216990

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

© Crown copyright 2001

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and juniors
School category:	C.E. Community
Age range of pupils:	4 -11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	St John's St, Duxford, Cambridgeshire.
Postcode:	CB2 4RA
Telephone number:	01223 712108
Fax number:	01223 712109
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs J. Duke
Date of previous inspection:	29 th September 1999

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Peter Sudworth 2700	Registered inspector	Science; Information and communication technology; Geography; Physical education; Special educational needs; English as an additional language.	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements; How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
Catherine Stormonth 16472	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development; How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with its parents?
Ann Shaw 18524	Team inspector	Mathematics; Design and technology; Music; Religious education; Foundation Stage.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
Fiona Ruddick 28007	Team inspector	English; Art and design; History; Equal opportunities.	

The inspection contractor was:

NES Education Services Ltd.,
Linden House,
Woodland Way,
Gosfield,
Essex CO9 1TH

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	12
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	16
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	18
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	20
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	22
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	23
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	25
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	26
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	27

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Duxford Church of England Community Primary School is situated on the perimeter of the village about twelve miles from Cambridge. It serves the village itself and the neighbouring villages of Hinxton and Ickleton. It shares some of its premises with the community. There are 179 boys and girls on roll in seven classes, similar to the time of the last inspection. Almost all the pupils are of white United Kingdom origin. It is smaller than the average primary school. Eight pupils, a proportion much lower than the national average, are entitled to free school meals. Eight of its pupils have English as an additional language and four of them are at an early stage of English language acquisition. Fifty-five pupils are on the special educational needs register, 31 per cent of the school's population, a figure higher than the national average. Two pupils have a statement of special educational need. Thirteen pupils joined the school during the school year and six left. Most pupils come from privately owned houses. Attainment on entry is average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an improving school. It has come a long way since the last inspection. It is very ably led by the headteacher who is giving the school a clear sense of purpose and direction. The governing body is knowledgeable and effective and very involved in overseeing and supporting the school's work. The quality of teaching is good overall and the pupils are receiving a good foundation for their future learning in the Reception class. Most pupils have been making at least sound, and sometimes good, progress and there are signs of improving progress linked to the good teaching. Significant improvement was made in the national tests in 2001 in both key stages. Standards are appropriate for pupils' ages except in information and communication technology and design and technology where better provision is needed. It is no longer a school with serious weaknesses. The school provides sound value for money.

What the school does well

- The excellent leadership of the headteacher and the effective governing body are giving the school a very good sense of purpose and moving the school forward;
- The overall quality of teaching is good;
- The very good provision for pupils' cultural, social and moral development and the good provision for spiritual development helps to develop well rounded pupils;
- Pupils' very good behaviour and personal development, their relationships with one another and with their teachers lead to a good and happy environment for learning;
- The accommodation is spacious and supports the quality of curriculum offered;
- Parental and community involvement and their support for the school make for effective home-school links and a sense of togetherness;
- Care and support of the pupils are both very good and pupils are pleased to attend school.

What could be improved

- Not enough time is given to information and communication technology or design and technology and a more carefully structured programme of skill development is needed in these subjects;
- Work is not matched accurately enough to pupils' prior attainment in subjects other than English;;
- Too many worksheets are used which reduces opportunities for pupils to think through the structure of their writing and leads to lack of pride in their quality of presentation;
- There is no secure external play area for the children in the Foundation Stage which restricts the opportunities for learning outside the classroom.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school is no longer in the category of serious weaknesses and has made significant improvement since the last inspection. Planning of the curriculum is better across the school. Targets are now set in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science for each class and more effective monitoring procedures are in place. Good improvements have been made in spelling standards. Leadership and management are very significantly improved under the guidance of the new headteacher. The senior management team is better organised and class and individual pupil targets are set and monitored. The management of subject responsibilities is more effective. There have been improvements in the approach to teaching writing and writing standards have improved as a result but more improvement is still needed in written work across the curriculum and in standards of presentation. Standards in science have improved but they are not as high in physical education, music, history and geography by age 11 as reported previously because of the greater focus given to literacy and numeracy. Except in literacy, there is still a need to challenge higher attaining pupils more effectively. Standards in information and communication technology have not kept pace with nationally improving standards. There is still room for better use of assessment, although assessment procedures have improved. The overall improvement has led to better value for money. The school has a good capacity to make further improvements.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	All schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	E	C	C	C
Mathematics	D	D	C	C
Science	C	D	C	C

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

The school's intake is more reflective of schools with more free school meals. Because of this the school has been placed in the next category up for the comparison with similar schools. Standards have fluctuated in recent years, often dependent on the particular ability of the cohort but girls in Key Stage 2 have been doing better than the boys, particularly in English and in mathematics. Standards in both key stages improved significantly in 2001 and currently are at expected levels in most National Curriculum subjects by ages seven and 11. Most pupils are achieving appropriately for their age, except in information and communication technology and design and technology where provision is unsatisfactory and standards are below expectations due to a lack of opportunities. The pupils reach the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus in religious education. Not enough use is made of English, mathematics and information and communication technology across the curriculum. Writing standards could be higher if better use was made of pupils' own narrative and factual writing. Appropriate targets have been set for the pupils and these have been reached. The children in the Foundation Stage are receiving good experiences in the Reception class. Most of these children are expected to reach the expectations for that phase of their education by the end of the Reception year.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have good attitudes to school. They are interested in their work and show respect for their teachers. They try hard and show pride in their achievements, although their presentation skills need to be improved.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour is very good in and around the school. Pupils contribute to class rules.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils have very good opportunities to develop their personal qualities through responsibilities they undertake. Their views are sought for the smooth running of the school and they make some good suggestions. Relationships amongst the pupils are very good.
Attendance	Slightly below average, mainly due to some parents taking term-time holidays.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good. The teaching of English and mathematics in Key Stages 1 and 2 is good overall. The teaching of literacy is good and it is good in some aspects of numeracy but there is scope for a sharper approach in some mental sessions and a better match of work to pupils' prior attainment in some lessons. Sound provision is made for pupils who have special educational needs and English as an additional language, given the recent reduction of staff for financial reasons. Information and communication technology and design and technology are not taught to sufficient depth. Teachers manage

their classes well and have a good rapport with the pupils. Consequently, the pupils respond well in lessons, do their best and show good levels of interest. Lessons are well prepared and are often well paced, although there is an over-use of worksheets many of which do not demand enough of pupils' own efforts and thinking. Questioning is often purposeful, drawing knowledge out of pupils and furthering learning. Teachers assess pupils' progress well but sometimes these assessments are not used well enough to match the work which pupils are given. In English there is a good match of task to pupils' prior attainment. The teaching of Italian is good.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The long-term overview of the curriculum is good. It meets National Curriculum requirements in most subjects but pupils do not have enough opportunities to develop their skills in design and technology and information and communication technology, including the use of information and communication technology for musical composition. The provision for Italian is good. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities, some provided by the community.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Sound. The school cannot afford to employ much extra teaching support and class teachers manage special needs satisfactorily. Individual education plans are of good quality. Most pupils currently are making at least sound, and sometimes good, progress when supported by structured programmes which build on their needs.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	There is a no extra teaching provision for the very small number of pupils who have English as an additional language but they are making appropriate progress. They integrate well and acquire a good understanding of the language from playing and working with the other pupils.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. Very good provision is made for pupils' cultural, social and moral development. It is good overall for their spiritual development. Acts of worship are sincere, purposeful and meaningful and play an important part in developing the school's ethos.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Pupils' work is marked and assessed well. Individual targets are set for pupils to aim for in English which help their progress. In other subjects assessment is not sufficiently informing what pupils need to learn next. The school gives a high priority to the care and well-being of pupils and they feel happy and secure in school.

The school has very effective links with its parents and the village in this community oriented school. The parents are very supportive of the school and play an active part in its life.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher is giving excellent leadership and guiding the improvements which are being made. Subject co-ordinators are becoming more aware of the need to monitor standards and teaching.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is well led and has very good expertise. Members visit the school at regular intervals and are very aware of its strengths and needs. Members work enthusiastically in their support and development of the school. Most statutory requirements are met but it should ensure that National Curriculum requirements are met in design and technology, information and communication technology and in the use of information and communication technology in music.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school is very effective at analysing test results to establish whole-school needs and in identifying progress over time. This leads to individual pupil target setting in literacy.
The strategic use of resources	Decisions about spending allocations result from thorough discussion of priorities and needs. The budget is monitored carefully. The staff is deployed effectively in the school. Learning resources are used well in lessons.

The staffing complement is satisfactory but there is little additional teaching support for pupils with special educational needs due to budget restrictions. Resources are adequate overall and the book provision is of good quality. The headteacher's leadership is a particular strength of the school. The school provides sound value for money. The headteacher and the governing body ensure that the principles of best value are obtained when purchases are made.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school and are making good progress; • Behaviour is good; • The quality of teaching is good; • They feel comfortable about approaching the school; • Their children are expected to work hard and do their best; • The school is well led and managed; • The school is contributing towards their children's maturity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A few parents feel that the pupils do not receive the right amount of homework and there is not an interesting range of extra-curricular activities.

The inspection team agrees with most of the parents' positive views about the school. However, progress could be better in information and communication technology and design and technology and pupils who attain more highly could sometimes be challenged more in lessons other than English. Pupils receive appropriate amounts of homework for their age. The range of extra-curricular activities is the same as that in similar sized schools and in addition the community offers pupils further provision.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The children's attainment on entry to the school is average on balance with a few pupils who are higher attainers and a few who have learning difficulties. The full ability range is represented but most are close to average. Children settle quickly on entry due to the good preparations made for them and the pre-school visits which they make. The children had only been in school a very short while when the inspection took place but the children were already into a good pattern of learning and engaging in a good range of activities which catered for their needs. They are already achieving well. Their personal, social and emotional development is good. They converse with ease and learn to listen to others. They are already gaining in confidence and developing their independence. They can play together co-operatively, persevering with tasks and clearing away when they have finished. They are making a good start in literacy, learning the sounds of letters. In number they are beginning to count accurately and to recognise numbers. The children are making good progress in exploring colour, texture and pattern in their creative development. In physical education they learn to control and curl their bodies in a variety of shapes but they lack good quality outdoor learning provision. In their exploration of the world around them they use magnifying glasses to examine the inside of fruit. Early indications are that most will attain the government's expectations in the national guidance for the end of the Reception year. Their attainment is similar to judgements made at the last inspection.

2. In 2001 the school's results in national tests were improved in both key stages with more pupils obtaining the higher levels. On average in the past three years boys and girls have under performed the national gender averages in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 and the results in 2001 provided a significant step forward. This has been due to a better focus on phonics and targeting of individual needs, particularly in literacy. Key Stage 1 spelling results were significantly improved in 2001. Some improvements were also made in Key Stage 1 writing results and a higher proportion of pupils obtained the higher level. Key Stage 1 pupils' results also improved in science as judged by teacher assessments, the percentage of pupils attaining the expected level increasing by eight per cent on the previous year and by 16 per cent for the proportion of pupils gaining the higher level in the subject.

3. Whilst Key Stage 2 girls have been doing much better than girls nationally in the past few years Key Stage 2 boys have been doing much less well than their respective gender counterparts, particularly in English and science. This has been a major contributory factor to the overall below average results in end of Key Stage 2 tests and a trend of improvement below the national trend. No obvious reasons were noticed during the inspection for the difference in attainment. Boys and girls in Key Stage 2 applied themselves equally and with interest in lessons. Boys in Years 5 and 6 contributed in large measure to the discussions in these classes and applied themselves well during activity. Key Stage 2 results improved in 2001. In writing, for example, the percentage of pupils obtaining the expected level more than doubled and the boys bucked the trend and outperformed the girls overall. The performance of boys was also much higher than the Cambridgeshire average in English.

4. Inspection evidence indicates that most pupils are attaining at expected levels for their ages in most subjects and their achievements are appropriate and sometimes good. There are some signs of improving progress particularly in English because of the clear individual targets. Some pupils are expected to gain the higher level in end of year national tests. However, in information and communication technology and design and technology

pupils are not making the expected gains in learning and they are not making enough progress. This is because they do not have enough opportunities or time to build up their skills in a regular way and they do not access the full range of the curriculum in these subjects. Computers are not being used enough across the curriculum and the small information and communication technology suite only allows about one-third of a class to learn and work with the computers at any one time. This means that lessons can only take place when suitable supervisory arrangements have been made for the other pupils to do other things. When they do get an opportunity pupils have to spend part of the lesson revising what they were doing last time and re-acquainting themselves with the program or keyboard. On average Key Stage 2 pupils only get a turn in the suite every three weeks. Consequently their progress is not fast enough and they are not very confident. In music pupils do not get enough opportunity to use computers to create compositions. In design and technology pupils do not develop a sufficient competence in designing, making and evaluating their work and this results in unsatisfactory progress and a lack of skills.

5. Pupils' writing, reading, speaking and listening skills at the end of both key stages are mostly at expected standards with some attaining more highly and a few not reaching the expectations. Some speak non-standard English which affects the overall quality of their writing. Year 5 pupils were attaining well using good a good range of complex sentences and a variety of descriptive phrases. The continuing attention to improving writing standards is bearing fruit but there is still some way to go. Many, but not all pupils read regularly at home and most pupils have a good familiarity with books and how to access and use them.

6. Pupils' progress in developing writing skills across the curriculum is hampered by a heavy reliance on worksheets in several subjects and in many cases these are not demanding enough of pupils' own thinking skills. Too often they only have to supply one word answers by filling in a gap. Furthermore, the pupils' presentation skills are not high enough. Handwriting quality is sometimes sloppy and the loose leaf papers in open wallets get creased and out of order. Dating work is not regular enough. Pupils are not taking enough pride in how they present their work.

7. Insufficient attention is given to matching work to pupils' different prior attainment except in English in which it is good. Although the teacher's often provide support for pupils with special educational needs, they too often provide insufficient challenge for the more able. Evidence was provided during the inspection to show that some pupils with special educational needs have been making better than expected progress but the staffing has had to be reduced and it is not yet clear whether this will affect the rate of their future progress. The individual education plans are certainly clearly targeted to guide the teachers' planning and to help them meet these pupils' needs.

8. Since the previous report there have been fluctuations in national test results in both key stages, often dependent on particular cohorts of pupils. The most recent results indicate significant improvements in both key stages in all tested subjects. Standards are not as high as reported previously in physical education, except swimming, and art and design in both key stages or in music at Key Stage 2 because of the increased focus on literacy and numeracy which leaves less time for these subjects. Nevertheless the pupils reach expected standards in these subjects.

9. The very few pupils with English as an additional language are accepted well by the other pupils, making good progress without additional specialist help and gaining good levels of fluency because of the quality of their interaction with staff and children.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Good attitudes and behaviour were a strength of the school at the time of the last inspection and remain so. Pupils' personal development is very good. They develop much independence in their learning, are able to take on responsibility and form very good relationships with their teachers and other pupils. These good traits make an important contribution to the pupils' learning and the quality of school life.

11. Children in the Reception class have positive attitudes to school. They are developing confidence, independence and good social skills. Despite their very recent entry to school, the children already play well together, share ideas and resources and show enjoyment in the success of others. When children attempted to paint a pineapple and pomegranate, their efforts were widely admired. They also show respect and consideration for adults and peers alike. They try and listen and answer questions and are eager to please their teacher with their good efforts.

12. Pupils elsewhere in the school have good attitudes to learning. There is good conformity to lesson routines. The best attitudes were seen in Key Stage 1 and the older Key Stage 2 classes. Pupils show good responses to challenge, they are keen to learn, have good concentration levels and answer questions eagerly. Very often the teacher's question results in a sea of hands going up. In numeracy lessons, where the pace of questioning was often fast, pupils really enjoyed doubling and halving numbers in Year 6 or recognising coins in Year 1 and there was excitement in good quality learning.. They were able to identify a range of interesting smells with some hilarity when exploring the five senses in a Year 1 science class. Pupils enjoy practical activities. Pupils willingly observe others in order to improve their own performance. They are motivated by involvement and opportunity to respond individually as seen in art and design and in physical education.

13. Very good self-discipline is evident in assemblies and pupils behave well and show reverence during reflection and prayer time. Behaviour in the school building and in most lessons is very good. In the dining room behaviour is very good and lunchtimes are happy, sociable occasions. Younger pupils' behaviour in the playground is very good and they amuse themselves well. That of the older pupils is generally good. There was no sign of any aggression and pupils confirmed that bullying seldom occurs. There was one exclusion in the past year, as the safety of other pupils and staff was at risk.

14. Pupils' personal development is very good and pupils are friendly, courteous, helpful, and welcoming to visitors. They naturally allow adults to go through a door first. They support each other thoughtfully and are aware of each other's feelings and values. As pupils move up through the school, they become more responsible, more independent and develop greater maturity and confidence. Pupils are keen and eager to be actively involved in daily routines and they carry out their duties very well. Year 6 pupils operate the CD player and overhead projector during assembly and set out the chairs. They also supervise younger pupils at the lunch table, serve the meals and help with all the clearing up. Pupils enjoy making their class rules and when pupils occasionally misbehave there is peer pressure from the rest of the class to conform. Pupils also contributed to the 'Living and Learning Together' booklet that sets out the clear expectation for behaviour and their rights and responsibilities. The School Council is well established and allows pupils to use their initiative well to channel issues they feel they want to change. The new benches around trees are a good example of pupil suggestions and currently pupils are deciding what playground equipment they would like to have.

15. Pupils stated that they enjoy the rewards system and it helps to boost their confidence and encourage them to try harder. A pupil was given a valued Achievement Card award at the celebration assembly and an entry in the Roll of Honour.

16. Attendance is satisfactory, although slightly below the national average. This is almost the same as at the last inspection. A factor in the high levels of authorised absence is the extent of holidays taken in term-time. This disrupts children's education and hampers their learning. The rate of unauthorised absence is just below the national level. Punctuality for school is generally good.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

17. The overall quality of teaching is good and significantly improved since the previous report. Of the lessons observed during the inspection two per cent were excellent, 34 per cent very good, 44 per cent good and the remainder were satisfactory. The quality of teaching is slightly stronger in the Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1 where there was a greater proportion of good and very good lessons. Nevertheless a substantial proportion of the lessons observed at Key Stage 2 were also good and very good.

18. Teachers manage the pupils well. They show respect for them, which the pupils give back in kind. Teachers use praise judiciously so pupils know when they have done something well. They adopt a calm approach even during the odd occasion when a pupil can be uncooperative. All teachers adopt the positive behaviour strategy to good effect. As a result pupils adopt good learning attitudes, are keen to do well and like to earn praise.

19. Teachers make good use of subject terminology and use mature language, which helps the pupils' own acquisition of language and their oral expression. The pace of lessons is often brisk, as in some of the mental work in a Year 5 lesson. In this lesson pupils were extending their knowledge of doubling and halving numbers from two- to three-digit numbers and then applying similar principles of calculation to four-digit numbers. They made good progress in this lesson. In some lessons teachers give time limits for a piece of work to be completed and this helps pupils to focus and work with even greater speed. This is also encouraged when expectations are made about the amount of work to be completed in a lesson and pupils rise to the challenge.

20. All the teachers build their work continuously on what has been taught previously so there is a purpose to the teaching. They share the purpose of the lesson with the pupils so that they know how it fits in with what they were doing before. Lessons have a good structure, which derives from the good quality of the school's planning systems. Teachers usually explain tasks well. Tasks are very well matched to pupils' prior attainment in English where careful account is taken of different needs. In mathematics some account is taken of different needs but not always to the same extent as in literacy. Mathematics lessons are often based on the same theme and this is not always precise enough for pupils' mathematical development and understanding. In other subjects similar expectations are made of all pupils but those with special educational needs are given extra support from the teacher to achieve successfully. Insufficient challenge is sometimes afforded to the more able, for example in science and mathematics.

21. Good use is made of a variety of resources in lessons but occasionally better use could be made of video clips to help pupils gain a clearer concept of specific ideas, such as the meaning of physical features in geography. They make good use of big books in literacy so that pupils can share the text and this leads to good levels of concentration, interest and often good quality discussion.

22. Teachers' questioning is often good and encourages pupils to reflect on previous learning and sometimes to evaluate the quality of their work, as in physical education lessons. In one such lesson Year 2 pupils' quality of dance interpretations improved considerably as a result of watching each other and discussing the quality. Facial expressions increasingly reflected their sensitivity to the music.

23. Lessons are often imaginative. Year 3 pupils tested out the importance of a plant's root structure by making simple model plants with a root designed from a drinking straw. These were tested for their strength with a hair dryer replicating the effect of the wind at different speeds. The pupils were engrossed in their learning and were very keen to see if they had made a strong enough root structure. In Year 2, a 'letter' was found stuck on the board and when opened it was found to be from a character from the current class story, inviting the pupils to visit her. The pupils quickly got in to a 'magic bus' arranging the class chairs for the journey and described what they could see through the window. The teacher recorded their 'observations' in drawings on the board in sequence. Later in the lesson the pupils used different phrases orally to describe their journey and the order in which they had seen things, using different phrases to begin each new sentence. This improvised drama linked very effectively with previous work in English when they had been discussing ways of joining sentences without using the repetitious 'then'.

24. Teachers have good subject knowledge in most subjects but some teachers lack expertise in the teaching of design and technology and information and communication technology. However, training is planned for staff in the near future for these subjects. The teachers have a good approach to teaching literacy and English in general, based on the National Literacy Strategy. The teaching of numeracy is sound but sometimes lacks sharpness and precision. In general, teachers' expectations of the quality of presentation of pupils' work are not high enough across all subjects. Handwriting is often sloppy and the dating of work is irregular. Worksheets are used too frequently and sometimes loosely placed in folders resulting in a lack of pride in finished work. Not all teachers model good handwriting. Good use is made of homework to support pupils' learning.

25. Marking of work is up to date. The best is developmental and encourages the pupils how to improve their work.

26. The teaching of Italian to pupils from Year 2 to 6 is good. Pupils enjoy these lessons and are making good progress in the language.

27. Introductions in all lessons are usually of appropriate length but they can sometimes be over-long or laboured and pupils are sitting on the carpet for too long as a result. Pupils then can become fidgety and lose their concentration. This occasionally happens in literacy lessons.

28. Teachers make best use of the limited extra teaching support available to further pupils' skills including the very few pupils who have English as an additional language and others who have special educational needs pupils. These pupils make at least sound progress as a result.

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

29. Learning opportunities for pupils in the Reception year are good and the good planning ensures that all stages of the Early Learning Goals are met by the end of the Reception Year. In both Key Stages 1 and 2, a broad curriculum is provided and overall, the school meets National Curriculum requirements with the exception of the use of information and communication technology in musical composition. Nevertheless, insufficient time is allocated to design and technology and also to information and communication technology and National Curriculum Programmes of Study are not met fully. As a result the pupils do not get enough opportunities to become proficient in these two subjects and progress is unsatisfactory because the pupils do not build up their skills regularly enough. The pupils lack confidence as a result. Some weaknesses in curriculum balance remain, therefore, as reported previously. However, schemes are better developed in all subjects and provide a much clearer structure for learning. The physical provision of information and communication technology is much better than at the time of the previous inspection and pupils in all classes have access to computers. Teachers still await their national information and communication technology training and some still lack confidence in the subject. Information and communication technology is not used enough to develop writing in English and data handling in mathematics and science.

30. In addition to the National Curriculum Programmes of Study and religious education, which fulfils local requirements, Italian is taught from Year 2 to Year 6 as the school has a link with an Italian town. The programme of work in Italian provides pupils with an insight into the culture and language of Italy.

31. Pupils with special needs and those for whom English is an additional language are fully integrated into all school activities including extra-curricular activities and visits to local places of interest.

32. Individual education plans for pupils with special needs are good and contain clear targets. They are reviewed regularly and as a result, most pupils have been making at least sound and some good progress. Evidence was provided by the school of some special educational needs pupils making better than expected progress over the past four years. The impact on pupils of the very recent reduction in special educational needs staffing due to financial restraints could not be assessed. The support required is identified and is met either by the class teacher, working in harmony with the learning support assistants, or through the local support services.

33. Policies and schemes of work are in place for all subjects. The policies for art and design, design and technology and sex education are to be revised and a new policy for drugs education is under discussion. Personal, social and health education is given due attention. Some lessons are taught separately whilst other aspects are incorporated within other subjects. For example during the inspection dental care was being taught in Year 4 as part of science. Sex education is taught to Year 6 pupils and pupils are made aware of the dangers of drug abuse.

34. Planning for the teaching of numeracy and literacy is consistent across the school. The school places a high priority on planning which is now very comprehensive and has improved the quality of teaching and learning since the last inspection. The headteacher monitors and evaluates teaching providing formal written and informal feedback to teachers. In-service training has been provided for the co-ordinators to develop the monitoring of the core subjects. The school adheres to the principle of inclusion and permission is sought from parents if pupils are withdrawn from lessons.

35. The school has good links with the community and several activities are provided on the school premises by the community. Several pupils are members of the Saturday morning music school, which meets in the school and caters for people of all ages who wish to make music. Good links are maintained with other local schools, including the secondary school to which most pupils transfer.

36. The extensive range of after-school activities, many of which are provided by the local community, are open to all pupils. Pupils have opportunities to participate in team games and athletics and an instrumental group meets weekly. Some pupils play their recorders to a good standard during assemblies.

37. Homework is provided in the form of regular reading practice in Key Stage 1 and in other subject areas in Key Stage 2 and amounts are appropriate.

38. The school promotes pupils' personal and social education effectively and very good provision is made for pupil's social, moral and cultural development. It is good for their spiritual development. The quality of collective acts of worship is high but there is less evidence of planning the spiritual element through the curricular activities.

39. Pupils' social development is encouraged through the way the oldest pupils care for the younger ones, the various after-school activities, residential visits, their involvement in school decision making and their contribution to school and class rules. The good quality acts of worship contribute to pupils' moral development and they develop a clear sense of duty and right and wrong. Pupils value the special achievement certificates for work and behaviour that are awarded by the staff on a weekly basis. The traditions and cultures of the world's nations are recognised and respected. Pupils learn about other faiths and learn tolerance for others and that all have rights. Visitors to school are often carefully selected so pupils develop a wider vision of world culture such as the visit of a group from Zimbabwe who worked with the pupils on music, art and literature.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

40. The care and support that the school provides are still a strong and notable feature as reported previously. Teachers know their pupils well and pupils are confident to approach their teachers and other adults in the school and this helps pupils to feel safe and secure. The school gives a high priority to a very good range of procedures to encourage very good behaviour, good work habits and safeguarding pupils' welfare.

41. Much of the monitoring of pupils' personal development is informal, promoted by teachers who know pupils very well and sustain very positive relationships with them. Teachers show a high level of support and commitment to pupils and are able to give them good advice for improving attitudes, social skills and to encourage a good work ethic.

42. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good. Registers are consistently maintained and absences are followed up to reduce unauthorised absence levels. Despite the best efforts of the school to discourage holiday taking during term-time, parents seldom heed this advice. Up to half the pupils from some classes take holidays during term-time and this causes classes to be disrupted and hinders learning.

43. The procedures for monitoring and promoting behaviour are very good. All teachers adopt a very effective positive behaviour strategy, which forms an important part of the school's ethos. Pupils are familiar with their own class rules and the school rules and the high expectations for behaviour and they usually behave very well. The achievement and courtesy cards are highly valued and encourage pupils to work and behave well. The procedures for eliminating any oppressive behaviour are outstanding. On the rare occasion when bullying is reported, the headteacher investigates and reports back to parents very quickly and takes effective action to stop it.

44. The arrangements for child protection are good and meet all the statutory requirements. The headteacher is the designated person and has planned to undergo new training shortly to update her and the school on recent changes in local child protection systems. Pupil injuries and accidents are dealt with carefully and monitored closely. There are very good relations with the local school nurse who also counsels pupils who are distressed and have difficulty in coping with some aspects of their lives. When pupils are sick or injured, they receive very good care and attention and pupils' medical conditions are catered for well. The school has good systems for checking routine health and safety matters. The school is aware of two health and safety issues but has not been able to address these yet because of funding issues: the lack of an enclosed outdoor play area for the youngest children to access freely and the toilets are old and in need of refurbishment. Some of the toilets were unusable and unsafe during the inspection as the roof was leaking forcing the electricity to be disconnected.

45. Teachers keep up to date with their marking. Marking is often positive and the best is developmental giving the pupils clear written guidance on how they can improve their work further. There is a whole school marking code which incorporates marking symbols to help pupils identify how improvements can be made.

46. There has been an improvement in the way the school assesses pupils' progress and standards of work in English, mathematics and science. The information teachers now have helps them to devise tasks in class for groups which are more appropriate to pupils' prior

attainment in English but there is still some way to go in other subjects. In some classes the match of set task to what pupils are capable of is not accurate enough, and this can lead to a lack of challenge or sometimes over-challenge. In most other subjects, assessment procedures are less rigorous, although in history and geography one piece of work from pupils is assessed for each topic studied.

47. In English, the assessment procedures are generally effective and have led to a clear pinpointing of group and individual targets for pupils. Pupils now have something specific to aim for and this has helped to raise both standards of work and their sense of achievement. In both science and mathematics, the school has carefully analysed national test results which has helped to identify presentation of work and problem solving as key areas for development. Targets have been defined for different attainment groups in mathematics, but not for individual pupils. In mathematics in Key Stage 1, trials are currently being conducted in which pupils' work is measured against the standards expected nationally for each age group with the aim of giving a clearer picture of how each pupil is progressing and what aspects need to be consolidated. In science, assessment procedures are in place but the information they yield is not yet being fed back into practice. The statistics for pupils' attainment at the age of five indicate that the standard is above average due to the testing being carried out too late in the term. Evidence gathered during the inspection indicates that attainment on entry is average.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

48. The previous inspection report stated that the school had a very good partnership with parents and this continues. Parents are very supportive and are highly satisfied with the education provided and with other aspects of the school. The school tries hard to work closely with parents. They feel welcome and are kept closely informed about their children's learning and of the day-to-day life of the school.

49. Parents particularly like the approachability of the headteacher and the welcoming and caring environment she has established in the school. Parents had slight misgivings about the amount of homework and the range of extra-curricular activities. The inspection team investigated these minor criticisms and found the arrangements for homework are good. Each class has its termly newsletter with a homework timetable that is sent to parents and pupils have a homework book in which homework is set regularly. The school also suggests for each year group a range of ways in which they can support their children's learning at home. The range of extra-curricular activities is appropriate given the size of the school and these are further enhanced by community provision.

50. The school has very good links with parents. The family induction arrangements are very good and children are able to settle quickly when they start at this school. There are very good links with the toddler group based in the school grounds and children make the transition to school easily and happily. Parents are given very good information, including a booklet, Reception class newsletters explaining the Foundation Stage early learning goals, baseline assessments and what else to expect at school. Other class newsletters are also very good and let parents know what their children will be learning. The friendly school newsletter 'Airwaves' keeps parents fully in touch with all other news and information. The quality of information parents receive about their children's progress is very good. Parents have termly formal consultation opportunities to discuss their children's work and share new targets for learning. Staff also make themselves available at the end of each day to discuss informally any issues with parents. The quality of school reports is good, although weaker in quality when reporting on progress made in design and technology and information and communication technology. Parents are provided with good information about their children's performance over the past year. Parents are also given some very specific individual advice on how pupils' weaknesses can be addressed.

51. The impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school is very good. Many parents regularly volunteer to help each week. They are given good guidance and are deployed well in a number of useful ways. The school recently trained a group of parents to help hear pupils read and this group now gives very good quality learning support. Parents always help when needs arise. The Wednesday parent's group is another very good opportunity for parents to help with some useful tasks and have the chance to socialise with other parents who have young children. The termly Busy Bee days involve a blitz on gardening and general outdoor tidying up and are well supported. On the last Busy Bee day parents also painted a classroom and did a very good job. The very active and hardworking Parent Teacher Association raises funds and provides the school with a busy social life. The school holds very successful school fetes, 'Air days,' quizzes, discos, ice skating trips, beetle drives and much more, raising large sums of money. This has been spent on library books, science equipment, outdoor seating, redecoration, computer equipment and other items that staff requested to provide learning luxuries. In this way parents make a very good contribution to children's learning at school and help improve the quality of school life. Parents also help to run the impressive and highly successful swimming pool club after school during the summer term and the school holidays.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

52. The leadership and management are a major strength of the school and have improved significantly since the last inspection. The excellent leadership of the new headteacher gives the school a very clear direction and sense of purpose. She is well supported by the very good quality of the governing body, which has a good range of expertise amongst its members and is ably led by the its chair. Its finance committee is particularly strong in its expertise and in its management and monitoring of the budget. The headteacher's quiet, courteous and conscientious manner and dedicated commitment to the staff, parents and pupils promote a very positive ethos of good work attitudes and sensitivity to others. She is the fulcrum for the school's Christian dimension and community spirit.

53. The senior management team now provides a useful forum for the school's way forward and planning internal organisation and development. Staff meetings are purposeful and planned well in advance with clear agenda. Decision reached are minuted. The deputy headteacher promotes a keen sense of pastoral support throughout the school and is very supportive of the headteacher. The new Key Stage 1 co-ordinator has also given valuable support and is managing the Key Stage 1 team very effectively. Curriculum co-ordinators are beginning to recognise the importance of the need to monitor standards and teaching and a good start has been made in this direction, although as yet monitoring across the school by staff is not yet good enough. Nevertheless good use has been made of the Local Education Authority's numeracy and literacy consultants in shared lesson observations and evaluation. Target setting is a regular feature of the school's aims but apart from individual education plans and target setting for cohorts of pupils, individual pupil targets are limited to literacy. Good analysis is made of test results through scrutinising pupils' responses to each question to track areas of weakness and also to detect gender differences in attainment. The special educational needs co-ordinator has only just taken on the role but the already well established and effective systems for planning work for pupils with special educational needs ensure she has a good base from which to work.

54. The school development plan takes an eighteen month view of the school's development. The governors and headteacher recognise that a longer term view needs to be taken but there have been other more immediate priorities which have prevented detailed attention to this aspect, such as overcoming the weaknesses identified in the last report. Finance is linked well to the plan, together with time scales and personnel responsible for particular priorities, but there are no clear criteria by which to evaluate the degree of success of specific initiatives. The governing body has incorporated its own priorities into the plan and this is a very useful feature.

55. The very committed and hard working governing body fulfils most of its statutory responsibilities but should ensure that the National Curriculum Programmes of Study are followed more rigorously in design and technology and in information and communication technology. The sex education policy lags behind current school practice. It has a good committee structure with terms of reference, reviewed annually and which works effectively. There is a good sense of teamwork amongst the governing body. Curriculum matters are discussed by the whole governing body. Each governor has a cohort and subject link which helps to keep them abreast of initiatives and in tune with the school's development. However, recent changes of staff have inhibited full implementation of this concept. They attend training regularly.

56. The school had a financial audit quite recently which found that in the main the school's procedures were satisfactory. It made several minor recommendations all of which are being attended to.

57. The school's aims are fulfilled in most respects but there is further scope to meet the aim which relates to fulfilling pupils' potential by matching work more carefully to their prior attainment.

58. The school states that there is too much bureaucracy, particularly in the amount of paperwork, most of which comes from the Department for Education and Skills. This is sometimes getting in the way of more productive use of the headteacher's time.

59. Overall, the school has very good accommodation which is well maintained and clean. It is in reasonable decorative order and there is a planned programme of redecoration. External provision is very good. There are good grassed and hard surfaced areas in this rural setting, including an open air swimming pool. Garden areas are well maintained, although the wild area is overgrown. The school building is attractive and spacious and of a good structure, although there are some problems with leaking flat roofs over toilet areas and some toilet facilities require refurbishment. In addition to the adequacy of classroom space, the school has a small information and communication technology suite which will accommodate about twelve pupils, a well furnished library, resource room and art room. It has suitable medical facilities and a spacious hall with wood block flooring, although it lacks storage space for dining furniture. It is used in the evenings by the community for a range of activities which restricts the school's opportunities to present three-dimensional and hanging wall displays. The school has shared use of the community provision which forms part of the building. The provision for the Foundation Stage is satisfactory but there is no secure external area for outdoor activities. Learning resources are adequate in most subjects, although unsatisfactory in geography. General school book provision is of a good quality. Resources for special educational needs pupils but there is limited information and communication technology software for them.

60. The school has adequate teaching staff but the number of support staff is limited but well used for supporting young children's needs and those children who require extra literacy support. The performance management system is working well and appraisal systems are proving positive in helping to meet teachers' needs. Staff have good opportunities for in-service training provided both internally and externally. There has been considerable staff turn-over in the past two years. In the past year four teachers left including two part-time teachers who were job sharing. There are no current vacancies and no teachers are on a temporary contact.

61. The school makes good use of its resources. The staff is well deployed in the school. Few of the teachers are leading subjects in their initial training specialisms, except in mathematics. However, staff have obtained skills through their teaching experience to manage the subjects for which they have current responsibility. Some recent changes and additions to management responsibilities reflect the school's needs due to changes of staff. Good use is made of resources in lessons, although more use of video materials would enhance some lessons and help pupils' understanding, for example concepts of physical features in geography. Finance is planned well and purchases are made on the basis of need and priority and these are discussed thoroughly. The carry forward figure, very slightly above five per cent, is understandable in view of the uncertainty of pupil numbers and the desire to maintain year group classes. Good use is made of service agreements to save on costs and tenders and estimates are scrutinised thoroughly to obtain best value for money. Given the average attainment on entry, the above median income per pupil, the significant improvements made since the last inspection report, the improved progress which the pupils are making, their very good behaviour and personal development and good attitudes to work, value for money is now sound, an improvement since the last inspection when it was regarded as unsatisfactory.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

62. The school is making significant strides forward under the new leadership. Many developments have taken place and there is a determination amongst all staff to improve standards even more. In making those further improvements the headteacher, governing body and staff need to address the following issues:

- **improve standards in information and communication technology and design and technology by:**
 - a) improving the quality of provision for information and communication technology even further;
 - b) making better use of computers across the curriculum and ensuring pupils use computers more regularly
 - c) monitoring pupils' information and communication technology skills and taking pupils on to the next stages of learning and in a more carefully structured way;
 - d) providing a better curriculum for pupils in design and technology which gives them more opportunities for the design process and to work with a range of tools and media.
(Paras 4, 24, 29, 59, 93, 118, 125)

- **matching the work better to pupils' prior attainment in subjects other than English so that all are challenged appropriately and build on the stage of learning they have reached.**
(Paras 7, 20, 46, 57)

- **giving pupils more opportunities to organise their own writing and thoughts so that they are less reliant on published worksheets and at the same time improving pupils' handwriting and presentation skills.**
(Paras 6, 24, 99)

- **providing the Reception pupils with a secure external learning environment to assist their independence and to provide better opportunities for their physical development.**
(Paras 59, 74)

In addition to the above recommendations the following minor recommendation should be considered for inclusion in the governing body's action plan.

- The governing body should update the sex education policy to match current arrangements.

* Through its own very good monitoring systems, the school is aware of all the issues which have been highlighted for development.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	50
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	25

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	17	22	10	0	0	0
Percentage	2	34	44	20	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		179
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		7

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR– Year 6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		55

English as an additional language

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	13
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.1
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.4
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	01[00]	13 [16]	13 [17]	26 [33]

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10 [10]	10 [10]	9 [11]
	Girls	10 [13]	10 [14]	11 [15]
	Total	20 [23]	20 [24]	20 [26]
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	77 [70]	77 [73]	77 [79]
	National	84 [83]	86 [84]	91 [90]

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10 (10)	12 (11)	11 (10)
	Girls	10 (15)	11 (15)	11 (15)
	Total	20 (25)	23 (26)	22 (25)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	77 [76]	88 [79]	85 [76]
	National	85 [84]	89 [88]	89 [88]

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	01 [00]	13 [14]	14 [12]	26 [26]

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11 [0]	10 [5]	11 [8]
	Girls	11 [12]	9 [11]	13 [11]
	Total	22 [12]	19 [16]	24 [19]
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81 [73]	70 [65]	88 [73]
	National	75 [75]	71 [72]	87 [85]

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11 [7]	11 [10]	13 [13]
	Girls	11 [9]	9 [7]	12 [9]
	Total	22 [16]	20 [17]	25 [22]
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81 [62]	74 [68]	92 [85]
	National	72 [70]	74 [72]	82 [79]

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	2
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	149
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	1	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)	8.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.38:1
Average class size	25.6

Education support staff: YR– Y6

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	52

Financial information

Financial year	00/01
----------------	-------

	£
Total income	376,478
Total expenditure	365,476
Expenditure per pupil	2,065
Balance brought forward from previous year	5,257

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	6.6
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	7.8
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	179
Number of questionnaires returned	74

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	74	24	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	49	47	4	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	26	65	8	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	34	51	14	1	0
The teaching is good.	56	43	1	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	35	56	8	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	69	25	4	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	50	44	1	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	32	56	8	1	3
The school is well led and managed.	51	43	3	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	57	39	0	1	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	31	46	15	4	4

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

63. At the time of the inspection children under five were settling into school well and making a good initial start to their education at school. Much evidence was drawn from the scrutiny of work from the past academic year and the current attainment of Year 1 pupils. Indications were that by the end of the academic year, the majority would be attaining in line with the national expectations in the Early Learning Goals, the Government's expectations for children's learning by the end of the Reception year, and some would exceed them.

64. Children are admitted to the Reception class in September having had a taster of school in the previous term during four story-time sessions. The induction period takes the age of the children into account so that the older children stay for a full day immediately and those children who will be five after Christmas attend on a part-time basis until the October half-term. These arrangements assist the children to settle in well and for them to become well known and their needs assessed. The assessments, known as baseline assessments, are carried out within the first seven weeks which helps the teacher to map out their future learning requirements. The results of this assessment are expected to indicate that the majority of children enter with standards of attainment at or just below the expected average.

65. Parents are introduced to the school staff, the curriculum and the daily routines before their children begin their first term. They are also invited to complete a booklet with their son or daughter and as a result of these initiatives children settle quickly and happily into the Reception class. Continual daily assessment takes place providing factual information to staff and parents on the social and academic progress of the children. Attainment, especially in language and numeracy, is analysed and the results are used to plan the next stage of the child's development.

66. The quality of teaching is good. Children enjoy school and quickly develop very positive attitudes making significant progress in their personal and social skills. They learn to listen, share and respect their peers and the adults with whom they come into contact.

67. The Reception teacher and the learning support assistant work well together. They are very caring, listening with respect to the children, teaching them to become independent, to behave well and to show concern for others. This is reflected in the very good behaviour that the children show in the classroom and around the school, for instance when they go to the school hall for assembly and physical education and also to the library.

68. The teacher plans the work in line with the requirements of the Early Learning Goals and interprets this in the light of different children's needs to match their stage of development. Resources are satisfactory but there is no outdoor play equipment and therefore few opportunities for the children to develop confidence in climbing and adventure and to stimulate their imaginations.

Personal and social development

69. The children are making good progress in this aspect of their development in this early stage of their schooling and the teaching is good. The children enter the spacious, airy classroom very happily and respond positively to the colourful and stimulating environment that encourages speaking and listening. During the day there are many opportunities for the children to speak and share their experiences. The teacher listens to them all with great respect, encouraging those children with speech difficulties and enriching the vocabulary of

all the children. The teacher values the personality and work of each child, guiding and supporting them so that they learn to persevere with a task until they succeed. As a result they gain in confidence and self-esteem, developing their independence. They learn to help one another to clear up after an activity. The very high expectations of the teacher and the learning support assistant promote very good attitudes to school that enable the children to work and play co-operatively together.

Language and Literacy

70. At the end of the Foundation Year the standards of attainment for the majority of children are expected to be in line with national expectations. This is a similar picture to that found in the last inspection. Teaching observed during the inspection was good and the children were making a good start to this aspect of their learning. At the time of the inspection the children had only been in school a very short time, but they are already eager to point out the initial letter sounds they have learnt. They respond enthusiastically to the teacher's questions about words beginning with 't.' Some children make mice and measure the respective length of the tails. The vocabulary of measurement is introduced effectively by the teacher. They look at books and, with the help of the adults, learn to select books to enjoy and take home to share with their families. In this way a love of reading is being fostered.

71. The children are learning to hold their pencils correctly. Some are beginning to write letters using their phonic knowledge. Those children with special needs are making good progress progressing from early marks on paper to writing over the top of the teacher's letters.

Mathematical Development

72. The teaching of this aspect is good. The children are asked detailed questions by the teacher about the order of the numbers and are introduced to the concept of greater and smaller and the number before and the number after. Very good use is made of the classroom environment and display to build upon mathematical vocabulary and understanding. Very early indications are that a large majority of the children will achieve the expected standard in mathematics at the end of the Foundation Year. The children are beginning to count confidently to ten and some can count numbers to twenty. The children learn to work co-operatively in pairs and groups, building up number lines and recognising written numbers. The teacher uses every opportunity to use songs and rhymes to build upon the children's mathematical knowledge and understanding for example the singing of 'One, two, three, four, five, once I caught a fish alive'. The children routinely count the numbers having school lunch, going on the bus or having packed lunch and this familiarises them with the concept of addition and subtraction and the application of number to real situations. The children are making good early progress in this aspect of their work.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

73. At the time of the inspection, the school's attention was focussed upon their harvest festival and the children in the Reception class were building upon their knowledge of exotic fruits. The teacher's good teaching alerts the children to new experiences and new learning. There were gasps of amazement as they observed the centre of a pomegranate and studied it through a magnifying glass. They suggested that the fruit resembled an angel or a butterfly. A few children recorded their impressions by drawing careful pencil sketches but the task was too challenging for the majority. During the harvest festival service, the children sat and listened attentively and sang the harvest songs with enjoyment. All the children are making good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world. The majority will attain the expected standard at the end of the Foundation Year and some will exceed it.

Physical Development

74. The children make good progress in their fine motor skills as when they handle brushes, writing and drawing equipment and in their use of scissors, paint, play-dough and glue. However, there are insufficient opportunities for them to develop confidence and imagination in their play on large equipment and to strengthen their bodies and their co-ordination due to the lack of a designated play area for this age group. The school does not have any resources such as bicycles, tricycles, climbing frames or outside equipment designed to extend and develop children's physical skills. The teaching of this aspect is sound and progress satisfactory overall.

75. During the physical education lessons, the children can move and use space appropriately, learning to control and curl their bodies in a variety of shapes.

Creative Development

76. There are many opportunities for the children to develop their creative abilities through the carefully selected resources and games and the good teaching. The children are making good progress in exploring colour, texture and pattern, for example by looking at autumn leaves and attempting to reproduce the colours with very good results. They learn to appreciate other children's paintings as when they share the bold use of colour representing the tiger in the jungle. In music the children enjoy singing and learn to use percussion instruments to describe movement and characters in the story of the 'Enormous Turnip'. They learn the term 'conductor' and they respond to the directions of a child ceasing to play as she directs them. They develop their speaking, listening and dramatic skills very well as they use the mice they made to enact a short play. They learn to communicate and talk about their feelings, for instance when looking at the colours of pineapples and pomegranates. The majority of children have made a good start towards attaining the expected standard at the end of the Foundation Year.

ENGLISH

77. The schools standards in the national tests in 2001 for Key Stage 1 were well below the national average in reading and writing and low when compared with similar schools. These results nevertheless showed a marked improvement on the previous year, especially in spelling and to a lesser extent in writing. At Key Stage 2, national test results for 2001 were around the national average and about average against schools with similar backgrounds. The school exceeded the targets set in conjunction with the Local Education Authority. Progress at both key stages is steady overall and very often good in particular lessons. Progress in Year 4 is slower. The improvement shown in the results of tests in 2001 at both key stages is mirrored in work seen during the inspection. For pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3, standards in all aspects of literacy are what might be expected nationally. There is a slight drop in Year 4 but standards in Year 5, and for a significant number in Year 6, are above age expectations.

78. In Key Stage 1, reading skills overall are in line with national expectation relative to age, although in each year group about 20 per cent of pupils exceed this. The current Year 2 cohort has more potential to perform well than that of the past year aided by good teaching.. Most pupils are able to use their knowledge of phonics to work out new words and can predict what might happen next in the story. Some make a reasonable attempt at understanding the meaning of unfamiliar words from the context and appreciate the humour in their stories. Most pupils read to an adult at home but not all do so every day and only a small percentage choose to read a book as a leisure activity. Taken overall, speaking and

listening skills are in line with national expectation for each age group. Some pupils in each year are very articulate and use a good range of vocabulary. In Year 2, for example, some are able to think up words which reflect how people feel in certain circumstances like 'confused' or 'surprised'. There are still a number of pupils in each year who struggle to express themselves clearly and whose vocabulary is limited. By the age of seven most pupils remember to give their written work a date and title. Presentation is variable but most form letters that are recognisable and a few are beginning to join up their letters. There is evidence of good progress in accuracy and the quality of content in many pupils' work. Most remember to use capital letters and full stops correctly. Most pupils can write short stories with a logical narrative and a recognisable sequence of events. Some higher attaining pupils attempt speech marks and there is a pleasing development of descriptive phrases such as 'an old grey and crumbly castle'. Spelling is generally more secure than in the past and again, pupils' knowledge of phonics is beginning to bear fruit in improving this aspect of literacy. Words which are incorrectly spelt are often recognisable from the sound of the letters. A few use dictionaries to correct their spelling. Pupils write in a variety of styles including stories, factual information and letters.

79. As pupils move up through Key Stage 2, overall reading skills remain in line with the expectation for their age, with a substantial number who exceed this. Some pupils read with good expression to bring out the meaning of the passage but many are more monotonous in tone. Most use punctuation marks to help them make sense of the text as they read. The majority attempt to guess the meaning of new words from the sense of the sentence. Speaking and listening skills are generally in line with what might be expected for their age. Most pupils listen courteously and attentively to their class teacher and to their peer group. Many are able to express themselves clearly and use a variety of speech patterns. By the age of nine onward, some have a remarkably mature vocabulary which brings a richness to both their oral and written work. However, there are some with more limited vocabulary who struggle to use standard English in speech and they are hampered in their written work because of this. At the start of Key Stage 2, many pupils begin to explore the use of words to enrich their writing. An example of this was seen in Year 3 where about half the pupils are able to think up a variety of alternatives for 'said' choosing words such as 'asked', 'whispered', 'replied' or 'grunted' to improve the impact of their work. By Year 5, many pupils are able to write using direct and reported speech, a variety of descriptive phrases and complex sentence construction to produce writing above the standard expected for that age group. By the age of eleven pupils can write in a wide variety of styles such as informative texts, story telling, book reviews, poetry, amusing parodies of well known works (like 'The Pied Piper of Hamelin') and sports commentaries. Most can identify the main features which define a particular style. A few can see how word usage has changed over the centuries and make a creditable attempt at writing, for example, in the style of Rudyard Kipling in 'Rikki Tikki Tavi'.

80. There have been considerable improvements in the provision of English since the last inspection. Standards are now in line with rather than below national expectations. The consistent attention given to improving writing skills has borne fruit in raising standards across the school, especially by the end of Key Stage 2. Spelling skills in Key Stage 1 have made remarkable strides. The quality of teaching has improved and is now good overall. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed this time. Progress is now mostly steady and some pupils make very good progress. The school has fully embraced the requirements of the National Literacy Strategy and teachers have very positive attitudes towards the implementation of this scheme. Strategies to improve writing are much more consistently

applied now. Teachers generally have higher expectations of what their pupils can achieve. The co-ordination of the subject has been sharpened and thorough systems for assessing pupils' work, monitoring standards and progress, analysing test results and predicting future patterns are now well in place. Pupils continue to have good attitudes to their work and there is less distracting behaviour because classroom management techniques have improved.

81. The quality of teaching is never less than good at Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2, it is mostly good and often very good, particularly in Year 3 and the last two years of Key Stage 2. Where teaching is most successful, lessons begin briskly, establish a good learning atmosphere and pupils' attention is immediately engaged. The main thrust of the lesson is often shared with the class at the beginning so that they can see the point of what they will learn and can gain a sense of achievement when this is successfully accomplished. Relationships between teacher and pupils are usually very good and encourage pupils to participate in discussion of texts being studied and to answer with confidence. Questions are often challenging and probe skilfully to make pupils think more deeply about their replies. Use of mature language, especially with the older pupils, encourages them to be more adventurous with their own language usage. Technical terms, such as 'phoneme' are correctly used to encourage pupils to develop their accuracy of language. The use of individual whiteboards help each pupil to feel directly involved and give the teacher an instant method of assessing how well a particular point is understood. Role-play is sometimes used to help pupils understand the story and the feelings of the character portrayed and to strengthen speaking and listening skills. This was seen in Year 2, where a pupil took the role of the central character who was unwillingly entertaining a tiger to tea. The rest of the class asked her questions to discover how she might react to such a situation. Planning is almost always designed to give a recognisable structure to lessons and to help them to flow smoothly. Most teachers constantly consolidate what has been learnt already to give pupils a sound base from which to progress. When the tasks set for each group are carefully designed to challenge each group in class, very good progress is often evident. Behaviour management is usually very good so pupils are able to work with relatively few distractions. Work is marked consistently well and many comments give pupils a clear direction for future improvement. The use of individual targets is helping to give pupils something to aim for and to improve their work.

82. When teaching is less successful, albeit overall satisfactory, the purpose of the lesson is not shared with the pupils so they are rather working in the dark having no clear goals. They are then less challenged as they do not know what volume of work is expected from them and those who are so inclined do less. This also happens when the task set is inappropriate for each group, being perhaps too easy for some or too difficult for others. Pupils do not then feel they have achieved anything and an opportunity to raise their self-esteem is lost. Pupils are not always given an opportunity to gauge what progress they have made in the course of the lesson or to discuss what is good about a particular piece of work. This does not help them to realise how they could improve. This also happens when the session at the end, where pupils come together to discuss and evaluate the lesson, is rushed. Quite often, pupils are kept too long on the carpet area where they become uncomfortable and restless and thus 'switch off'. When writing on the board, teachers do not always take sufficient care that their presentation matches what they require from their pupils and an opportunity for them to improve by example is lost.

83. The subject is well managed. Much work has been put into the provision of English to ensure the pupils are given the tools and techniques to improve. The co-ordinator is full of infectious enthusiasm and has a clear vision for what needs to be done. She has identified areas which need special attention. The implementation of assessment procedures, analysis of previous test results and systems for tracking pupils' progress have been well handled. These are now yielding valuable information to contribute to a continuing

improvement in standards and in setting individual targets for pupils. The system has also identified pupils who could benefit from additional learning support. There has been a high level of in-service training which has raised staff confidence in teaching literacy which in turn is raising standards. There is a general will to improve among the staff. Assessment, both formal and informal, is being well used to help staff modify their planning to meet the different needs of groups of pupils. There are good cross-curricular links to develop pupils' language skills in each subject. The library has been recently updated and books chosen carefully to appeal to different groups of pupils. However, there is not yet a wide enough range of books to stimulate pupils' interest in independent research. The room is pleasant and sunny, but there are few chairs and pupils are not therefore encouraged to browse or read quietly in a 'cosy' corner. Records of pupils' knowledge of sound blends are not yet in place so their progress in this area is less well defined. Role play is used effectively in some lessons but does not yet feature sufficiently in planning to add an extra dimension to the literacy syllabus.

MATHEMATICS

84. The results of the 2001 statutory assessment tests show that the percentage of pupils reaching the expected level of attainment at the end of the Key Stage 1 tests was well below the national average. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher level was also well below the national average but more pupils achieved this level than previously. These results are the same when compared to schools serving pupils from a similar background. The performance of boys and girls over the last three years was well below the national average.

85. The results at Key Stage 2 in 2001 show that the percentage of pupils attaining the expected level was around the average as was the percentage reaching the higher level. The school's performance against similar schools was also about average. The trend over the last three years has shown that standards are well below the national average. The school predicts, and the inspection team agrees, that this year about three-quarters are in line to reach the expected level in end of year national tests and a small number of pupils should achieve the higher level. The current year has a significant number of pupils with special needs. The performance of boys and girls over the last three years was below the national average but the performance of girls was higher than the boys.

86. In both key stages inspection evidence indicated significant improvements in teaching, planning and assessment and a better planned curriculum. This is beginning to result in pupils making better progress and developing a better understanding of their work. Pupils with special needs and those with English as an additional language are provided with work more suitable to their needs and make good progress overall.

87. Since the last inspection the quality of planning has improved significantly. This has done much to raise the standards of attainment in mathematics which were higher in 2001 than in previous years. The thorough planning of the National Numeracy Strategy across the school ensures effective teaching. The co-ordinator and the senior management team analyse the end of year results and identify areas of weakness. For instance, this year presentation and problem solving are the two areas for consolidation and are addressed consistently in the plenary sessions at the end of each lesson. The National Numeracy Strategy is taught in a consistent and effective manner from Year 1 to Year 6. Resources are satisfactory. They are placed in each classroom and centrally, allowing easy access for teachers and pupils.

88. At the end of Key Stage 1 pupils can count to 100 and place numbers up to a thousand in order. They can add and subtract to 1000 using number lines and cards to assist them visually. They can halve and double numbers. A number of the higher attaining pupils in Year 2 can add double twenty to a given number and all pupils can use a hundred square to add on in tens. Pupils have a good understanding of place value. They use mathematical vocabulary well and use it with understanding to solve word problems. Year 1 pupils are encouraged to ask questions for example, 'Is it round?' 'Is it small?' 'Is it silver?' to identify a coin in a guessing game. Year 2 pupils enjoy using mathematical terminology such as 'odd', 'even', 'digit' in another mathematical guessing game in order to find out a number which has already been thought of. These games develop the pupils' logic and thought processes in addition to improving their use of mathematical vocabulary.

89. The quality of class work seen in Year 2 during the inspection was appropriate for the stage of the year. Most are expected to gain the national standard for the end of the key stage. Already their presentation of work is improving and progress is raised further by high expectations of behaviour and achievement.

90. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils have a good understanding of mathematical language and use it accurately. Year 3 pupils learn to identify common and irregular shapes with increasing confidence. They learn to add on to the nearest hundred and the higher attaining pupils work to the nearest thousand. Year 4 pupils become familiar with equations whilst pupils in Years 5 and 6 can halve and double numbers using mathematical language, for example product and multiples to solve problems. Years 5 and 6 pupils were doing well doubling two-digit numbers mentally and then applying the techniques to three- and four-digit numbers, most with much success.

91. The attitudes of pupils to mathematics throughout the school are very good. All pupils throughout the school enjoy the subject because of the way it is taught and many pupils state that it is their favourite subject. They ask the teachers and classroom assistants for help when needed and feel very confident that staff value their contributions. Their behaviour in lessons is very good. Pupils are interested and involved in activities and listen very attentively. They respect and value the contributions made by their peers. Pupils are keen to succeed and are making at least satisfactory progress.

92. Teaching overall throughout the school is good. All teachers make good use of praise and pupils respond to their encouragement. In Key Stage 1 teaching is very good and it is good overall in Key Stage 2. All the lessons observed were satisfactory or better. The brisk pace of teaching, high expectations of presentation, improved assessment and marking are consistent features of the very good teaching in Key Stage 1. Planning in Key Stage 1 is very good with clear learning outcomes that enable assessment to take place. Teachers in Years 1 and 2 are trialling a system of individual target setting that is giving a clearer focus to individual needs. The setting of individual targets for pupils in Key Stage 2 is not yet established. Good use is made of resources to aid understanding. Assessment in Key Stage 2 is not so detailed and in practice the lessons do not yet match the pupils' different needs precisely enough. However whole-school targets, for example for problem solving and presentation have been agreed and are consistently followed by all the teachers resulting in improving standards.

93. Homework is provided throughout the school and it extends the learning in the classroom. Information and communication technology is not yet used fully to support the learning of mathematics. Most teachers make good use of marking to improve performance and it is particularly effective in Year 2.

94. The policy and scheme of work have been drawn up and implemented by the co-ordinator with support from the county advisors. Monitoring of class work by the co-ordinator does not yet take place on a regular basis. When it does, informal feedback is given to staff but not recorded. Good use is made of assessment information from formalised tests. Samples of work are compared with National Curriculum expectations each half-term and pupils' performance in end of year tests is analysed and provides useful information to staff for whole-school target setting.

SCIENCE

95. For most pupils their level of attainment is at expected levels for their age and a few pupils are expected to obtain the higher level by the end of both key stages, indicating improved standards of work since the last inspection. In 2001 Key Stage 1 pupils' performance in teacher's assessments was much improved on that of the previous year. Despite this teacher assessed results were still below the national average. Almost one-fifth of the pupils obtained the higher level in these assessments and just over four-fifths of pupils reached the expected level. The results of the Key Stage 2 pupils also improved. Nine-tenths of the pupils gained the expected level in the national tests and just over one-third of the pupils reached the higher level about the national average. In Key Stage 2 the school's girls have been performing much better than the boys against the national trend in the subject, although no reason for such a difference could be found during the inspection. Both boys and girls showed equal levels of interest in their work. Furthermore the school's girls have been performing much better than girls nationally in recent years.

96. Key Stage 1 pupils' knowledge is appropriate for their ages. They understand the difference between animate and inanimate objects knowing that some things have never lived. They know some of the sources of light, such as torch or the sun. They appreciate some of the dangers of electricity. They can construct a simple circuit with a battery as a source of power. They know the difference between push and pull. They appreciate the conditions for germinating seeds and the need for light and water for plant growth. They can name the main parts of a plant. They also know that some animals are born alive and that others hatch from eggs after an incubation period. They can discuss the life cycle of a frog.

97. Key Stage 2 pupils have a good understanding of what constitutes a fair test and the need to focus on one variable at a time when experimenting. Their predictions are reasoned. They understand the concept of electrical conductors and insulators. They appreciate the difference between liquids and solids and understand the concept of a gas. They consider safety factors when carrying out investigations. After experiments they undertake some evaluation of their work. Year 6 pupils decided, for example, that they could use a deeper pot and bait to attract more mini-beasts. They undertake some interesting experiments, such as finding out which bread moulds the quickest and which type of sugar dissolves best and these experiments are helping them to understand the process of scientific enquiry. They know about the effect of gravity and the concept of balanced and unbalanced forces and the upthrust of water to keep things afloat. They carry out effective work on reversible and irreversible change and the properties and constituents of different materials. National Curriculum Programmes of Study are fulfilled in both key stages.

98. Pupils enjoy their work in science, particularly when investigating. Year 3 pupils were seen to test their root structure models made from straw against the different forces of wind provided by a hair dryer operated at different speeds and in wet and dry soil conditions. Year 1 pupils learned much about the sense of smell when they smelt different mixtures, such as yoghurt, chocolate, mint and mouldy milk as part of their work on the senses. Year 6 pupils gained much knowledge about diet when they planned their own balanced diet and challenged in their setting up of test situations when asked to find out which crisps contained

the most fat. They are well behaved and work with interest, co-operating well in pairs and in small groups. Interesting activities are devised for them to investigate but all pupils study to the same depth and with the same level of challenge throughout the school.

99. The quality of teaching observed in science was satisfactory overall in both key stages. Resources are used effectively in lessons. The presentation of work is, however, not high enough. Pupils often present their work rather sloppily and too much use is made of worksheets, which do not demand enough of the pupils' own efforts and writing skills. For example they do not often select their own way to present and record their results. Teachers make good use of subject specific terminology such as 'reaction', 'hypothesis' and 'prediction' which pupils make part of their own vocabulary.

100. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic, takes her role seriously and carries out a good analysis of test question responses and increasingly good records are being developed to indicate progress. Currently, however, not enough attention is being paid to those who attain easily or to those who find learning difficult. She has a good bank of information and links whereby the subject can be developed. Resources are well labelled and form an adequate provision.

ART AND DESIGN

101. Standards of work in art and design are securely in line with national expectations for pupils at the age of seven and eleven. There is a substantial minority whose work exceeds these standards in each year. There are also some who do not reach them, particularly in Year 4. At the age of five, most pupils are able to make a fair attempt at painting the human face with the features more or less correctly proportioned. By Year 2, most begin to develop greater skill in mixing colour and controlling how they apply paint to paper, for example in painting continuous lines without lifting the brush to give a smoother effect. Some experiment with different shapes on paper by holding pastel crayons in various ways with some interesting effects. As they move up through Key Stage 2, most improve techniques and are able to produce work in a wide variety of media such as paint, pastels, textiles, screen printing and papier mâché. Some pupils in Year 4 produced pleasing observational drawings of fruit and vegetables using pastels to create the sense of texture and three-dimensional shape. By the last two years of Key Stage 2, some pupils develop considerable skills in using water colours and produce very creditable landscapes and flower paintings. A few pupils are able to use powder paint mixed with white to produce the effect of rippling water by reed banks. Some attempt different methods of shading, with pencil by hatching or with paint by adding depth of colour gradually. Pupils are aware of the work of other artists and use this as the inspiration for their own paintings. For example some interesting shape paintings resulted from a study of the architecturally based paintings of Ferdinand Leger. Experimentation with mixing textiles and buttons produced some attractive work based on American folk art. Some pupils in Year 5 designed collages to represent the bottom of a pool using colour and different textures of textiles to create the effect of sunlight falling through water very effectively. Most pupils use their sketchbooks to practise various techniques which they can then apply in the planning of their larger pieces.

102. Since the last inspection art and design continues to make an important contribution to pupils' creative development. Standards overall are well in line with national expectation but are lower than reported in the previous inspection. Some pupils achieve a higher standard than their age might suggest. More attention has been given to building on pupils' skills from year to year and this can now be observed in a scrutiny of their work where most make at least steady progress.

103. It was only possible to observe two lessons, one of which was very good and the other good. Overall judgements about the standard of teaching are based on these, scrutiny of pupils' work and discussion with staff and pupils. In the most successful lessons, the teacher gives good instruction with clear modelling of technique for the pupils to emulate. Pupils are sometimes encouraged to discuss what they have found difficult or what makes one piece of work better than another. This gives them guidelines as to how to improve their own work. Teachers often give sound support when pupils are working in groups, encouraging experimentation without over-directing. Good subject knowledge and infectious enthusiasm add to pupils' enjoyment and willingness to improve. Simple 'tricks' are taught to the pupils to help them to remember a particular technique. An example of this was WWPP, which stands for water, wipe, palette, paint - a useful method of controlling the amount of paint applied to paper when practising colour shading or blending. In some classes, pupils are asked to describe under their work how certain effects were achieved which gives them a point of reference for the next time. Where teaching works less well, the teacher has less confidence in the subject and may not always find the correct word to describe what is required. There are sometimes lost opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own work and that of others and to see how they could improve.

104. The subject co-ordinator has only been in post for three weeks. There is a good basis from which to work as art and design is well integrated into the curriculum. However, the recent strong focus on implementing and improving literacy and numeracy has inevitably meant that art and design has been allocated less time over the last two years. A new art and design policy is planned to be developed this term. There has been helpful in-put from outside consultants and in service training is to take place later this term. Resources have recently been improved by buying high quality materials, particularly good mounts and borders so that pupils' work is displayed to best advantage, and shown to be valued. There is a portfolio of pupils' work so that progress can be observed and more systematic methods of recording and assessing work are now being developed. There are good links across the curriculum particularly with literacy, geography and history where pupils observational skills are developed by drawing objects like Victorian artefacts. Limited use is made of computer technology but pupils in Key Stage 1 do use some of the graphic programs to produce some interesting abstract patterns.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

105. Due to time-tabling arrangements, only one lesson was observed during the course of the inspection. However, a sample of pupils' work from Year 1 to Year 6 was scrutinised together with displays around the school. Standards currently being achieved by the pupils at the end of both key stages are below national expectations due to insufficient opportunities in the subject, although there were plans to improve standards in the subject during the course of the year. During the last inspection standards were judged to be good in special projects but the pupil's entitlement to the subject was limited. Evidence suggests that this judgement is still the same and that pupils do not have regular enough opportunities to develop their skills in the subject to a good level.

106. The one lesson observed was excellent and pupils were enthused whilst they made models of Roman cargo ships. By the end of the lesson pupils had learned to investigate the properties of materials and to use appropriate ones for particular elements of their work. They also learned how to evaluate and modify their designs. All pupils had sketched their designs carefully and independently, producing complex drawings complete with full loads of cargo and armed with catapults if attacked. They identified and selected the tools required, calculated the cost of production and evaluated the product. Boys and girls, including those of high ability and pupils with special needs and English as an additional language made good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the key skills in this lesson.

107. The quality of teaching in the one lesson observed was excellent. The planning addressed all the learning needs and pupils were asked effective questions that encouraged them to think independently. They organised the resources appropriate to the task in hand and set about the project with great enthusiasm.

108. The recently appointed co-ordinator is very knowledgeable and eager to put her expertise into effect. A policy and scheme of work are under review by the staff. Extra resources for Key Stage 2 are to be ordered and ideas to organise a whole day of design and technology are being thought through. The co-ordinator also plans to keep a photographic record of all design and technology work in order to monitor and assess pupil progress.

GEOGRAPHY

109. It was only possible to observe one lesson in each key stage and a small part of another Key Stage 1 lesson but from a scrutiny of work undertaken during the last academic year it is clear that National Curriculum Programmes of Study are fulfilled. Standards meet expectations by ages seven and 11 reflecting those at the time of the previous inspection. The programme of work is planned clearly and pupils experience a range of work which relates to physical and human geography. The curriculum is well organised based on a mixture of local and national guidance.

110. Key Stage 1 pupils gain a good insight into their own locality and evaluate the good features of it and where they would like to see improvements, for example suggesting the addition of a slide and roundabout to their local park. They identify the physical and human features of the village and most recognise that some changes are due to natural events and processes and others are caused by the impact humans have on their environment. They learn to follow a simple map of their locality and place photographs of significant features on a large wall map of the area. Year 2 pupils follow the 'journeys' of their adopted class bear, take him on outings and describe where he has been, finding the appropriate location on maps. They also learn about his adventures through big books, such as his trip to Brittany. They discuss the proximity of France, features of the French way of life and language and how the journey might be accomplished. Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1 in coming to an understanding of place and the world around them through a well structured programme of work which is effectively delivered.

111. Pupils make sound progress in Key Stage 2. By age 11 pupils are developing an appropriate knowledge about the world. They appreciate and understand the reasons for the changing land use in their own locality. About one-third have heard of the Lake District and can find its position on a map and a few know where the North-West Highlands and Grampians are situated. They are learning to identify and locate the most important mountain ranges on world maps. They have a good idea of a key and symbols. They make useful studies of particular settlements in parts of the world, such as an Indian village, and how the way of life relates to climatic conditions. They know about the monsoon and can describe India as an area of contrasting physical features. They know the importance of the Ganges and some pupils carry out independent research of their own to find out more.

112. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. It is good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. Teachers have sound subject knowledge but they use too many worksheets, some too isolated from pupils' understanding, such as colouring in UK maps of geological features according to a prescribed colouring-in system. They are not being given enough opportunities to express themselves in writing and in their own style.

113. The headteacher has only recently taken over the temporary co-ordination of the subject because of the staffing situation and she is keeping a careful, watching brief over the subject. She recognises that the range, quantity and quality of resources are unsatisfactory overall and there is a limited amount of video material and slides to widen pupils' conceptual understanding of what they are studying and to increase their understanding. There are satisfactory resources for the identification of place, although limited Ordnance Survey materials of different scales of the local area.

HISTORY

114. Standards in history are in line with national expectations for pupils at the age of seven and eleven. Most pupils make steady progress in developing historical skills such as factual recall, putting events into chronological order and using a variety of sources to research and deduce conclusions. As pupils move through Key Stage 1, most learn to compare their own immediate experience of the world with how things were in the past, first within their own family and later in a wider context. Year 2, for example, study old photographs of Blackpool and compare them to what the town looks like now. From this most pupils can see that leisure activities at the seaside are changing. Pupils develop research skills by devising a questionnaire for their parents and grandparents asking how they spent their holidays in the past. In the lower years of Key Stage 2, pupils learn to use worksheets (for example on life in Anglo Saxon Britain) which encourage them to research by asking what they already know, what they want to find out and what conclusions can be drawn from their study. By this means most pupils learn to follow a logical path in their 'detective work' using a methodical approach which applies to all historical studies. Most pupils develop some understanding of how it must have felt to be in certain situations, like the Great Fire of London. By the last two years of Key Stage 2, many pupils begin show a growing understanding of how words can affect how others behave. This was seen in speeches some wrote based on Queen Elizabeth's exhortation to the troops at Tilbury using the same sort of passionate and persuasive language.

115. Since the previous inspection, most pupils continue to be aware of how events in the past have affected how we are now. The history policy provides a sound basis for the development of pupils' historical skills. The quality of teaching remains good overall. Standards, while in line with national expectation, are not as high as reported in the last inspection. Resources have been reviewed and some new videos and computer software bought to correct previous deficiencies. The scheme of work has been rewritten to combine the best of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority guidelines with Cambridgeshire programmes of study. Lessons continue to be well organised and there is an appropriate balance of teacher in-put to pupil activity.

116. It was only possible to observe three lessons, of which two were deemed to be good and one satisfactory. Overall judgements about teaching quality are based on these, scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with staff and pupils. Where teaching works well, there is a high level of enthusiasm for the subject which is communicated to the pupils and most enjoy the lessons as a result. Questions are well thought out to challenge pupils not just to recall facts but to reach conclusions from these. This was seen particularly in Year 2 where various versions of the story of Robin Hood were discussed and pupils were encouraged to think where the truth lies. Good use was made of the game 'Chinese Whispers' to help pupils understand how stories can change as they are passed on by word of mouth. Role play is well used in some lessons to bring scenes alive and stimulate pupils' understanding. Pupils are encouraged to develop their powers of observation by looking at a range of sources, for example various portraits of Henry VIII, to realise that the same person or event can be portrayed in a variety of ways depending on the point of view of the writer or artist. From this pupils are led into a discussion about the differences between fact

and opinion. The work set for pupils in some classes is designed to match what each group is capable of so that each pupil is involved fully and none are disheartened by work that is too difficult or too easy. Where teaching is less successful, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to write in their own words. Free writing is quite often based on a list of questions and there is an over-reliance on work sheets which limits pupils' ability to research and expand their ideas. Sometimes pupils are encouraged to be too simplistic in their approach, for example 'Was Henry 8th a good or bad king?' This does not develop their perception that events are seldom so easily categorised and much depends on ones point of view. There are lost opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own progress and that of others which would give them guidelines on how to improve.

117. The management of the subject is sound. The co-ordinator has only been in post for one year but much has been done already to give a more effective structure to the teaching of history. There has been a review of the programmes studied to ensure that there is an appropriate emphasis on pupils developing skills and building on previous knowledge. Formal assessment has been introduced based on one piece of pupils' work per topic studied with regard to identified targets. There is continuing informal assessment but more needs to be done to ensure that the information gleaned about progress and standards is fed back into planning. There is a suitable range of resources and more can be borrowed from a local museum as required. There are good links with other subjects in the curriculum, especially literacy, art and geography but more could be done to develop pupils' literary skills in written work in history. Little use is made of computer technology but some pupils do use the Internet to research various projects. Some work is produced using the computer as a word processor. Visits to places of interest in the local area add an extra dimension to the teaching of history and the development of the pupils' cultural awareness. There is an appropriate coverage of the required programmes of study as pupils move through the school. As yet there are few opportunities to monitor teaching but the subject gains from the fact that many of the staff are interested in and knowledgeable about history.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

118. Pupils' skills in information and communication technology are below expectations by the end of both key stages because they do not have enough opportunities to practise what they learn on a regular enough basis and the school has inadequate facilities and software. As a result, the school has not been keeping up with the improving standards in the subject nationally. Pupils do not use information and communication technology regularly across the curriculum. The small information and communication technology suite containing eight computers is not fully utilised because it is not possible to accommodate many pupils and it is difficult to supervise other pupils at the same time due to staffing levels. As a result pupils in Key Stage 2 use the suite on a rota basis about once in every three weeks. Pupils cannot develop a meaningful build up of skills and they have to spend a disproportionate amount of time in each lesson revising what they did in the previous lesson. This holds back their progress. Pupils' progress is unsatisfactory in both key stages as a result.

119. In the work observed younger Key Stage 2 pupils were learning how to use the tool bar and were learning how to change font sizes, type of font and to change colour for effect. Most pupils still needed a lot of help to achieve any degree of success. Several pupils made screen errors by pressing the wrong key but the teacher was able to extricate the pupils from their problems because of her own good information and communication technology skills. Pupils worked well in pairs, taking turns to share the mouse.

120. In an upper Key Stage 2 lesson, pupils were given clear instructions about the task, some programming a robotic toy. Others working on a learning game which included control simulations and decision making. They found the task very challenging and had to seek constant support from the teacher because of their own lack of skill. The teacher had good knowledge of the game and was able to support the pupils but her help was constantly needed.

121. The co-ordinator for information and communication technology is acting in a temporary capacity. There is insufficient provision of computers for current needs. Staff have not yet had their national training in the subject but this is about to begin.

MUSIC

122. Standards in music are at expected levels at the end of both key stages. The last inspection found that there are a significant number of pupils who achieve standards higher than expected nationally by taking part in the extra-curricular Saturday music workshop. The school has taken advantage of the opportunity to become involved in this community initiative for interested musicians and it enhances the standard of music in the classroom.

123. Key Stage 1 pupils learn to sing, clap and march in time to the beat. They develop their knowledge and understanding of dynamics and pulse with the aid of a 'noise monitor' increasing and decreasing the level of tone and speed. Through very good teaching they learn to identify the pulse of a variety of pieces. They have opportunities to listen, appraise and reflect upon music, describing it and their feelings very well. Pupils in Year 2 use percussion instruments to play sounds as depicted on a card. However, some pupils do not hold the instruments correctly and do not know about the tonal quality of them.

124. Pupils in Key Stage 2 consolidate their knowledge of pitch, dynamics, rhythm, tempo, musical patterns and mood. In a very good Year 6 lesson groups of pupils were encouraged to clap rhythms to incorporate into a whole-class pattern. The pupils worked well in their groups to practise some difficult rhythms and they performed these with enjoyment and musicality. By the end of the Key Stage, pupils can play recorders, tuned and untuned percussion with confidence and good musical skill, as four pupils demonstrated during a lunch time session. They enjoy performing part of the 'Four Seasons' by Vivaldi, sight reading the music and listening to one another with accuracy.

125. Pupils do not use information and communication technology in order to capture, change and combine sounds, as in a composition, a requirement of the National Curriculum music Programme of Study. However, the co-ordinator is aware of the need to purchase software and to plan in opportunities for composition which are currently insufficient.

126. Teaching observed was good overall. Teachers plan effectively, use resources well and have a good knowledge of the scheme that is used to deliver the programmes of study, although formal individual assessment of pupils is not yet in place. The teachers encourage pupils to listen carefully and sensitively to themselves and to others singing and performing. A good example of this took place in the combined Year 5 and 6 singing lesson when pupils practised the harvest songs and a 'Millennium Hymn' by John Rutter.

127. The co-ordinator has attended a number of courses that he has used to enhance the development of the subject. He is able to offer some help and support to colleagues in the teaching of the subject. Pupils respond to music with enthusiasm and enjoyment and its provision contributes to their cultural and social development.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

128. Pupils have a balanced programme of physical education activities in both key stages which fulfil National Curriculum requirements and which benefit from good accommodation. The playing fields are quite extensive with additional and adequate hard surface area. The hall is of a good size with wood block flooring, though its useful area is partly restricted by the storage of dining furniture. In addition the school has a large outdoor swimming pool, used extensively in the second half of the summer term and also during the summer holidays. Swimming is a strength of the physical education provision and pupils make good progress in this aspect. All pupils learn to swim at least 25 metres by age 11 and many can swim much further distances. In other aspects of physical education pupils in both key stages reach the expected standards and make sound progress. These judgements do not represent such a good picture of standards as presented in the last report when they were described as good, except in swimming. Pupils do not have as many physical education lessons as they used to because of the incorporation of the literacy and numeracy hours into curriculum time.

129. The overall quality of teaching observed during the inspection was good but stronger in Key Stage 1 in which it was very good. Lessons observed in Key Stage 2 were satisfactory. The very good teaching in Key Stage 1 was attributable to the teachers' enthusiasm, clear lesson structure and focus and good demonstration of technique. Lessons in Key Stage 1 proceeded at a good pace. By contrast lessons in Key Stage 2 were less rigorous and some learning time was lost as pupils queued for turns on the apparatus. The progress Key Stage 1 pupils made was good. It was sound in Key Stage 2.

130. Year 1 pupils can adopt the correct technique for rolling a ball by crouching down with correctly positioned legs as they project a ball forward enabling them to roll a ball with a good degree of accuracy. Pupils at the beginning of Year 2 danced sensitively, taking their work seriously, resulting from very good teaching as they acted out part of the story of 'Sleeping Beauty'. The quality of their movement was good because the teacher discussed how snow falls to the ground and asked the pupils to use all their body to replicate the feeling of snow falling. An inventive approach whereby half the class suddenly froze their movements whilst the other half continued as snow flakes added to the quality and their performance improved from watching each other. Pupils were encouraged to show expressive facial gestures as they performed. An imaginative end to the lesson saw one child become a snowflake pupil, touch the others in turn who individually became snowflakes moving to the exit door and giving a fitting end to the lesson. This well paced lesson from an enthusiastic teacher enabled the pupils to make good progress and produce good quality work for their age.

131. In the few opportunities to observe Key Stage 2 pupils, Year 3 children could select their own sequence of curling, stretching and jumping movements. They could make a sequence of these movements though they rarely extended their movements and stretched out to full capacity nor were they aware of the need for finesse in starting and finishing positions. In a games lesson, Year 6 pupils effected accurate chest passing movements with large balls and some knew the advantage of straight direct passes as opposed to a lobbed pass which might be intercepted.

132. Pupils in both key stages enjoy their physical education lessons and change appropriately. They play fairly and are co-operative in group and team situations. Resources are adequate. The co-ordination of the subject is being held temporarily, a result of recent staff changes. There is a small range of extra-curricular activities, mainly comprising friendly football matches against other schools. Outside bodies provide a wider range of other opportunities including athletics, short tennis and gymnastics.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

133. The school follows the Cambridgeshire Agreed Syllabus syllabus which has a focus upon the major faiths of the world. During both key stages, pupils make satisfactory progress in their studies, learning about the symbols, history and stories of Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Sikhism and Judaism.

134. Pupils learn to reflect upon the reasons that God made the world and the importance of caring for the environment. A very good lesson was observed in Year 2 in which pupils made very good progress in their understanding and enjoyment of the Old Testament story of David and Goliath. They acted out the events with verve and vigour.

135. There is a whole-school policy to link religious education with other areas of the curriculum. This was demonstrated in a good lesson given in Year 3 where pupils, including those with special needs and English as an additional language, worked hard during the lesson to make pastry sheaves of corn, to incorporate into a loaf of bread for the harvest festival service. Pupils learn the ways in which ancient civilisations ground corn, the action of yeast and the way to cook bread.

136. In Year 4 pupils learn about the symbols and ceremonies of the Christian religion and the appropriate resources gave pupils immediate insight into the rituals and vocabulary of a Christian wedding ceremony. Year 5 pupils make observations about the interior of a church, recording on a worksheet the positions of the pulpit, font, altar and lectern. They had visited Ely Cathedral and could recall historical facts about the building and its peaceful and calm atmosphere. Pupils made good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the Buddhist faith in a very good Year 6 lesson. They listened with great attention to the story of its beginnings and placed flowers, candles and incense on a table to demonstrate the symbols of the religion. Pupils are aware of the need to be sensitive to and respectful of faiths other than their own.

137. The spiritual experiences of pupils in religious education lessons are not so well identified. However the 'stilling exercise' during the teaching of Buddhism in Year 6 had a spiritual dimension that enhanced pupils' understanding. In all parts of the school, emphasis is placed upon caring, listening and respecting one another and this is reflected in the daily assemblies.

138. The quality of teaching of religious education in most lessons is good and in Year 6 very good. Teachers' planning takes due regard of the different learning needs of their pupils. There are good links made to other subjects as, for example, the stands made for sacred books in the design and technology lessons, the colourful display of the five Ks of Sikhism in art and design and the creative writing of the story of Buddha. The resources are used effectively, the pace and timing of lessons are satisfactory and there is a consistent approach to the subject across the school. All these factors contribute to the overall spiritual, cultural, moral and social development of the pupils.

139. The presentation of written work is just satisfactory but there is an over-use of work sheets preventing pupils from developing their writing skills. The overall quality of handwriting is unsatisfactory. The co-ordinator leads the subject well. She has reviewed the policy and scheme of work offering advice, resources and support to the teachers. The monitoring of teaching is not yet established but the work of pupils is monitored.