

INSPECTION REPORT

PRINCECROFT PRIMARY SCHOOL

Warminster

LEA area: Wiltshire

Unique reference number: 126259

Headteacher: Mr G P Ball

Acting headteacher at the time of the inspection:
Mrs R Harrison

Reporting inspector: Dr Colin Lee
21854

Dates of inspection: 14th –17th January 2002

Inspection number: 220323

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Princecroft Lane Warminster Wiltshire
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs J Adam
Date of previous inspection:	24 th January 2000

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Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21854	Dr C Lee	Registered inspector	Science Information and communication technology Physical education	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well pupils are taught How well the school is led and managed What the school should do to improve further
9086	Mrs R Watkins	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well the school cares for its pupils How well the school works in partnership with parents
22397	Mr S Fowler	Team inspector	English Art and design Design and technology Religious education	The quality of the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils Equal opportunities Special educational needs
18342	Mrs M Spark	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History Music Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage	English as an additional language

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Princecroft Primary School is smaller than the average primary school. There are 166 pupils on roll aged between 4 and 11. This is 30 fewer than at the time of the last inspection in January 2000. Pupils are from a range of socio-economic backgrounds that are below average overall. There are no pupils from ethnic minority groups. Seventeen per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is average. Twenty-eight per cent of pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs and this is above average. One per cent of pupils has a statement of special educational needs and this is below average, but several pupils are, currently, being considered for statements. The special needs cover a wide spectrum of learning, emotional and behavioural difficulties. There is a significant number of pupils who either join or leave the school during a school year. This turnover is typically around 15 per cent. Children's attainment on entry to the reception class is gradually rising. It is, currently, below average overall, but has been well below average and occasionally very low in the past. The school has experienced a large turnover of teaching staff and some difficulty in recruiting new staff. Six teachers have left in the last two years and have been replaced by four teachers appointed to permanent posts and one temporary teacher. Since March 2001, the deputy headteacher has acted as headteacher in the absence, because of illness, of the substantive headteacher.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective and improving school. Standards are rising and, although below average in English and mathematics at the end of both key stages, and below average in science at the end of Key Stage 1¹, most pupils are achieving well in relation to what they have achieved in the past. Pupils are keen to learn and they behave well and this helps to create a good atmosphere for learning. The school is well led by the acting headteacher, and this leadership, together with the good overall quality of teaching, has enabled past serious weaknesses to be overcome. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- In relation to their past attainment, children in the Foundation Stage² and pupils in Key Stage 2³ make good progress.
- The overall quality of teaching is good and helps pupils to learn well.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to school and the work they do, and they behave well.
- The acting headteacher provides good leadership that is at the heart of the school's improvement.
- There is a good partnership with parents.
- Staff have a strong, shared commitment to the school's improvement and success.

What could be improved

- Standards could be improved still further in English, mathematics and science.
- More able pupils could make faster progress and attain higher levels.
- At Key Stage 1, more emphasis needs to be placed on ensuring pupils learn basic skills and teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve could be higher.
- The information gained from assessment of pupils' learning is not used sufficiently to plan the next stages in their learning.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan, which will be sent to all parents and carers of pupils in the school.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

There has been good improvement since the acting headteacher took over leadership of the school in March 2001. The overall improvement since the last inspection in January 2000 is satisfactory. The serious weaknesses that existed have been overcome successfully, due to constructive school improvement planning, the good guidance of the acting headteacher, and the collective determination of teaching staff. All the major issues, which related to standards, the quality of teaching and learning, the effectiveness of leadership and management, accommodation,

¹ Key Stage 1 caters for pupils aged 5 to 7 and refers to pupils who are in Years 1 and 2.

² The Foundation Stage applies to children from the age of three to the end of the reception year.

³ Key Stage 2 caters for pupils aged 7 to 11 and refers to pupils who are in Years 3 to 6.

resources, and the arrangements for assessing pupils' work, show improvement. Beyond these issues, there has been good improvement in standards, teaching, and provision for children in the Foundation Stage. Pupils' behaviour is better, having improved from satisfactory to good. There is still work to be done, and the school needs to develop further the use of information from assessment, the role of subject co-ordinators, and the overall level of resourcing, as well as raise standards still higher. However, inspectors are confident that the comparatively recent introduction of a wide range of strategies for improvement provides a good foundation for further progress by the school.

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 ⁴
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	E	C	E	E
Mathematics	E	D	D	E
Science	E	D	E	E

Key	
very high	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E
very low	E*

During the last five years there have been many fluctuations in the school's results in the annual National Curriculum tests taken by pupils at the end of Key Stage 2. The overall trend has been below that which has occurred nationally. In 2001, as in previous years, the significant proportion of pupils with special educational needs had the effect of lowering the overall results, but teachers' expectations have also been too low. This has had a particular effect on the achievements of the more able pupils, too few of who achieved higher levels in the tests. Compared with schools nationally, the percentages achieving the higher Level 5 were very low in English, below average in mathematics, and well below average in science. However, in relation to the targets set for percentages of pupils to achieve the expected Level 4, all targets were met. These targets are based on careful predictions that take account of pupils' prior attainment, and other data, such as the proportion of pupils with special educational needs. The comparisons with the results of similar schools, shown in the table above are based on percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals. In relation to what the pupils had achieved when they were seven, such comparisons are more favourable, and the majority of pupils made satisfactory to good progress during their time in Key Stage 2. The raised expectations of teachers have led to more challenging targets for the pupils currently in Year 6, and the work seen during the inspection indicates that these pupils are in line to achieve the targets set. Standards overall are an improvement on the school's past results, being below average, rather than well below average, in English and mathematics, and average in science. No significant differences between boys and girls are evident.

The National Curriculum test results, in 2001, taken by pupils at the end of Key Stage 1, continued to fluctuate as in the past. Compared with schools nationally, the results were well below average in reading, and very low in writing and mathematics. Teachers' assessments of science indicated that pupils' attainment was well below the national average. When compared with similar schools, results were very low in all tests. Very few pupils gained the higher Level 3. The class taking the tests had a history of disrupted teaching, but these results and those in preceding years have also been adversely affected by teachers' low expectations. In Key Stage 1, teachers have failed to build on the good progress achieved at the Foundation Stage that has been gradually raising the standards of children entering Year 1. This situation is improving slightly. Standards achieved by pupils currently in Year 2 are below average in reading, mathematics, and science, but generally well below average in writing.

In other subjects, pupils attain standards in line with expectations at the end of both key stages, apart from physical education, in which standards are above expectations. Work in information and communication technology has improved particularly well since the last inspection, when it was below expectations. Children enter the reception class with standards below expectations for their age in all areas of learning. They make good progress in the reception year and they are in line to match expectations, by the time they start Year 1, in communication, language and literacy, and mathematical development and to exceed expectations in all other aspects of their development.

⁴ 'Similar schools' are defined by the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals; this measure has been found to be significantly related to the levels of attainment normally found in schools nationally.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and are very eager to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils conduct themselves well both in class and around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Good relationships exist between pupils and between pupils and staff, contributing to pupils' satisfactory personal development overall.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Attendance is close to the national rates and the amount of unauthorised absence is slightly less than is seen in most schools.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Variations in teaching and learning between the stages are primarily the result of the differences in the expectations that teachers have of pupils. These expectations are highest at the Foundation Stage and the end of Key Stage 2, but lowest at Key Stage 1. Within the good or better teaching, the teachers' planning is very thorough and the pupils' learning is developed through imaginative and stimulating learning activities. The skills of literacy and numeracy are taught satisfactorily overall but, at Key Stage 1, there needs to be greater emphasis on basic skills in all lessons and, throughout the school, planned opportunities for writing need to be extended in all subjects. The needs of different groups of pupils are met with varying success. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Work is generally carefully planned and the good support of classroom assistants and volunteers enables these pupils to progress at least satisfactorily. Provision for more able pupils is more variable, but often provides insufficient challenge for these pupils. This is due, primarily, to teachers not carrying out sufficiently detailed assessments of what pupils are learning in lessons, with the result that the more able pupils are often asked to work on tasks that are too easy for them.

Pupils generally work hard and the oldest and youngest pupils show particularly good levels of concentration and interest.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall. A broad and balanced range of learning opportunities is provided at the Foundation Stage and Key Stages 1 and 2. A good range of extra-curricular activities is provided for pupils in Key Stage 2.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision is satisfactory overall and the Code of Practice is implemented fully. There is early identification, good liaison with parents, and regular review of pupils' progress towards the targets that are set for them.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	There are no pupils from ethnic minority groups.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory overall, with strong emphasis on and good provision for pupils' moral development that establishes good understanding of moral values.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school is a very caring community, supporting and guiding pupils' personal development, and attending to all aspects of pupils' welfare. Satisfactory procedures have been developed for assessing pupils' attainment and progress, but these do not yet influence sufficiently either curriculum planning or pupils' academic performance

The school has good links with parents, providing them with good information about their children's progress.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good overall. The acting headteacher provides good leadership and receives good support from staff. The roles of subject co-ordinators need to be developed further.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body fulfils its responsibilities satisfactorily. Governors provide constructive guidance and have a clear vision of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school's satisfactory self-evaluation procedures and analysis of relevant data enable it to identify priorities, set itself targets, and pursue effective courses of action for future improvement.
The strategic use of resources	There is satisfactory use of physical and human resources and efficient management of finances.

Staffing levels are adequate, but numbers of applicants for vacant posts are small. Learning resources and the adequacy of accommodation are satisfactory overall, but the level of resources, or their condition, is unsatisfactory in several areas. The school applies the principles of best value satisfactorily, challenging itself and securing value for money in the services and resources that it acquires.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school. • Children's good progress. • Children's good behaviour. • The good standard of teaching. • The information provided about their children's progress. • How the school deals with their questions or problems. • The school has high expectations of its pupils. • The way the school works closely with parents. • The high quality of leadership and management. • How children are helped to become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The homework set for pupils. • The range of activities outside lessons.

Inspectors endorse all the positive views of parents and, in the inspection team's judgement, the parental concerns are unfounded. The homework set for pupils is suitable both in type and amount, and is consistent with the school's policy.

The programme of extra-curricular activities is good for a school of this size, providing a good variety of additional learning opportunities and reflecting a strong commitment by the teachers and parents who organise them.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The attainment of children in the reception class is formally assessed shortly after they start school and these assessments show a trend in recent years of gradually rising attainment. For many years, children's attainment has been low, particularly in their personal, social and emotional development and communication, language and literacy skills. Standards overall were consistently well below what would be expected of four-year-olds. More recently, children's attainment on entry has improved, although the attainment of children, currently in the reception class, was still slightly below expectations of four-year-olds when they started school. However, good teaching in the reception class is enabling children to make good progress in all areas of learning. Most of the children are likely to reach the expected standards in communication, language and literacy, and mathematical development, by the time they start in Year 1 and they are on track to exceed the Early Learning Goals⁵ in the other areas of learning. The children's good progress and raised standards are improvements compared with the last inspection.
2. The low attainment of children on entry to the school has in the past been a contributory factor to the school's poor results in the National Curriculum tests and assessments at the end of Key Stage 1, but weaknesses in the teaching of pupils Years 1 and 2 have also kept standards low. The results in 2001 were well below the national averages in reading, writing, and mathematics, as they have been since 1998. Indeed, in writing and mathematics the results in 2001 were very low. The percentage of pupils who reached the higher-than-expected Level 3 was well below average in reading and mathematics, and below average in writing. Compared with similar schools, results in all tests were very low. This picture was repeated in the teachers' assessments of pupils' attainment in science. The pupils taking these tests in 2001 had a change of teacher during the year and were badly affected by weaknesses in the overall quality of teaching. Now that these pupils are in Year 3, they are making good progress as a result of good teaching and are starting to catch up.
3. In the National Curriculum tests taken by pupils at the end of Key Stage 2, the results, overall, from 1997 to 2001, show annual fluctuations, but the extent of the rising trend that has occurred nationally has not been matched by the school. In 2001, compared with all schools, the results were well below average in English and science and below average in mathematics. Compared with similar schools, all results were well below average. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 in the tests was very low in English, below average in mathematics and well below average in science. Compared again with similar schools, the percentage of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 was very low in English and well below average in mathematics and science. A factor that has contributed to keeping the school's results moderately low, in some of these comparisons, is the percentage of pupils with special educational needs. This is around 28 per cent overall, but higher in some year groups. The learning difficulties of many of these pupils are addressed successfully by the school, enabling the pupils to achieve close to their potential, which, by the end of Key Stage 2, is usually Level 3 in the tests. However, teachers have had generally low expectations of what pupils can achieve and this has also had a negative impact, particularly on achievement by the more able pupils, who could be reasonably expected to gain the higher Level 5. The school has responded to this by placing the raising of teachers' expectations as a high priority in the school improvement plan, seeking, in the first instance, to improve the planning of learning activities for different groups of pupils in literacy and numeracy lessons. Inspection evidence of work in lessons confirms that this is improving, but could be refined still further.
4. The school uses all the information available about pupils' attainment in the past to establish targets for pupils at the ends of the key stages to achieve in the National Curriculum tests. These targets are percentages of pupils expected to achieve Level 2 at the end of Key Stage 1, and Level 4 at the end of Key Stage 2. All targets were exceeded slightly in 2001, with the exception of that for writing Key Stage 1, which was just below the target. When the performance of the pupils in Year 6 was

⁵ The Early Learning Goals set out what children should achieve by the time they reach the end of the reception year in primary school.

compared with what they had achieved when they were in Year 2, nearly all pupils made at least satisfactory progress. The commitment to raising standards is seen in the significantly increased targets for Year 6 in 2002, which are that 77 per cent of the year group should attain Level 4 in English and 74 per cent in mathematics.

5. The standards seen during the inspection show improvement when compared with the past results in the National Curriculum tests, and also when measured against the judgements of work seen in classes during the last inspection. Those judgements were that standards were well below national averages in English, mathematics and science at the ends of Key Stages 1 and 2. This inspection judges that pupils in Year 2 are attaining standards that are below average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Standards in Year 6 are below average in English and mathematics and average in science. The targets set for pupils currently in Year 6 are very challenging in relation to these pupils' past achievements, but are attainable as a result of the consistently good teaching.
6. The good quality of teaching, particularly at the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 2, is enabling pupils of all ages to maintain satisfactory and sometimes good levels of achievement in other subjects. Standards at the end of both key stages exceed expectations in physical education and are generally in line with the expectations at these ages in all other subjects. One other notable area of success is information and communication technology. The previous inspection judged standards to be below expectations throughout the school. Standards now match expectations at all ages. This good improvement is a result of the training that teachers have received, their better planning and teaching of the subject, the improved resources and the very good subject leadership.
7. In relation to their abilities, children at the Foundation Stage achieve well, while pupils in Key Stage 1 achieve satisfactorily, and those in Key Stage 2 achieve well. In identifying and providing for pupils of different abilities, teachers are not consistent in their planning of appropriate work for the most able. Consequently, some of these pupils are not challenged sufficiently by their work and they are required to complete work set for average-ability groups before progressing to tasks that extend them sufficiently. There is, consequently, some under-achievement by more able pupils throughout the school.
8. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in all areas of the curriculum. They receive appropriate support from classroom assistants who help to ensure that they progress towards the specific targets within their individual action plans.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. The good attitudes shown by pupils, which were seen at the previous inspection, are still readily apparent. In addition, pupils' behaviour and their relationships with others have improved and are now good. Most pupils are eager to come to school. They arrive in good time and are keen to learn and this all helps them to make progress with their learning. Parents are generally happy with the standards of behaviour. Other aspects of pupils' personal development are satisfactory.
10. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in lessons are good or better in two out of every three lessons and are seldom less than satisfactory. Good attitudes and enthusiasm are also very evident in the way pupils join in the various extra-curricular clubs arranged for them after school. Children in the Foundation Stage show the most consistently good behaviour and attitudes, in response to the high level of good teaching they experience. The response is rather less positive in Key Stage 1, though still good overall, and improves again in Key Stage 2. In the instances of good teaching, the pupils are keen to please, because of the way staff value their efforts and work hard to help them. They listen attentively to their teacher and are keen to answer questions. For instance in Year 3 pupils became really enthused at the idea of acting as history detectives, to find out about the lives of the Anglo-Saxons. They work well together and help each other when this is part of the lesson. On occasions, they show real pleasure and pride in their own and their friends' achievement, as when individual good efforts in a Year 2 physical education lesson were greeted with a round of spontaneous applause by other pupils. In the minority of lessons, where teaching is more mundane, attitudes and behaviour tend to be less good, though usually still satisfactory. In these lessons, a degree of fidgeting or even unnecessary chatter develops at times and pupils' progress in their work is less pronounced. A few individuals, mostly boys, find it particularly hard to always

act sensibly. For the most part, they behave themselves because they are managed sympathetically and effectively by their teachers, but, occasionally, their behaviour becomes distracting and results in interruptions to their own learning and that of others.

11. Around the school, pupils' behaviour and interactions are similarly good. Pupils live up to the expectations of staff and are usually pleasant and good mannered to adults and to each other. For instance, in the dining hall the mid-day supervisors manage pupils well, bringing about a calm and friendly atmosphere.
12. When the importance of considering others' feelings is discussed in assembly, or in 'circle time'⁶, pupils show a satisfactory degree of sensitivity. When stimulated by good, relevant activities, such as a role-play session seen in Year 6, they are very keen to pursue this topic. Infrequently, unkindness to others does arise during the school day, but staff are alert to any such cases. Pupils are confident that they can tell teachers of any problems, such as instances of bullying, and that these will be resolved. Rarely, incidents of really poor behaviour involving just one or two pupils arise, despite the good efforts of staff to bring about improvements, and these lead to the exclusion of those concerned. Older pupils are confident that standards of behaviour have improved in recent months.
13. When the occasion arises, pupils show a good sense of responsibility, but this is not seen often enough, because insufficient opportunities are created to develop it. Pupils willingly carry out small tasks, such as returning registers to the office. A small 'do-it-yourself' group of older pupils helps with practical tasks, such as repainting the play furniture used by the children in the Foundation Stage. Some older pupils, when asked, are able to volunteer perceptive ideas for improving the functioning of the school, for instance, by increasing the size of their library. However, their ability to show initiative in this, and other ways, is limited by the lack of scope to exercise it. The school is aware of this and has plans to set up class, school and library councils.
14. Attendance is satisfactory, though lower than the average for primary schools. Records show it has fallen since the previous inspection, when it was good. This fall is partly attributable to discrepancies in calculating the numbers present, with pupils who arrive just a few minutes late sometimes being counted as absent for the whole morning. Another factor is the way that a few pupils, generally from families where education has a low status, are frequently absent, despite good efforts made by the school. Unauthorised absence is similar to that seen in other schools.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

15. The overall quality of teaching is good. Teaching ranges from excellent to unsatisfactory. Of the 49 lessons observed, in ten per cent the quality of teaching was very good, or better, and this included an excellent lesson seen in Year 6. A further 51 per cent of teaching was good and 35 per cent satisfactory. Unsatisfactory teaching occurred in one lesson, where the learning activities failed to challenge pupils sufficiently. Teaching is satisfactory overall at Key Stage 1, and good at the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 2. This overall picture is a significant improvement when compared with the last inspection, although there have been several staff changes in that time. The improved monitoring of the quality of teaching by senior management has made a good impact.
16. The quality of education provided for children in the Foundation Stage is good, demonstrating an improvement since the time of the last inspection. The teaching in reception is good, with some very good features. It is imaginative and well planned. The good teaching and learning opportunities created in reception are likely to ensure that most children will reach the Early Learning Goals by the time they enter Year 1, and that many, more able children, will be working well beyond them. The teacher has a thorough knowledge of how to develop children's skills, using the 'stepping-stones'⁷ that lead to the achievement of the Early Learning Goals in the Foundation Stage.

⁶ 'Circle time' is an activity where pupils are able to discuss certain matters as a class, following strict rules about listening to others and taking turns to speak.

⁷ 'Stepping stones' are the carefully graduated steps within the Foundation Stage curriculum, which enable teachers to track children's progress in each area of learning.

17. The quality of learning is good overall, being highest in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 2, and indicating the effort that these pupils put into trying to attain the highest standards of which they are capable. In these classes, all pupils respond well to teachers and other adults and work conscientiously and co-operatively. Pupils maintain good levels of concentration and interest in their work at all times, including occasions when they are required to work independently. The pace at which they work, and the amount of work produced are good overall although these vary according to the expectations laid down by individual teachers. Generally, where the teacher's delivery is brisk and expectations are high, the pupils respond by working quicker and achieving more. These many good features of pupils' learning are consistently highest in the Year 6 class. Conversely, in Key Stage 1 pupils do not generally match the qualities of learning of pupils older and younger than them because teachers' expectations are not consistently high enough and the teaching of basic skills is not reinforced as a priority in every lesson. When these weaknesses are not evident, as in the good teaching and learning that occurred gymnastics lesson seen in Year 2, and a literacy lesson in Year 1, pupils' achievements matched the raised expectations that teachers promoted.
18. Throughout the school, the relationships between teachers and other adults with pupils are good. Teachers make satisfactory use of support staff to provide additional instruction and guidance for pupils, but they vary in the thoroughness of their briefing of these staff. Where written planning is provided in advance of the lesson, the support staff's guidance to pupils is generally good but it is less effective when they are told what to do just before starting work with their groups. Teachers do not involve support staff or volunteers sufficiently in assessment of pupils' learning and there is little recording of how well pupils have done or of any difficulties that they may have experienced. Nevertheless, these staff and volunteers have a positive impact on pupils' attitudes to learning and to the progress that they make in lessons.
19. Teachers are implementing the National Literacy Strategy effectively by generally providing a range of activities that are matched to the needs of groups of pupils of different abilities. Teachers are less successful at using lessons in subjects other than English to develop pupils' speaking, reading and writing skills. The National Numeracy Strategy is also implemented satisfactorily. Teachers are confident and most promote number work strongly, although there are some weaknesses in the mental calculation sessions where some teachers lack briskness and fail to encourage pupils to explain their working methods. Teachers have a good overall knowledge of information and communication technology and they use this successfully to plan appropriate learning opportunities to support pupils' learning in other subjects.
20. Teachers vary in the effectiveness of their management of pupils' behaviour. When this is at its best, notably in Years 3, 4, and 6, teachers make their expectations very clear and provide much positive comment whenever good behaviour occurs. This is also a consistent feature of teaching in the Foundation Stage, where the expectations, communicated so clearly by the teacher and classroom assistant, help children to understand exactly how they are expected to behave and treat others. On the occasions, where behaviour management lacks consistency or the firmness that may be required, lessons are less successful and teaching and learning are no more than satisfactory. Other weaknesses in teaching are comparatively rare, but there is generally insufficient ongoing assessment of pupils' learning during lessons. Teachers, do not therefore, have enough specific information that can be used to plan the next stage in learning for individuals or groups of pupils. As a consequence, the more able pupils have too few learning activities that really challenge them. Teachers evaluate their lessons but do so in very general terms. Throughout the school the pupils themselves are insufficiently involved in self-assessment of what, or how well, they are learning. Although pupils have specific targets to work towards in literacy and numeracy, these are rarely referred to by teachers during lessons or in their marking of pupils' work. Most teachers plan and discuss with the class what it is intended that they all should learn by the end of a lesson, but this is inconsistently refined to a level of communicating different learning targets for different groups or individuals.
21. Teachers are well aware of the needs of pupils with special educational needs and plan accordingly. Work is generally appropriate to their needs and, in many lessons, they receive support from classroom assistants. However, a more consistent approach to this support is needed as classroom assistants are rarely involved in the planning process and tend to work on a day-to-day basis.

22. Some parents have expressed concern about homework provision but inspectors do not share this concern. Provision is in line with the expectations set out in the homework policy. It is regular and relates well to what is being taught and learned in class lessons. In addition to literacy and numeracy tasks, older pupils have occasional work in most other subjects that ensures a good variety in what is being done at home.

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

23. The overall quality of the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils is satisfactory. The school's curriculum is sufficiently broad and balanced, and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. The provision for religious education meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus and there is a daily act of collective worship for all pupils, other than those withdrawn by their parents. There are policies for personal, social and health education, and sex education.
24. The curriculum for children in the reception class is broad and balanced and carefully matched to the Foundation Stage curriculum. The environment is welcoming, although resources are still limited. There is a good balance between teacher-directed and child-initiated activities and the high quality of the teaching ensures that the children make good progress.
25. At the time of the last inspection, the breadth of the curriculum at Key Stages 1 and 2 was satisfactory, but it was not sufficiently balanced, because insufficient time was allocated to the teaching of science. The school has carried out a review of curricular timings and all subjects now receive appropriate coverage. The acting headteacher, in her role as curriculum manager, has implemented a number of improvements since the last inspection. With the support of senior managers and governors, she has developed a plan for school improvement that includes a long-term overview of curriculum policy. The school has refined and developed its long-, medium- and short-term planning, and almost all schemes of work have been updated to meet the most recent statutory requirements. There is still, however, a need to update policies to include reference to educational inclusion, special educational needs and equal opportunities. Monitoring of planning and teaching has taken place in the core subject areas of English, mathematics and science and the school's current improvement plan places a priority on providing the co-ordinators of all other subjects with similar opportunities for the monitoring of teachers' planning and teaching. This is expected to develop the role and effectiveness of all subject co-ordinators. All co-ordinators currently provide at least satisfactory leadership, and there is good leadership in science, art, music and physical education, and very good leadership in information and communication technology.
26. At the time of the last inspection, the school's strategies for literacy and numeracy were not followed successfully at Key Stage 1, where skills for developing writing were insufficiently promoted. Teachers at both key stages now implement the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. While numeracy skills are developed effectively, the overall strategies for teaching literacy skills are unsatisfactory due to continuing weaknesses in the teaching of writing. The previous report also noted that the shortage of good quality, non-fiction books in the library adversely affected the opportunities for pupils to develop their research skills. Although some resources have been purchased and new expenditure on books is planned, the inadequacy of the junior library puts a severe limitation on opportunities for pupils to develop their research skills.
27. The school has recognised the importance of pupils' personal, social and health education by appointing a subject manager for this area of learning. Although only recently appointed, she has already developed a scheme of work that can be taught either as a discrete subject or as part of the normal curriculum. Most classes now include 'circle time' in their weekly curriculum plans and this provides an opportunity to deal with a whole range of issues such as bullying, growing and changing, and the importance of caring for both themselves and for others. These sessions are beginning to make a significant contribution to the development of the right sort of attitudes and relationships within school.
28. The school is developing procedures to provide a fully inclusive curriculum to ensure that pupils are given equal access to the statutory curriculum and all other activities provided. A number of

parents, and other members of the community, regularly support the school on a voluntary basis, through listening to pupils read and, whilst this is commendable, some thought needs to be given to developing a consistent approach to this support. At present, pupils are taken out of lessons, often when the teacher is engaged in important explanation and this denies pupils their full curriculum entitlement.

29. Overall, the school makes satisfactory provision for pupils who have special educational needs. Although classroom assistants provide appropriate support for these pupils, they are not sufficiently involved in the planning process. They tend to work on a day-to-day basis and more thought needs to be given to developing a consistent approach to this support. Individual education plans contain targets that are measurable, realistic and attainable and the subject co-ordinator ensures that the early identification of problems enables support for these pupils to be targeted appropriately. The school makes good use of the advice that it receives from the local authority support team.
30. Although pupils with special educational needs receive satisfactory support within the school, there is insufficient support for more able pupils who do not achieve sufficiently high standards of attainment. In many lessons, more able pupils receive insufficient challenge and work is not closely matched to their needs. One of the key issues from the previous report was to raise attainment in English, mathematics and science by ensuring that work is closely matched to all pupils, including higher-attaining pupils. This is still not being done consistently, and is having an adverse impact on standards of attainment overall.
31. There is a good range of successful extra-curricular activities to add to the breadth of pupils' experience and that are much appreciated by the pupils in Key Stage 2 who take part. As well as sports clubs and teams, there are good opportunities to learn the recorder, and to join in other creative and artistic activities.
32. Satisfactory use is made of links with the local community. Studies in the local area contribute to pupils' learning for instance in geography, while pupils' interest in art has been fostered by exploring a renowned gallery. Visits to the Minster church, for instance for religious education studies, also contribute. However, there have not recently been any residential visits to enlarge pupils' experience. Several members of the local community assist in lessons, and there are occasional visitors who contribute in specialist areas. There remains a need to find ways to use visits or visitors to extend pupils' understanding of ethnicity and cultures, other than their own.
33. Suitable links are in place with the playgroup that is accommodated on the school site. There is good liaison with the local secondary school to help pupils in Year 6 move on happily to the next stage of their education. This includes a curricular link whereby pupils complete English writing tasks, which they take with them into Year 7.

Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

34. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is now satisfactory overall, a slight loss in emphasis from the previous inspection. Good strengths are apparent in the example of the caring commitment of teachers and in the good attention to moral development.
35. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. Religious education and assemblies, together, contribute to understanding of Christian values and beliefs, and also touch on the beliefs and festivals of some other world religions. Assemblies include suitable introduction of stimulus for reflection. On occasions, there is skilful provision for pupils to deepen their grasp of values and ideas. For instance in a good religious education lesson, in Year 6, pupils were each helped to extend their own thinking about what God is like, and at the same time to respect others' suggestions. Room is found occasionally to value pupils' ideas and feelings in other subjects. For instance, the thoughts some had, about how the 'art attack' mural in the school hall made them feel, are prominently displayed.
36. The provision for pupils' moral development is good. School and class rules provide them with readily understood guidance as to the right way to behave. Across the range of school activities, pupils benefit from the way staff calmly, and consistently, reinforce expectations about behaviour.

Good attitudes are encouraged successfully through praise and awards, with the weekly 'golden time' successfully used to motivate pupils of all ages. The weekly assembly themes also contribute, for instance, when saying 'sorry' was considered. From time to time, there are reminders of the rights and needs of others, for instance, harvest gifts are collected each year for local elderly people. In addition, pupils are encouraged to develop a responsible attitude towards the natural world, as in a Year 4 science lesson when pupils heard of the effects on the environment of some peoples' wastefulness and reacted with total indignation.

37. Provision for pupils' social development is satisfactory. There is ample example and encouragement from staff for pupils to interact pleasantly with each other, both when they need to work together in lessons and also at lunchtime and in the playground. The acting headteacher plans to improve outdoor play facilities, so as to further enhance playtime activities. From the Foundation Stage upwards, pupils are given small duties that aid the smooth organisation of their classes and of the school as a whole. There is some provision for older pupils to take increasing responsibility, for instance a few pupils in Year 5 are librarians, and take their duties very seriously. Overall, though, there is too little provision for pupils to expand their contribution as they progress through the school. 'Circle time' has recently been developed as part of the personal, social and health education programme and is providing good, more formal, opportunities for pupils to learn about social interactions. There are good plans to build on this foundation and to establish a school council.
38. Provision for pupils' cultural development is also satisfactory. Pupils are helped to gain a good understanding of how the past influences their own culture, as when those in Year 5 found out about the lives of street children in Victorian times. They learn something of different musical and artistic traditions, and of life in other countries. This is helped by the way that the supply of suitable books has increased somewhat. Opportunities are also sometimes found, for instance during literacy lessons, to talk with pupils about the peoples of different ethnicity to be found in their own country. Older pupils were observed stating that, in important respects, those with skin of a different colour 'are the same as us'. However, other ways of building understanding of different races and cultures present in this country today still need to be explored further.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

39. The atmosphere in the reception class is very calm, happy and purposeful; no opportunity is missed to develop children's social skills. The teaching of personal and social skills to children in reception is good, with a consistent approach that enables them to understand the type of behaviour that is expected in school. Children settle quickly and happily to the activities on offer. There is a strong emphasis on the development of independence in learning and initiative. Children are encouraged to work together, help each other and share equipment good-naturedly.
40. In the other classes, the care for pupils is similarly good. Parents agree that pupils are happy at school. They are well cared for in a happy environment, as at the previous inspection, and receive satisfactory educational support. Assessment of their learning has improved and is now satisfactory but the use made of assessment is still in the early stages of development and remains unsatisfactory.
41. Personal guidance is good, because teachers know pupils well, and there is a shared concern for the welfare and happiness of each individual. This good atmosphere of care, with positive encouragement for good work and good behaviour, helps pupils to enjoy their lessons and to make progress. A well-understood system of awards adds effectively to pupils' motivation and a good system of sanctions is called on when this becomes necessary. Teachers are well aware of the few pupils who need extra help to manage their behaviour and generally use relevant strategies, to good effect, to support them. However, there are a few instances when a teacher's efforts are insufficient to prevent deteriorating behaviour from slowing the flow of a lesson somewhat. Staff persevere with strategies to improve behaviour so that the education of the pupils involved can continue. Exclusion is viewed as a last resort. The school sometimes achieves the intended improvements, but the incidence of particular behavioural difficulties means that, as at the previous inspection, permanent exclusion is used more often than in many other primary schools.

42. Staff are alert to any concerns about pupils' well being. The good management of pupils' behaviour ensures proper attention is paid to any bullying that occasionally arises. However, there is no specific anti-bullying policy to underpin the response of staff, or to ensure parents always have ready access to information about the school's approach. There is a good system for ensuring that staff, including supply staff, are alert, not only to particular medical needs, but also to other personal circumstances that might affect pupils' learning and progress. Good efforts are made to build links with parents when there are problems with a pupil's attendance or behaviour, and to overcome instances of emerging disaffection. Suitable routines are in place to guide the response to any child protection issues that arise and staff have a satisfactory awareness of such matters. Local area procedures are followed by the designated person. However, there is no school specific policy or guidance about such matters to which staff may refer.
43. Procedures to monitor and record attendance are satisfactory overall. Good steps are taken to improve any unsatisfactory attendance or punctuality and appropriate use is made of support from the education welfare officer. However, during the past year, there have been inconsistencies in the compiling of attendance statistics, with lateness of only a few minutes at times being counted as absence. There is occasional use of pencil to mark registers. The school has recently recognised these errors and improved its procedures.
44. Other aspects of pupils' welfare receive relevant attention. Good arrangements are in place to look after any who become sick or injured. There is satisfactory attention to health and safety routines so as to ensure the safe conduct of lessons and other activities. The acting headteacher gives satisfactory attention to risk assessment procedures and arrangements are in hand for governors to make an increased contribution to this area.
45. Overall, the school makes satisfactory provision for pupils who have special educational needs. Although classroom assistants provide appropriate support for these pupils, they are not sufficiently involved in the planning process. They tend to work on a day-to-day basis and more thought needs to be given to developing a consistent approach to this support. Pupils' individual education plans contain targets that are measurable, realistic and attainable, and the subject co-ordinator ensures that the early identification of problems allows support to be targeted appropriately. The school makes good use of the advice that it receives from the local authority support team.

Assessment

46. The previous report highlighted the need for the school to improve arrangements for assessing pupils' attainment and this has been done. Since the last inspection and particularly in the last twelve months, the school has responded to this challenge in a very positive manner. As part of the school improvement plan, a range of new assessment procedures have been introduced which include a programme for all subject co-ordinators to monitor lessons and to review teachers' planning. All pupils are now aware of their individual targets for literacy and numeracy and these are referred to during lessons and are often prominently displayed within the classroom. Teachers meet regularly to review and to analyse pupils' work, and they are now making use of tracking sheets to monitor the long-term progress of each pupil. Since the last inspection, the school has made increasing use of data analysis to monitor the progress of both individual and groups of pupils. The information gained from an analysis of baseline information and pupils' performance in a range of statutory and optional tests has enabled the school to become increasingly aware of the potential of individual pupils and to begin to plan work accordingly. Assessment folders for each pupil, containing examples of their work in English, mathematics and science, give a guide to their progress, and assessment information, including detailed analysis of National Curriculum test results, is now reported to governors on a regular basis to help them to monitor the school's effectiveness and rate of improvement.
47. During the last twelve months, the assessment co-ordinator has worked hard to raise the profile of assessment within the school. She has implemented a number of improvements in an effort to raise standards of attainment within the school and this represents good progress from the time of the previous inspection. However, most of these developments have been introduced recently and there has been insufficient time for them to have a major impact on current standards of attainment. The school improvement plan includes provision for all co-ordinators to develop

assessment procedures within their subject areas and this needs to be done. All staff need to become much more aware of the ability and potential of their pupils in relation to national standards, to identify areas of weakness within the school and to plan collectively for improvement. Although the assessment and monitoring of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory and the quality of record keeping is improving, staff are insufficiently aware of the potential of their more able pupils.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

48. The close partnership with parents, noted at the time of the previous inspection, has been maintained. Parents continue to value the work of the school. They appreciate the friendly welcome that they receive from the acting headteacher and other staff. They are helped to feel very confident about approaching the school with any questions or problems.
49. The school has formed strong links with the local playgroup, and parents welcome the contacts and visits made to home and school before their child starts school. The school has established good links with parents of children in the reception class. Children take books home to look at with their family. Where parents are able to find the time to help their children at home, this is having a very good effect on children's reading and enjoyment of books.
50. The sense of partnership is fostered by the good quality of information that is supplied to parents. In addition to well laid out newsletters about events and concerns, parents receive summaries of what their children will be learning in the coming term. Another useful feature is a helpful sheet of advice about how they can aid their children's learning through games and activities at home. The governors' annual report to parents and the prospectus are, on balance, less successful. They are both informative, to an extent, but their contents need updating and extending. Parents are appreciative of the quality of the annual reports about their children's progress, because they give a good amount of information about what each one has learnt, and about targets for future learning. There is room to further improve these reports by including an indication of how the pupil is doing in comparison with national expectations in English, mathematics and science. Formal meetings with staff to discuss pupils' progress are offered regularly and the school is successful in attracting parents of around four out of every five children to attend these. Good efforts are made to inform and involve parents if their children are identified as having special educational needs. Parents of children with special educational needs seem happy with the level of support that they receive from the school. A number of parents regularly assist these pupils on a voluntary basis and one parent was so impressed with her child's progress that she kept him at the school, even though the family had moved away from the local area.
51. There are concerns about a small minority of families who take little interest in the work of the school, because they attach little importance to education, often because of unfavourable impressions and attitudes retained from their own school days. In the past, a parenting course was organised to help increase the level of support from parents, but, recently, a shortage of suitable accommodation has prevented any such initiative.
52. There is successful parents' association that makes a good contribution by raising funds to purchase extra resources, which they decide on in consultation with teachers. In addition, a few parents make a considerable contribution by helping to run extra-curricular sporting activities. Some parents help their child's progress by regularly listening to them reading at home, or helping with other homework, but there are a minority who seldom give such support.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

53. The uncertainties surrounding the headteacher's absence through illness for nearly twelve months have created ongoing problems for the school in its attempts to address the serious weaknesses found at the last inspection. Since March 2001, the school has benefited, and continues to benefit, from the acting headteacher's good leadership of the school and the good support she is now receiving from the new senior management team. The acting headteacher's good management skills and her determination to move the school forward have greatly strengthened staff unity and morale and are instrumental in improving the standards being achieved by pupils. Commitment to

raising standards is evident in the focus on the quality of teaching that the acting headteacher ensures through her good monitoring of classroom practice. The clarity of her expectations of teachers, and her reinforcement of the necessity for the school's aims and values to permeate all aspects of school life, provide clear guidelines for all staff new to the school. This has been instrumental in helping teachers to achieve the good quality of teaching that was observed during the inspection. Her leadership has also been the driving force behind the school's successful eradication of the serious weaknesses found at the last inspection. However, this is an achievement that has ultimately been made possible by the collective determination and hard work of all teaching and non-teaching staff.

54. School improvement planning identifies clear priorities for the school's development. This planning places particular emphasis on developing the role of subject co-ordinators, which was a weakness at the time of the last inspection that has, until now, been hampered in its progress by the turnover of teaching staff. The current staff are now starting to carry out their roles and responsibilities with increasing effectiveness and the planned release of teachers from classroom duties is an improvement in allowing opportunities for co-ordinators to monitor and evaluate standards and provision in their subjects. It is important that the strategies for classroom observation and scrutiny of pupils' work, which have been initiated by the acting headteacher and the senior management team, are used as a common approach across subjects. This will enable co-ordinators to acquire the necessary skills of subject leadership and management. The very good example of co-ordination of information and communication technology is good practice for all to follow. The co-ordinator for special educational needs gives satisfactory leadership. She ensures that pupils with learning difficulties are identified at an early stage and that support is targeted appropriately. She monitors and supports the development of pupils' individual education plans, and works with the local education authority's support team.

Monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance

55. The school has satisfactory systems for monitoring and evaluating its own performance. This has come about as a result of the successful introduction of a range of procedures for monitoring and evaluating the curriculum, the quality of teaching and the standards of pupils' work. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is monitored effectively, resulting in refinements of teachers' skills that, in turn, have had a good impact on standards of pupils' work. Much progress has been made in raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve and this work, although needing further emphasis in relation to the achievements of more able pupils across the whole curriculum, is contributing to rising standards. Standards of pupils' work are also monitored effectively through the acting headteacher's thorough analysis of National Curriculum test papers each year. More staff now need to be involved in this process. The arrangements for performance management that have recently been adopted are setting clear targets for teachers to work towards within their own professional development. Overall, monitoring of teaching and learning have improved significantly since the last inspection and the systems for the involvement of all staff, now in place are a very good foundation for further improvement.

The Governing Body

56. The governing body now makes a satisfactory contribution to shaping the direction of the school. Their input is fostered by the way that the acting headteacher enables a suitable flow of information and promotes governors' involvement. For instance during summer 2001 governors were able to join staff on a planning day to consider the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Their understanding of the school's work is now also being developed through visits to the school by the 'governor of the month'. Governors have a satisfactory involvement in performance management and staffing appointments. Their finance committee is regularly involved in monitoring the use of funding. Previously governors were criticised for failing to evaluate the effectiveness of spending. Though the approach is informal, governors now have a satisfactory awareness of the results of spending decisions. For instance, there is understanding of how the new administration computer enables effective improvements in day-to-day financial management, and of the advantages gained by maintaining continuity in the placement of the school meals contract. Advised by the acting headteacher, governors are beginning to recognise the need for improved forward planning. For instance, they are to look at projections of pupil numbers so as to be able to estimate the funds that

will be available for improvements over the next two or three years. Largely because of recent changes in members of the governing body, they do not all share the same understanding of the educational priorities that need to be supported. However, the understanding of how the school's performance compares with that of others, and of the challenges to be tackled, is now developed to an overall satisfactory extent amongst both staff and governors.

57. Satisfactory attention is also given to other principles of best value. Governors and the acting headteacher now take satisfactory steps to consider the views of staff. They also consult, from time to time, with parents, about ideas for future developments. Occasional consultations with pupils are organised, for instance, full account was taken of the views of pupils in Key Stage 2 about their preferences for activities in 'golden time', but there are no regular routines to canvass their ideas for changes and improvements. Staff look for best buys when ordering consumables and governors follow proper routines to consider competitive quotations for major items.
58. The good day-to-day financial management ensures that up-to-date information about allocation and availability of funds is readily available. Due care is taken to ensure that grants, such as the standards fund, are spent for their intended purpose and in support of the school's identified priorities for improvement. The few action points in the most recent audit report have all been addressed satisfactorily. During the current financial year, the governing body's formal approval of the annual budget was delayed until rather late in the summer term, because of the time taken to resolve uncertainties over the final allocation of standards fund.
59. The governing body does not fulfil its statutory duties with regard to the required contents of the prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents. Neither of these gives the national statistics, relating to the end of key stage tests and assessments, with which to compare the school's results. The prospectus fails to mention parents' right to withdraw their children from collective worship and religious education. The report lacks the required information about the targets set for the results of statutory tests in future years, and about each governor's term of office, school security, and the school's good willingness and efforts to cater for disabled pupils. The account of provision for children with special educational needs does not include an evaluation of its effectiveness.
60. The school's use of information and communication technology is unsatisfactory overall. Its good use for financial administration is not matched in other areas. For instance, the potential for using spreadsheets to analyse assessment data about pupils' achievements, so as to identify strengths to be built on, and areas of common weakness, for which pupils need extra help to overcome, has not been exploited. The development of other uses, such as establishing an e-mail facility, and Internet access for administration purposes, has been hindered by delays caused by service providers.
61. Staffing remains satisfactory. A good number of teachers are employed, enabling single-age classes to be continued at present, despite a falling number on roll. There are suitable routines for the induction of staff new to the school and very good support, in liaison with the local education authority, for newly qualified teachers. The number of classroom assistants is slightly below the average currently seen in other primary schools. There are suitable plans to give these staff further training, to enable them to give the best possible support to teachers.
62. There has been satisfactory improvement in the resources available to the school, to rectify the previous deficiencies. They are now adequate in quantity and quality in most areas. The use made of them is, in nearly every case, at least satisfactory, and the use of equipment is good in science and in information and communication technology. However, there are still not enough computers. Similarly, a few items of large outdoor play equipment have been purchased for the children in the Foundation Stage, but these are not yet sufficient. Role-play in the reception class is severely restricted by the poor equipment available. The teacher does her best to improvise, but the facilities overall are poor and in urgent need of improvement. More resources are also still needed for music and physical education. Good attention has been given to improving the classroom accommodation so that it is now satisfactory. Alterations have improved the poor lay out, and good management of pupils means that any remaining possible distractions from other classes are not a problem. Library provision is unsatisfactory. The numbers of books in the two libraries, although

improved, are still unsatisfactory. This is at least, in part, because funds earmarked for further purchases are still to be spent. Those books that are in place are not yet used enough by pupils. A contributory factor is that the restricted size of the junior library is not calculated to promote its use in lessons. Outdoor accommodation is good with separate tarmac areas, of an adequate size though lacking in stimulus for play activities, for Key Stages 1 and 2, and also an extensive grassed area. Opportunities for experimentation out of doors for children in reception are restricted by the poor facilities available for outdoor play. The school has improved the facilities since the previous report by creating a secure outdoor area, but it is exceedingly small and the facilities are woefully inadequate. The acting headteacher recognises this problem and is exploring ways of creating a more space.

63. The funding now allocated to the school is higher than that given to most other primary schools. At the previous inspection it provided unsatisfactory value for money. This situation has improved. Taking account of all aspects of the school's work, including the good achievement of children in the Foundation Stage and pupils in Key Stage 2, the good behaviour and good attitudes to work that are generated among all pupils, the shared commitment to improvement, and good relationships that characterise the school community, it now gives satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

64. In order to improve the standards of work and the quality of education, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- Raise standards in English, mathematics and science by:
 - Reviewing the provision of the teaching of reading, research skills, spelling and writing and ensuring that learning opportunities in these aspects of English are matched to pupils' needs. (*Paragraphs 2, 3, 19, 26, 81 and 87*)
 - Developing consistency across the school in the teaching of mental calculation and providing more opportunities for pupils to solve mathematical problems. (*Paragraphs 2, 3, 19, 90, 91 and 93*)
 - Maximising the opportunities for investigative work in science by identifying, in the subject's long-term planning, the place of investigations, and what pupils should learn from them. (*Paragraphs 2, 3, 98 and 99*)
- Raise the levels of achievement of the more able pupils, by planning learning activities that are matched to their needs across the curriculum. (*Paragraphs 7, 20, 30, 42, 94 and 100*)
- Improve the overall quality of teaching at Key Stage 1, by placing more emphasis on ensuring pupils are learning basic skills, and by raising the general level of expectation of what pupils can achieve. (*Paragraphs 17 and 94*)
- Make better use of the information gained from assessment, both that carried out during lessons, and the summative assessment at the end of units of work, in order to plan the next stages in pupils' learning. (*Paragraphs 18, 20, 40 and 47*)

Other issues which should be considered by the school for inclusion in the action plan:

- ensure that the school's prospectus and governors' annual report to parents comply with statutory requirements, (*paragraph 59*);
- produce appropriate documentation to establish school policies relating to child protection and anti-bullying, (*paragraph 42*);
- when finance permits, improve the resources for children in the Foundation Stage, and for the school libraries, (*paragraphs 26, 62, 72, 73, 76 and 85*).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	47
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	22

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	4	25	18	1	0	0
Percentage	2	8	51	37	2	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than 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)		166
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		28

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		47

English as an additional language

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	16
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	10

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.3
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3
National comparative data	0.4

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
	2001	14	10	24

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys*	-	-	-
	Girls*	-	-	-
	Total	17	13	17
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	71 (63)	54 (75)	71 (79)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys*	-	-	-
	Girls*	-	-	-
	Total	15	17	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	63 (63)	71 (67)	75 (54)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (89)

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

*The number of boys and girls taking the tests has been omitted, as there were 10 or fewer in one of the groups.

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
	2001	17	11	28

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	9	14
	Girls	9	10	11
	Total	18	19	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	64 (76)	68 (59)	89 (83)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	7	10
	Girls	9	9	9
	Total	18	16	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	64 (59)	57 (62)	68 (83)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	168
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	2	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
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.75
Average class size	23.7

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	91

Financial information

Financial year	2000/01
	£
Total income	386,158
Total expenditure	388,044
Expenditure per pupil	2,144
Balance brought forward from previous year	32,237
Balance carried forward to next year	30,351

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	6
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
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	166
Number of questionnaires returned	54
Percentage of questionnaires returned	33

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	70	26	2	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	65	30	4	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	20	70	0	2	7
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	31	50	15	2	2
The teaching is good.	52	48	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	46	46	4	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	72	28	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	72	28	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	39	56	6	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	50	50	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	50	48	0	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	37	35	9	4	15

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

65. The quality of education provided for children in the Foundation Stage is good, demonstrating an improvement on the situation at the time of the previous inspection. The curriculum is broad and balanced and planned to cover the six areas of learning. The environment is welcoming, although resources are still limited. There are a variety of planned activities ready for children when they arrive at the beginning of each session. Children settle quickly and happily to the activities on offer. The school has formed strong links with local playgroup, and parents welcome the contacts and visits made to home and school before their child starts school.
66. Children enter the reception class at the beginning of the year in which they are five. Standardised assessment indicates that many children enter the reception class with levels of attainment that are just below those expected for children of this age, particularly in mathematics. During their time in the reception class, the children make good progress in all areas of learning and most are likely to reach the expected standards in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development by the time they start in Year 1. Many of the children are expected to exceed the Early Learning Goals in most areas of learning.
67. The curriculum for children in the reception class is carefully matched to the Foundation Stage curriculum. There is a good balance between teacher-directed and child-initiated activities and the high quality of the teaching ensures that the children make good progress. Teaching is good with some very good features.
68. The atmosphere is very calm, happy and purposeful; no opportunity is missed to develop children's social skills. Clearly identified areas within the classroom allow children to choose, for themselves, where they want to work, and this is, very successfully, encouraging children to be independent learners. The classroom is bright and attractive, although there is still a shortage of resources, especially those for role-play, and to provide a comfortable and attractive book area where children may enjoy books, quietly, in their own time.

Personal, social and emotional development

69. Children's personal, social and emotional development is a very strong feature of all activities in the reception class. Teachers are patient and understanding. They explain instructions as clearly as possible so that children know exactly what is expected of them and, as a result, there is a calm working atmosphere where the children feel happy and valued. All adults praise children for their efforts and successes so that they are proud of their achievements and gain in self-confidence and self-awareness. Children are encouraged to work together, help each other and share equipment good-naturedly. Much of this good behaviour results from firm management and from interesting, and enjoyable, activities that allow children to make good progress towards targets for their learning.
70. The teaching of children's personal and social skills in reception is good, with a consistent approach that enables them to understand the behaviour that is expected in school. There is a strong emphasis on the development of independence in learning and initiative. For, example, children choose, for themselves, the order in which they will tackle the tasks they are given, and they mark off on their 'caterpillar' when they have completed the activity. Children settle down quickly at the beginning of lessons and they concentrate well. Children behave sensibly during discussions, show an interest in all that is happening and can be trusted to get on with their work independently. Most children learn quickly to become independent, for instance, by looking after their own clothes when they change for physical education lessons, and by putting on their own coats for outdoor play. In reception, children make good progress in personal development, and all are likely to attain the Early Learning Goal in this area of learning by the time they enter Year 1.

Communication, language and literacy

71. The good teaching and learning opportunities, created in reception, are likely to ensure that most children will reach the Early Learning Goal for communication, language and literacy by the time they enter Year 1, and that the more able children will be working well beyond it. The teacher has a thorough knowledge of how to develop early communication, language and literacy skills using the 'stepping-stones' that lead to the Early Learning Goals for children in the Foundation Stage. The teacher promotes the development of language in everything children do. Children listen attentively to stories and enjoy the pictures, using these to follow the plot, and most join in well with discussion. Stories are chosen well to introduce children to patterns of repetitive language that they incorporate successfully in their play. Good opportunities are made for children to learning simple songs and rhymes.
72. Children take books home to look at with their family. Where parents are able to find the time to help their children at home, this is having a very good effect on their reading and enjoyment of books. Children turn the pages carefully and treat books with respect. A structured scheme for learning is contributing to children's good progress in learning letter sounds. Most children recognise the initial sound of their own name and the most able children know the sounds and names of most letters. Most children can recognise a few words and letters in isolation and they 'tell the story' well, using the pictures and the repetition found in the structure of the story to help them. The more able children are confident early readers and are already reading at a higher level than that expected for children entering Year 1. A few less able children are unable to distinguish between text and picture, although all show an interest and an enjoyment of books. The selection of books available to children in reception is appropriate for the age group, but resources are limited and there is no attractive book area to encourage their interest and enjoyment of books. When given the opportunity, children make good progress in handling books. They enjoying stories and are beginning to recognise that print carries meaning.
73. Handwriting skills are carefully taught and most children hold pencils correctly and form letters appropriately when practising or copy writing. Many children write sentences, unaided, using their developing knowledge of letter sounds to good effect. A few more able children are beginning to use capital letters and full stops in their writing. Less able children are beginning to make marks and to use very simple 'pretend' writing. Children are expected to write their own names, for example on their artwork, and they are, thus, able to practise their skills in a meaningful situation. The poor resources for role-play activities, however, restricts both the social development and the language development of the children. It has not been easy, therefore, for the teacher to create the opportunities for early writing development that she would wish and which were recommended in the previous report.

Mathematical development

74. The teaching of mathematics in the reception class is good. Many children entering reception are below expectations for their age but they make good progress in reception and most are likely to reach the Early Learning Goal for mathematics by the end of the year. Lessons are very effectively planned to help them acquire this understanding. During whole-class lessons, questions are directed well to individual children at their own ability level. The least able children have very little concept of number, whilst the most able count forwards and backwards to 10, and use this to calculate how many more are needed to make 10, and what will be left if one is given away. Songs and rhymes are used very effectively to ensure full understanding, and the children thoroughly enjoy counting on their fingers as they sing '*One, two, three, four, five*'. Carefully planned activities and daily opportunities to count and use mathematical language help children make good progress in understanding number. The teacher makes learning mathematics fun and children thoroughly enjoy lining themselves up in size order, drawing around one another, making long and short walks in the playground, ordering different lengths of string, and making chain links to compare. They discuss what they are doing knowledgeably and use the language of mathematics, appropriately, in their work.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

75. Children in reception learn to explore the world around them in an exciting range of activities. Teaching is imaginative and well planned, and the majority of the children are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of their time in reception. They have designed vehicles to transport teddy to school and they use their own designs well to create their vehicle out of boxes and tubes, applying glue and sellotape with expertise. In the outdoor play area, children experiment with the very small range of wheeled vehicles available to find the most suitable transport for a teddy bear and rapidly realise it cannot pedal a bike but needs their help. The children have investigated the contrasting environment of day and night and are aware of different sources of light, such as lamp, candle, torch, and a lighthouse; they have made a three-dimensional model of the latter and created pictures on the computer. Through regular opportunities to use the computer, children know how to use a computer mouse to move objects round the screen or to draw pictures of their own. They are very competent for their age even though very few have access to a computer at home.

Physical development

76. Teaching in this area of learning is very good with a clear demonstration of technique in order to ensure children improve their performance. By the end of the reception year, children generally achieve the skills expected for their age in the manipulation of bricks and other construction materials, and in control of pencils and scissors. Plenty of opportunities are provided for children to practise and develop these skills. Children are encouraged to manipulate scissors with increasing confidence as they cut around their own drawing to make collage teddy bears, although they are not expected to cut the fur fabric. The development of skills, such as climbing and balancing, ball control, throwing and catching, and the use of space is good. The current state of the accommodation means, however, that although the children are making good progress and are in line to achieve the Early Learning Goals, very few are likely to be above it by the end of the reception year. Opportunities for experimentation out of doors are restricted by the poor facilities available for outdoor play. The school has improved the facilities, since the previous report, by creating a secure outdoor area, but it is exceedingly small and the facilities are still inadequate.

Creative development

77. Teaching in the creative area of learning is satisfactory. Children make sound progress, overall, in creative development, although their progress in learning in some areas is better than it is in others. Good organisation of the available space results in an environment that is bright and attractive. Displays are colourful, include good examples of children's work, and available for children to interact with. Staff provide many activities where children can explore colour, texture and shape and ensure that children experience a wide range of techniques, such as collage work, working with play-dough, and printing.
78. Creative artwork in reception sometimes tends to be over directed by the adults and, as a result, children do not develop free expression as effectively as they might. They mix paint to make lighter and darker shades and all know that if you add white it lightens the colour. When left to their own devices, however, work is much more experimental and imaginative and the children thoroughly enjoy their painting. In collage work, seen during inspection, they drew their own teddy bears and cut them out expertly. Experimentation was restricted again, however, by the fact that only one type of fabric was available, and had already been cut.
79. Children's enjoyment of music is apparent in their singing. They sing sweetly and tunefully with good attention to rhythm and pitch. They are beginning to read a simple musical score in the form of a picture chart, and to match contrasting musical mood and tempo to the movement of different toys. They are taught to hold percussion instruments properly, and are taught the words and actions of traditional songs and rhymes. They enjoy singing songs and joining in action rhymes although not all know the words. Children sing enthusiastically and with clear enjoyment. They particularly enjoy action songs and in this specific area of learning they are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goal by the end of reception.

80. Role-play is severely restricted by the poor equipment available. The teacher does her best to improvise, for example, through the use of toys such as a dolls' house, and the creation of a 'picnic area' in order that the children may play imaginatively, but the facilities, overall, are poor and in urgent need of improvement.

ENGLISH

81. Standards at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 are showing some improvement, when compared with those at the time of the last inspection and those achieved in the National Curriculum tests in 2001. Writing remains a weakness, with standards throughout the school being well below average, but, in English as a whole, pupils at Key Stage 2 are starting to achieve standards closer to what could reasonably be expected in relation to their past attainment. The overall standards are now below average at the end of both key stages as a result of improved teaching, compared with the last inspection, and a more confident implementation of the National Literacy Strategy.
82. Standards of speaking and listening skills have improved since the previous inspection and are now below expectations at the end of Key Stage 1, and in line with expectations by the end of Key Stage 2. Whilst some pupils in Key Stage 1 speak in clear sentences, and listen attentively to teachers' instructions, many have a very limited vocabulary, which prevents them from articulating their ideas effectively. These pupils often find it difficult to listen to what is being said, respond to questions with one-word answers, and they also have difficulty in finding the vocabulary that they need to describe or explain. Teachers in Key Stage 1 provide opportunities for pupils to practise and develop their speaking and listening skills, such as when pupils in Year 1 were asked to describe the characteristics of puppets based on fairy tales. The majority of lessons in most subjects conclude with an opportunity for pupils to share their work with their classmates. However, there are a lack of planned opportunities for drama and imaginative role-play that would enable pupils to enrich their language skills through communicating with partners, groups, and the whole class. Given their low starting point, pupils make satisfactory progress in speaking and listening in Key Stage 1.
83. Pupils' skills in speaking and listening are now in line with expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. All teachers encourage pupils to share their work with others, both during and at the end of lessons. Pupils in Year 6, for instance, responded positively to the challenge of reading their poetry reviews of 'Jabberwocky' by Lewis Carroll, speaking with confidence and enthusiasm. Similar confidence was seen in a Year 4 lesson, when pupils were given the opportunity to discuss and share their nonsense words. In Key Stage 2, teachers have recognised the importance of drama to the development of speaking and listening skills, and there is good evidence to indicate that such activities take place in a range of subjects across the curriculum. In one history lesson, for example, pupils in Year 6 dramatised the story of Cortes with insight and perception, as part of their topic on 'Aztecs', and role play plays a key role in the development of pupils' personal and social skills. In some respects, however, pupils' oral abilities are not developed as effectively as they could be. There is very little evidence in teachers' planning files of regular opportunities to extend speaking skills through, for example, the medium of debate and formal presentations, such as class assemblies and school plays. However, most pupils do make good progress in speaking and listening and reach the end of Key Stage 2 with the range of language skills, and vocabulary, that is to be expected for their age.
84. Standards in reading are below the national average at the end Key Stage 1 and results have remained fairly consistent over the past three years. In the most recent National Curriculum tests, only one in five pupils was successful in reaching a high level of reading skill, and nearly one third of pupils failed to reach the expected level of achievement in reading. However, as pupils' attainment on entry is below the national average, this represents satisfactory progress in reading throughout Key Stage 1. The small number of more able pupils demonstrate an enjoyment of reading and respond well to humour or interesting content. They read fluently, employ a range of reading strategies and talk expressively about the aspects of the story that they particularly like. One pupil in Year 2, for example, spoke of his preference for adventure stories, whilst another thought that all books were interesting. Pupils of average ability are more hesitant in reading, but are able to use a range of reading strategies, such as their knowledge of letter sounds, informed guesses, picture cues, and whole-word recognition. Almost all of these pupils know the meaning of 'title', 'author' and

'illustrator', and welcome the opportunity to take books home from the infant library. Pupils of below-average ability in reading, have a very basic sight vocabulary and can recognise a few words, but find difficulty in using their knowledge of phonics to tackle unfamiliar words. Parents are encouraged through the home-reading record diaries to participate in helping their children to make progress, but this does not always happen on a regular basis. Teachers' reading records are too descriptive and often do not contain reference to strategies that would contribute to the raising of reading standards. In the previous report, it was noted that pupils had limited knowledge on how to find out information by using books from the library, and this remains a weakness. Although the infant library is attractive, and appropriate in terms of size, it is under-resourced and many of the reading books are dated and in urgent need of replacement. A number of parents, and other members of the community, regularly support the school on a voluntary basis by listening to pupils read and, whilst this is commendable, some thought should be given to developing a consistent approach to this support. The timing of withdrawal of pupils from lessons needs to be considered for, at present, pupils are sometimes taken out of lessons when the teacher is engaged in important explanation that is crucial to pupils' learning.

85. At the end of Key Stage 2, there is, currently, great variation in pupils' reading abilities and, although standards are judged to be below average, this is an improvement since the previous inspection, when standards of reading were judged to be well below average, overall, by the end of the key stage. Pupils make satisfactory progress in reading throughout Key Stage 2. The more able pupils read very well indeed. They convey meaning when reading aloud, pronounce unfamiliar words with ease, and work out their meaning from the context. A significant proportion of pupils, however, still struggle with reading, and even the average readers show some insecurity in their ability to apply their knowledge of sound patterns when faced with unfamiliar text. During the last inspection, it was noted that there was a shortage of good quality, non-fiction books in the library and this weakness still remains. The junior library is not a vibrant centre for learning and, in Year 6, pupils were unable to describe how it is organised. It is cramped, inadequate and the poor range and quality of both fiction and non-fiction books is having an adverse impact upon standards in reading. The school does plan to increase spending on library books in the near future and this needs to be done as a matter of urgency. However, the junior library is too small for the size of the school and this problem also needs to be addressed. Although overall standards of reading are below average at the end of Key Stage 2, there is a significant minority of pupils whose reading ability is considerably below that expected of pupils in Year 6. These pupils are now receiving additional support, but more should have been done, at an earlier stage, to support their obvious needs.
86. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils achieve well below the standard expected in writing and very few pupils produce good-quality writing of any significant length. Pupils begin with limited writing skills and make very slow progress throughout the Key Stage 1. The written work produced by pupils in Year 1 is very basic and, although many show a genuine desire to write, they do not have a sufficiently wide vocabulary to enable them to produce imaginative writing and they struggle to spell words correctly. In one lesson, for example, not one pupil was able to write the word 'person' correctly, and very few were able to even make an informed guess as to how it might be spelt. Even the more able pupils have a very limited grasp of spelling conventions and few are able to use basic punctuation, such as capital letters and full stops. The stimulation that is provided by the newly appointed teacher during the literacy hour is, however, beginning to motivate these pupils to succeed, and those in Year 1 were very excited to receive their own wordbooks for writing. Similar motivation is evident in Year 2, where the written output of many pupils is very poor due to their inadequate language skills. In one writing lesson, the class teacher had prepared banks of useful words to assist pupils to write about 'Katie Morag', but, still, the writing produced by pupils of average attainment consisted of one or two basic sentences only. More able pupils are rarely stretched and there is little evidence that they produce extended pieces of writing which are consistent with their ability. The pupils currently in Year 2 will need continued good support if they are to achieve the expected level of attainment by the end of Key Stage 1. The low standard of written work impacts adversely on all areas of the curriculum and there is a need to ensure that more opportunity is provided for pupils to develop their writing skills within the context of other subjects.
87. By the end of Key Stage 2, the standard of pupils' writing remains well below the level expected for their age. Some more able pupils can produce good-quality writing, which is just above the level

expected for eleven-year-olds. They write in well-formulated sentences, using a good range of vocabulary, and reasonably accurate punctuation and spelling. Some tasks capture their imagination well, such as the chapters written in the style of J K Rowling by pupils in Year 6 and the many examples of poetry writing, including those based on limericks by pupils in Year 4. During the literacy hour, pupils are provided with opportunities to write and this can be very successful. For example, a shared-writing exercise, carried out by pupils in Year 6, based on 'Jabberwocky', produced writing of a high standard. Pupils were aware of the importance of planning before writing and the opportunity for them to work in pairs during the drafting and re-drafting stage helped them to improve their work. In Year 5, pupils were successful in developing moral endings to traditional stories and these opportunities help to raise standards of writing. However, the English curriculum does not yet contain regular opportunities for pupils to develop their skills of extended, sustained writing. Pupils do have opportunities to write for a range of different purposes and these are often linked to other areas of the curriculum. Pupils in Year 3, for example, had written information about 'The Blue Whale', as part of their topic work, and in Year 4, pupils had written stories about a range of historical period, including Ancient Egypt and the Second World War. However, many pupils throughout Key Stage 2 struggle to produce fluent writing, as they do not have the range of vocabulary necessary to enable them to cope with the demands of the National Curriculum. Significant numbers of pupils have particular problems in spelling words correctly, have very little concept of grammar, and their written work is well below the standard expected. There is an urgent need to improve the standard of writing for many pupils. Literacy lessons are generally well resourced and pupils are introduced to a good range of texts. However, the junior library's size restricts pupils' ability to develop their research or more advanced reading and writing skills.

88. Teachers are aware of the need to raise levels of attainment in literacy, and most have a good understanding of the National Literacy Strategy, which is beginning to have a positive impact upon standards. Generally, teachers take account of the needs of pupils with special educational needs and ensure that work is sufficiently matched to the needs of these pupils who are supported effectively by classroom assistants. However, all teachers need to develop a greater awareness of the needs and capabilities of their more able pupils when planning lessons, as these pupils are currently under achieving. During the inspection, no unsatisfactory teaching was seen and teaching was judged to be satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2, where one Year 4 lesson was judged to be very good. This is an improvement in teaching, in both key stages, from that seen at the time of the last inspection. Good elements of teaching in the school occur when teachers plan effectively, explain the lesson objectives, and give clear instructions, as a result of which pupils make good progress. In the very good lesson observed, the teacher in Year 4 had very high expectations of the learning to be achieved, challenged the pupils effectively, and they responded accordingly. Most teachers do not make sufficient use of information and communication technology to support literacy, however, there are some good examples of word-processing in displays around the school. Pupils in Year 6, for example, contrasted various page-layouts in terms of font, colour, and size, whilst in Year 5, pupils had incorporated graphics to produce posters. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 had used the computer to word-process their appreciation of a display that had been created during their visual arts day. However, more use could be made of computers in the development of individual research projects. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve and their use of marking vary considerably. In some classes, teachers demand high standards, ensuring that pupils set out their work carefully and use their time productively. However, not all written work is marked effectively and teachers are inconsistent in their use of marking as an opportunity to indicate areas for improvement. In some classes, the presentation of work is of a poor standard, and marking is brief and unhelpful. The behaviour of pupils in lessons is generally of a good standard. Relationships between groups of pupils, and pupils and adults, are good and pupils generally respond well in lessons. At the time of the last inspection, it was noted that pupils do not concentrate well, independently, when the tasks that they have been given are either too easy or too difficult. Whilst this remains an issue, it is not the problem that it was previously.
89. The English co-ordinator gives satisfactory leadership to the subject. Since the last inspection, and particularly during the last twelve months, he has implemented a series of improvements that are having a positive effect on the quality of teaching in English. One of the most important developments is the introduction of a system of assessment and data analysis, which is beginning to enable teachers to cater for the individual needs of all pupils. An analysis of pupils' results in National Curriculum tests is shared with all staff and governors to enable support to be targeted

appropriately and teachers to become more aware of the appropriateness of standards of work. The co-ordinator has also implemented target-setting procedures and all pupils now have individual targets for all aspects of their work in English. These targets are reviewed by pupils, parents, and teachers, during the course of the year. The co-ordinator has improved the resources for the literacy hour and monitored the teaching of English throughout the school. He has developed a list of future priorities for raising attainment in English, as part of the shared commitment to raise the profile and effectiveness of subject co-ordination within the school, and realises that the improvement of standards in English generally and writing standards in particular are an immediate priority.

MATHEMATICS

90. Although standards are below average throughout the school, and are still not high enough, there has been a satisfactory improvement, since the previous inspection, with the results of National Curriculum tests taken by pupils in Year 6 showing clear improvement. The improvements are the result of some good teaching in Key Stage 2, based on systems that now track the standards that pupils achieve and target areas of mathematics that have caused problems for pupils in previous years. In this way, the school aims to address the underachievement found previously in the school. The National Numeracy Strategy is now well embedded in the school's planning procedures. Teachers state clearly what it is that they want pupils to learn each day and share these learning intentions at the beginning of lessons. This helps pupils to focus on the work and they are able to assess, for themselves, whether they have achieved the learning objectives at the end of the lesson.
91. Teachers start their lessons with appropriate activities that test pupils' mental skills, but the pupils' poor recall of number bonds, and multiplication facts, is affecting their learning, and many will need a great deal of practice to reach the standards of which they are capable. This was a major weakness at the previous inspection and is still the case. Teachers rarely expect pupils to explain their methods of working, in detail, and this is preventing many pupils from developing the quickest and most effective strategies for mental mathematics. The best examples of good mental mathematics practice are in lessons in Years 3 and 6, where sessions are brisk and quick-fire, and expectations are high. In Year 6, pupils played a 'Bank Overdraft' dice game to help them to understand the concept of positive and negative numbers as they added and subtracted mentally, according to the numbers displayed on the dice. The game was very competitive and highly motivating. Pupils in Year 3 played 'Mathematical Gym' in the form of a beanbag game where they had to add ten to the number given by the teacher when the beanbag was thrown to them. The number varied considerably according to the ability level of the pupils concerned and, although many found this difficult initially, the brisk pace and the enjoyable delivery challenged them all to succeed. Because they were motivated to achieve, the pupils made very good strides in their learning in both lessons.
92. Standards for pupils currently in Year 1 are in line with national expectations. This is a clear improvement since the previous inspection. The scrutiny of work from last term shows that all aspects of mathematics are suitably covered. There is an adequate amount of work over the term and progress is satisfactory. Pupils in Year 2, however, are working at the same level as those in Year 1 and this is unsatisfactory. More able pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 are beginning to count on in twos and threes and to look for pattern in number. They are beginning to develop some understanding of tens and units and most are secure with numbers to twenty. Pupils are, however, given insufficient opportunities to apply what they know to practical situations, and much of the work covered is identical to that for pupils in Year 1, which does nothing to raise standards. In the lesson observed in Year 2, for example, pupils were nearly all able to understand the task presented to them before they began. More able pupils, in particular, consequently gained no new learning from the lesson. Pupils with special educational needs have specific mathematical targets written into their individual educational plans, such as 'to count reliably to ten' and they receive good support in class from teaching assistants in Key Stage 1. Within lessons, they make sound progress because of this support.
93. Pupils in Year 3 are now developing the understanding of tens and units they should have learned last year. Many are not yet able, however, to work confidently with numbers beyond one hundred.

Pupils make good progress generally, throughout Key Stage 2, because of the well-focused teaching and high expectations of teachers. Most pupils in Year 6 are currently working at an appropriate level for their age, but there are very few who are reaching a higher standard. Teacher-devised tests are regularly given throughout the year, and tests, at the end of each year, are analysed to determine the levels that pupils have reached. Targets for improvement are set for groups of pupils and shared with them so that they know what to aim for. This is helping to improve pupils' learning and attainment. The scrutiny of work from last term for the pupils currently in Year 6 reveals that they regularly apply their mathematical knowledge to practical situations, such as working with bank statements and calculating problems involving probability. The school has correctly identified that more needs to be done to develop pupils' skills in solving everyday problems. Most pupils work confidently with addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division, involving numbers to one thousand, and know the properties of a range of three-dimensional shapes. Pupils know how to collect data, use a tally chart, and how to construct a pictogram or block graph to show results. The use of information and communication technology, in the use of graphs and data handling, forms a very strong part of pupils' learning in mathematics.

94. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, throughout the school, showing an improvement on the standard found at the previous inspection. They are very good in Year 3, but unsatisfactory in Year 2, where there is no challenge for more able pupils and all are working at the Year 1 level. In the better lessons, a very brisk pace is maintained, particularly in the mental mathematics session. Teachers generally explain the work carefully but, too often, they do not engage pupils in explanations to test whether they understand the tasks. Good teachers are quick to assess where there is a lack of understanding. In Year 6, for example, the terminology used in the lesson, on negative numbers, has not been fully understood, so she abandons the task work until another lesson and changes to further brisk mental practice. Most teachers have good skills of questioning but not all are able to conduct brisk lessons. This is particularly evident in Years 5 where, because of a lack of any support, the teacher sometimes has to stop lessons and spend time ensuring that pupils listen and behave correctly. Some teachers, too, are not yet planning work that entirely meets the needs of pupils. In a Year 2 lesson, for example, the expectations for both the volume and the level of work were too low, and pupils only completed one task when many were capable of far more.
95. Work in other lessons supports the development of pupils' numeracy skills, for example, in science and in geography. In a Year 4 geography lesson, for example, pupils researched the percentage of household waste sent for recycling. Opportunities to develop pupils' numeracy skills in other subjects are not always identified in teachers' planning. The benefits of using information and communication technology to support mathematics, however, are fully exploited. There are many examples of graphs produced on the computer and the school has developed this skill well.
96. Support staff are deployed in classes in Key Stage 1 to give effective help to pupils, especially those with special educational needs, enabling them to make sound progress. In Year 5, however, the lack of any additional support for pupils with clearly identified special educational needs makes teaching difficult and, despite the best efforts of the teacher, this is affecting the learning of some pupils in the class. Teachers are generally aware of the needs of their pupils and usually cater for all of them in a satisfactory way. There is sometimes, however, a lack of challenge for more able pupils and this is affecting standards overall. The subject is soundly led and there are sufficient resources to deliver the subject effectively. The school's observations of lessons have, so far, been carried out on an ad hoc basis, but there are plans to organise this more systematically in the near future.

SCIENCE

97. Standards in science were judged, by the last inspection, to be well below average throughout the school, and this was consistent with the results being achieved in National Curriculum tests. Improvement is now evident, with standards being below average at the end of Key Stage 1, and average at the end of Key Stage 2. These improvements have resulted from work in Years 1 and 2, building successfully on the learning achieved during the Foundation Stage. Older pupils are benefiting from consistently good teaching and the subject co-ordinator's good impact on the recent development of the subject.

98. The work of pupils Year 2 is currently of below average standard overall. They are acquiring a satisfactory range of knowledge and understanding of the topics that they study, but their written work has weaknesses. This reflects the overall standards in pupils' literacy skills. Too many pupils fail to use correct terminology in tasks such as the labelling of diagrams, or the recording of what happens in investigations. Written work has many spelling errors. Scrutiny of the work covered in Year 2, shows that pupils experience a broad curriculum, but practical investigations tend to be completed by the class as a whole, and pupils have insufficient opportunities to carry out investigations, and record what happens, for themselves. Pupils, generally, are not clear about how a test can be made fair. The scrutiny also shows that pupils, of all abilities, complete the same work, which is unsatisfactory, as it prevents the more able pupils from reaching the levels of which they are capable.
99. The standard achieved by pupils in Year 6 show that consistently good progress is being achieved, as pupils move through Key Stage 2. Standards are now average by the end of the key stage, a good improvement that is due to good teaching. The particular strength in pupils' attainment is the breadth and depth of knowledge that they have across a wide range of topics. By the end of the key stage, pupils achieve satisfactory standards in investigative work, but there is variation, between other classes at Key Stage 2, in the frequency of opportunities provided for pupils to design and carry out experiments. The recording of practical work often lacks structure and pupils are not taught to write logically so that a prediction is stated, procedures are described, results recorded, and conclusions written down. The use of correct terminology by pupils in Year 6 was evident in a lesson in which they recorded the results of an investigation, in line graphs, and then answered questions about the recorded data. Pupils demonstrated good understanding of the reasons for the type of graph being more appropriate than other forms of graph or chart. The data was interpreted correctly, and pupils used scientific vocabulary confidently in their explanations and answers to questions.
100. Teaching and learning are good overall at Key Stage 2 and satisfactory in the one lesson seen at Key Stage 1. All teachers plan lessons thoroughly. There is satisfactory modification of tasks for pupils with special educational needs and, due to the good support that learning assistants provide, these pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 2, teachers have good subject knowledge, lessons are planned thoroughly and resources used well. These factors make a good impact on the learning achieved by the majority of pupils. More able pupils are not generally challenged sufficiently, as a result of a lack of ongoing assessment of pupils' learning in lessons. Assessment is confined to the end of topics. During lessons, additional questioning or extension activities for the more able pupils tend to arise incidentally, rather than having been planned beforehand. Marking is generally good, providing constructive feedback that identifies areas for further improvement, as well as confirming successful aspects of the work.
101. In the best teaching in the school, there are high expectations of pupils in terms of standards of behaviour, co-operation and the learning to be achieved. All pupils are appropriately challenged by these expectations. In a good lesson seen in Year 3, pupils investigated the changes that take place when mixing solid materials with water. The combination of teacher input, well-structured learning activities, and expectation of mature response, resulted in good gains in knowledge by all pupils. Good questioning by the teacher led to pupils understanding that a fair test is dependent on no more than one thing changing at a time. This was frequently consolidated while pupils worked, as was the use of the correct vocabulary of soluble and insoluble. Pupils ended the lesson with very secure knowledge of what the teacher had intended them to learn and, due to the concluding questions that she left them with, already thinking about what they would be learning in the next lesson.
102. Throughout the school, teachers use resources well, ensuring they are well prepared and have good potential to help pupils' learning. Charts and tables, together with recording of results in graphs, are making a satisfactory contribution to the development of pupils' numeracy skills and information and communication technology is used well as a means of creating these records of results.

103. The co-ordinator manages the subject well. In the year since taking on the responsibility, she has used the limited opportunities to monitor standards and teaching constructively, and established clear priorities for the subject's development. In response to teachers' concerns about the assessment system, a period of individual teachers experimenting with their own forms of assessment has occurred. This is now to be reviewed in order that the most successful practices can be adopted by all, and a manageable whole-school system developed. Additional opportunities for the co-ordinator to monitor the subject are being created as part of the current school improvement plan. This monitoring needs to include regular scrutiny of planning to ensure that the needs of more able pupils are being consistently met.
104. There has been good progress in many aspects of the subject since the last inspection. The time allocation has been increased and standards, teaching, and subject management, all show good improvement.

ART AND DESIGN

105. Pupils' attainment at the end of both Key Stages 1 and 2 is in line with expectations. This appears to represent a decline in standards since the last inspection, when attainment was judged to be good at the end of both key stages. However, it can be explained by the fact that, since the last inspection, the school has had to place a high priority on raising standards of achievement in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science.
106. The art co-ordinator has developed a comprehensive scheme of work, in which all classes concentrate on one visual element each term, and this helps to ensure that all pupils gain regular experiences of a range of resources and stimuli. During the current term, the school's focus for skill development is tone and tonal qualities. In Year 1, for example, pupils were set the task of using pastels and paints to produce black and white designs, whilst, in Year 3, pupils were using a variety of different resources to reproduce their own black and white computer-generated photographs. Pupils are consistently encouraged to examine the detail in pictures and photographs in order to develop their observational skills. In Year 3, pupils discussed, for example, how different photographs made them feel and, in Year 4, pupils confidently compared a range of black and white photographs in terms of tone and contrast. During this term, all classrooms hold displays based on a range of black and white resources.
107. Pupils generally have a positive attitude towards their learning. When given the opportunity, they are able to evaluate their own progress and develop confidence in using a variety of techniques. Pupils respond well to challenge, relationships are generally good and pupils work co-operatively in sharing resources. They respect each other's work and show interest when it is displayed or celebrated as an achievement, such during a celebration of the success of one individual pupil during the recent visual art day. The scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that, throughout the school, they use a variety of media including paint, charcoal, fabric and natural and man-made materials. All pupils have sketchbooks that they take through the school with them, and these help them to monitor their own progress. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make at least satisfactory progress throughout both key stages.
108. Although there was no opportunity to observe lessons in Key Stage 1, teaching was judged to be good in both lessons seen in Key Stage 2. Both teachers had good subject knowledge and provided pupils with a range of resources appropriate to their task. In one lesson seen in Year 3, the teacher introduced a lamp to show how an object blocks out light to create shadow and demonstrated how the use of light enhanced a wood sculpture from Africa. In Year 4, the teacher used questioning very skilfully to challenge his pupils to observe a range of black and white photographs and to select the one that contained the greatest tonal variation. Although teaching is good, and the art scheme is comprehensive, pupils in Year 6 were unable to discuss the work and lives of any great artists, and they would benefit from the opportunity to carry out independent research into this area of the art curriculum.
109. The art co-ordinator gives good leadership to the subject. He is enthusiastic, provides good support for his colleagues and has ensured that resources are adequate for the subject. The regular art club that he has established has made a significant contribution to the learning

environment within the school. During the week of the inspection, pupils in the art club were painting an alphabet on the wall of the reception outdoor play area, and they had already completed various murals and mosaic designs, both inside and outside the school. The co-ordinator is aware of the need to develop the use of assessment procedures, within the art curriculum, and to develop the subject further, through increasing the number of appropriate visits and visitors. There are opportunities for art to contribute to other areas of the curriculum. The Year 3 lesson, for example, contained strong links to both science and geography and, in Year 2, pupils had used the computer to generate designs for making 'Joseph's multi-coloured coat'. However, there is a need to ensure that art makes a greater contribution to literacy skills throughout the school, particularly in terms of opportunities for pupils to carry out independent research.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

110. The standards of attainment are in line with expectations at the end of both Key Stages 1 and 2, and these standards are similar to those found at the time of the previous inspection. The previous report noted that pupils continued to develop their designing skills well in Key Stage 1, but the skills and quality of designs in Key Stage 2 were variable with insufficient increase in the complexity and quality of the design process and evaluation. Although standards are satisfactory, design and technology projects at the end of Key Stage 2 could be more complex still and, to some extent, the weakness highlighted in the previous report still remains. The school has attempted to improve the provision for design and technology, by introducing a new scheme of work, but it is, currently, too early to judge what impact this will have upon standards.
111. In Key Stage 1, pupils have the opportunity to plan, make and evaluate their work. In Year 1, for example, pupils were taken on a visit to a local playground in order that they could observe a range of playground equipment. They then planned and made their own playground rides, by using a range of construction kits, before finally evaluating their models and suggesting improvements. In Year 2, pupils used the computer to design their own 'Joseph's coat' and then sewed, glued, or stapled their designs from a range of materials. They had been given the opportunity to develop their literacy skills by completing written evaluations on their models. Throughout Key Stage 1, their design work is often linked to other subjects, such as information and communication technology, literacy, and art, and, by the end of Key Stage 1, pupils understand the basic principles of the design process and apply them appropriately.
112. In Key Stage 2, pupils build on previous knowledge and have a range of opportunities to develop their designing skills. In Year 3, pupils had been given the task of designing and making a monster with at least one moving part and most had skilfully adapted straws and syringes to allow movement as air was blown through them. This lesson was closely linked to their work on the pneumatic system in science. Many examples of design and technology are linked to topic work and have strong cross-curricular links. In Year 4, for example, pupils had made shadoofs and ancient designs on plaster as part of their Egyptian topic, whilst in Year 6, pupils had used card to make moving calendars and temples for their work on the Aztecs. In Year 5, pupils had studied a range of musical instruments before designing and making their own instrument. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress throughout both key stages.
113. As at the time of the last inspection, teaching is judged to be satisfactory in both key stages. As no lessons were observed in Key Stage 1 during the week of the inspection and only one lesson observed in Key Stage 2, the judgement on teaching is based largely on a study of teachers' planning and scrutiny of pupils' work. In the one lesson that was observed, teaching and learning were judged to be good. The lesson was well planned and pupils worked purposefully on an appropriate task. They had designed their own pencil case, using felt, and were in the process of sewing the pieces together. The teacher made good use of classroom assistants to support individual pupils and helped to ensure that pupils thought carefully about how their work could be improved. For example, the pupils decided that a good pencil case must be strong to hold the weight of the pencils and needs to fasten to stop the pencils falling out. Although teachers plan effectively throughout both key stages, they need to give some thought to ensuring that projects become increasingly more complex as pupils move through the school. The application of pupils' literacy skills could be improved in the written work, and more emphasis could be placed on pupils'

numeracy skills in the designing and making stages. Information and communication technology has yet to have a major impact on design and technology and is generally limited to the word-processing of labels.

114. The school has appointed a new co-ordinator who has only been in post for one term. However, she is very enthusiastic about her new role and has already been responsible for implementing a new and comprehensive scheme of work, which should help to raise standards of attainment by ensuring that all areas of designing and making are consistently and continuously developed. She has drawn up her own action plan, which highlights the need to develop a system of assessment to ensure that pupils make good progress within the subject. She is also aware of the need to improve resources and to increase the use of information and communication technology within the subject.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

115. The school has maintained the satisfactory standards in both subjects found at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2, in both geography and history, is typical of that expected for their age. An improved programme for teaching enables teachers to take pupils through interesting and challenging work. This allows all pupils to make steady progress so that by the time they leave school, most pupils, including those with special educational needs, have a sound understanding of the periods and people they study in history. They know about periods of history, from ancient times to the recent past, including the Ancient Egyptians, the Aztecs, Tudor England, and the history of the 20th Century.
116. By the end of Year 6, pupils have developed a sound appreciation of some of the environmental issues in geography. Their studies of contrasting locations, and different climate regions of the world, give pupils a sound understanding of the effects of climate and topography on lifestyle and help them to appreciate, not only differences between cultures and countries, but also the things they have in common. Teachers make good use of the local area in geography. A similar approach is used throughout the school, starting in Year 1 where pupils accurately locate places on a plan of the school and of the neighbourhood. In Year 5, pupils visit the Water Treatment Plant at Trowbridge and those in Year 6 use the nearby River Wyle to gain first-hand experience in their learning about rivers. This continuity means that as they get older pupils are able to build on their knowledge and understanding in a consistent way.
117. Pupils' numeracy skills are developed well in both history and geography, for example, when pupils use timelines in history, throughout the school, and when in Year 4, they use graphs and tally charts in geography to record information about household waste.
118. By the time they are seven, pupils begin to understand about the passage of time, as they use artefacts and toys of children in Victorian times as an introduction to the past. Teachers choose topics that are interesting to pupils and ensure that there is a wide range of resources available to them. A good example of the way teachers create interest is the way pupils in Year 1, as part of their topic on 'Toys Old and New', enjoyed playing with toys from another era and comparing them with their own. They learn about chronology, through a simple use of time-lines, and note the year of their own birth alongside that of famous people and events from the past.
119. Teaching in both subjects is satisfactory at Key Stage 1, and good at Key Stage 2, where some excellent teaching was seen. Teachers are beginning to encourage pupils' research skills effectively, and many use drama to very good effect to encourage pupils to empathise with the past and, so, develop a deeper understanding of issues of the day. Teachers use their good knowledge of history to enable pupils to focus clearly on the events or circumstances that brought about changes. A further strength of teaching is the way in which teachers develop pupils' skills of empathy. In Year 6, for example, pupils were absorbed in the role-play and discussion, concerning the story of Cortez and Montezuma, and interpreted the historical evidence from the different viewpoints very effectively indeed.
120. A good example of cross-curricular links was seen in a lesson in Year 4, where pupils had made excellent shadoofs in a design and technology lesson, based on research about both ancient, and

current use along the river Nile. Pupils in Year 2 applied artistic skills well to their work on the Fire of London as they drew line drawings of Samuel Pepys with great attention to his wig. In geography, pupils made models of the island of “*Struay*” using sand, play people, houses, and paper for water. As a result of this stimulus to their imagination, pupils identify well the geographical features of the island.

121. Teachers enrich pupils’ understanding of the reality of the past, through visits to museums and historic buildings, whenever possible. Pupils in Year 3 investigate a Roman Site in Bath, where they dress up as Romans and make mosaics, and, in Year 5, pupils develop their understanding of everyday life in Victorian times. They experience a wonderful day at school when they all dress in Victorian clothes, write on slates, and behave impeccably lest they ‘get the cane’, or have to wear the ‘dunce’s cap’.
122. The management of both subjects is good. The co-ordinator has management responsibilities for both geography and history, which is helpful in developing links between the two subjects. There are developing links with other subjects, particularly numeracy, but links with literacy need further development. Assessment systems are appropriate; half-termly assessments are made of units of work, as they are taught, with records kept in pupils’ files. This is appropriate, to ensure that pupils’ progress is consistent and their learning is built on. Resources for learning are sound in both subjects and the school has an appropriate range of artefacts, which is very effectively enhanced by loans from the local museum service. A start has been made on monitoring teachers’ planning, although the co-ordinator for the subjects has only been appointed very recently. There are currently few resources by which pupils may make use of information and communication technology in history or geography, although the co-ordinator is aware of the need to improve this as soon as possible, and pupils are beginning to use the Internet for research in Key Stage 2.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

123. Good progress has been achieved since the last inspection. Standards have risen and pupils are now meeting expectations at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. Although there is a strong focus on pupils acquiring essential skills, there are good opportunities for them to use these skills to develop their learning in other subjects. The curriculum is planned very carefully so that pupils can catch up on learning experiences that they have missed in the past. Resources, although still limited, have been improved to the extent that finance permits. These good developments in the subject are managed by a co-ordinator who is providing very good leadership.
124. The curriculum is currently planned so that all year groups are studying the same aspects of the subject at the same time. This enables teachers to develop their own subject knowledge systematically, and to gain good understanding of how each stage in pupils’ learning builds on what has been learned before. Pupils themselves can also understand this, by comparing what they are doing with what they see displayed in other classes. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, are maintaining a good rate of progress that, due to teachers’ good organisation, overcomes the restrictions arising from the limited resources. Working on this term’s topic of handling information, pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 are successfully entering data and presenting it in the form of bar charts while those at the end of Key Stage 2 produce line graphs that plot data from a science investigation. Such activities are making a good contribution to the development of pupils’ numeracy skills. Basic computing skills are well established. In Year 2, pupils explain keyboard functions clearly and save and print work confidently. They understand the different features of word-processing and graphics programs. Using the latter develops pupils’ skills in controlling the mouse with care, and they produce artwork of good quality, such as the designs of ‘Joseph’s multi-coloured coat’ and pictures of the Great Fire of London. By Year 4, pupils retrieve saved work, such as word-processed stories, and they successfully highlight parts of the text, changing font or letter size in order to improve the presentation of their work. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils use their accumulated knowledge to produce high quality presentations of work, such as the writing they have done in the style of J K Rowling. While pupils’ skills in the subject are very secure and match the expected standards at the end of Key Stage 2, there are some weaknesses in pupils’ broader understanding of the place and use of information and communication technology in everyday life. Thus, although they successfully enter into the

computer long, often complicated series of instructions to programme the movement of a screen turtle, many pupils are unable to name everyday examples of programming, such as traffic lights.

125. Teaching and learning are good at both key stages. Although hampered by having only one computer in each classroom, teachers use time efficiently by introducing and demonstrating the week's tasks to the whole class. These short sessions indicate that teachers have good subject knowledge, which is being extended still further by ongoing training led by the subject co-ordinator. Teachers have a good understanding of the levels at which their pupils should be working, and they communicate their expectations and the learning intentions of activities very clearly. When working at the task individually, or in pairs, during the week, pupils respond well to the independence and work conscientiously. While priority is given to ensuring that computers are used for completion of the planned tasks, within the information and communication technology topic, teachers provide good opportunities for computers to be used to develop pupils' learning in other subjects. In Year 6, for instance, pupils successfully edited information, downloaded from accessed Internet sites, to support their geography studies on rivers. In Year 1, pupils were observed working confidently with a mathematics program to create and answer addition sums. They displayed the good levels of co-operation that are a feature of the positive attitudes shown by all pupils, and which have a very positive effect on the rate and quality of pupils' learning.
126. The co-ordinator provides very good leadership of the subject. Her own good subject expertise is being used well in her role of training provider for colleagues and she has benefited from good support by the local education authority. The developing portfolio of samples of pupils' work is a good resource for monitoring standards, as well as providing a benchmarking reference to help other teachers understand the levels that their pupils should be working towards, and to assist their assessment of pupils' learning. Resources have recently been extended by the acquisition of digital cameras, and a scanner, but the number of computers in the school remains low.

MUSIC

127. The school has maintained the satisfactory standards found at the time of the previous inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress throughout the school and achieve standards that are similar to those of seven and eleven-year-olds in other schools. Good use of teacher expertise, and the new scheme of work, enables pupils of all abilities to achieve equally well. The small choir, known as the 'Performance Club', produces music of good quality and has a positive impact on standards of musically talented pupils. Pupils achieve very well in these sessions.
128. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are beginning to copy a simple rhythm, clapping, and chanting and singing rhythmically. They know the names of most percussion instruments and play them correctly. Pupils learn from an early age to listen appreciatively to music from a variety of cultures and traditions in assemblies, and within the classroom, and to enjoy the range of instruments available within the school. Pupils in Key Stage 2 build on their earlier experiences to very good effect as they echo the teacher to develop phrasing and timbre to an appropriate level of competence. They demonstrate sound breath control and mastery of pitch, as they create dramatic effect and atmosphere in their singing very effectively.
129. Pupils throughout the school make good progress in musical composition and performance, and in singing, developing their listening skills, and mastering an increasingly complex musical vocabulary, both in the recognition of instruments and in their use of musical expressions and terminology.
130. Pupils in Key Stage 1 perform simple musical rhythms effectively as they respond to a partner using opposite dynamics or tempo. In Key Stage 2, pupils develop this skill to compare and contrast notes from a major and a minor scale as they use this to interpret mood and feelings. Pupils make good progress in skills of performance, building on their early experiences to play a range of tuned and untuned percussion with good attention to rhythm and dynamics.
131. The recently appointed co-ordinator has worked hard to raise the profile of the subject. The new scheme of work has given teachers confidence in their teaching and most display considerable expertise. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school. There is a brisk pace to nearly all

lessons coupled with an invigorating enthusiasm, ensuring the use of methods and strategies that are suited well to the needs of the pupils and which demand high standards. Lessons are well planned and teachers generally have high expectations of the pupils' abilities. There is a very clear teaching of skills, particularly in Key Stage 2, and this is developed progressively, throughout the school, enabling pupils to build on their prior learning to attain high standards in some areas of the music curriculum. Pupils show great enjoyment of music at both key stages. They collaborate very well in group composition and listen attentively and respectfully to each other's work. Pupils encounter music from a range of cultures and styles during assemblies and in lessons and enjoy all with equal pleasure. The 'Performance Club' meets regularly, and pupils perform with developing skill and expertise. Pupils sing each year in Minster Church, improving their confidence in performing to an audience. Musical appreciation forms a major part of the curriculum and pupils develop imagination and sensitivity well in these sessions, as they express their feelings in relation to the music verbally and expressively through art and through movement.

132. All instruments are easily accessible but the resources do not reflect non-European culture and pupils are, consequently, unable to develop a full appreciation of all types of music. The school works hard to improve this understanding through the use of CDs, but there is a lack of exposure to live music of any type other than piano or untuned percussion and this is detrimental to pupils' learning.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

133. The school places particular emphasis on providing pupils with a good range of learning opportunities and there is a strong commitment to the potential of physical education in raising pupils' levels of self-esteem. In Key Stage 2, lessons in dance and games were observed during the last inspection and standards were judged to be better than expected by the end of Year 6. This inspection included observations of gymnastics in Year 2 and games in Year 6. The standard of pupils' performances exceeded expectations in both lessons. There has been good development of the curriculum by the co-ordinator, teaching is good overall, and there is good provision of extra-curricular activities that encourages pupils' participation in a wide variety of sports.
134. Standards in gymnastics exceed expectations in Year 2 due to the pupils' good ability to perform with a smooth flow in their movement, when they link actions together to perform sequences. Gymnastic apparatus is moved safely and co-operatively, and movements, practised on the floor, are adapted and extended successfully when transferred to the apparatus. Pupils jump confidently from apparatus and landing technique is generally good. In games, Year 6 pupils show good individual technique when performing throwing, catching and bouncing actions. They throw accurately to partners and demonstrate good hand/eye co-ordination when dribbling a ball in basketball. Although pupils were not observed swimming, teachers' records indicate that national standards are reached, with most pupils achieving at least the requirement to swim 25 metres competently and confidently. In all areas of activity, pupils with special educational needs are integrated fully into lessons and achieve similar standards to their classmates. All pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of the effects of exercise on the body as a result of the good attention that teachers pay to this in all lessons.
135. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good and this is an improvement since the last inspection. Lessons are planned thoroughly and teachers pay suitable attention to health and safety factors. The good teaching incorporates appropriate use of selected pupils to demonstrate specific actions that reinforce key features of what is to be learned. The pupils observing these demonstrations are encouraged to look out for particular features or evaluate what is particularly good about what they are watching. The good gymnastics teaching seen in Year 2 incorporated a good range of learning activities that built well on pupils' earlier learning. Teachers' levels of subject knowledge are good. Pupils' good rates of learning result from their willingness to practise hard at improving their skills. The lesson seen in Year 6 on basketball dribbling skills demonstrated this commitment well. Extended practise, building on the teacher's good specific guidance on technique, resulted in many pupils making significant progress in the lesson to a point where speed and rhythm could be sustained well.

136. The new co-ordinator provides good leadership and management based on her own good level of subject expertise. The school is applying for the 'Active Schools' Gold award, a process that has required a detailed self-evaluation of facilities and provision. As a consequence, the co-ordinator has established a good understanding of the subject's strengths and weaknesses, which has ensured clear priorities for the subject's development. Resources are unsatisfactory overall. Some of the limited gymnastic apparatus is close to needing replacement, as is much of the games equipment. Facilities are adequate.
137. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities, several of which are run by parents and all clubs are for mixed-gender groups. Pupils have many opportunities for involvement in competitive sport at local level and the school enjoys a good level of success.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

138. Pupils' knowledge and understanding in religious education is in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 and this was the case at the time of the last inspection. Pupils join the school with levels of general knowledge and language and literacy skills that are below average and these are vital aspects in contributing to pupils' work in religious education. In order to improve standards further, there is a need, therefore, to ensure that there is an improvement in the contribution of language and literacy skills within the subject. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress throughout both key stages. However, there is a need to ensure that the more able pupils are challenged sufficiently in order that they can achieve their full potential.
139. The school has recently adopted a new scheme of work that is based on the recommendations of the local education authority. Pupils systematically acquire a satisfactory basic knowledge and understanding of the Christian and Islamic faiths as they progress through the school. By Year 6, most pupils are able to compare and contrast beliefs and customs, such as naming ceremonies, views on creation, places of worship and how people pray. Much of the work is factual and, in the lessons seen, only occasionally was enough time spent on reflection and in-depth discussions exploring pupils' own beliefs and customs.
140. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, although in one lesson the teaching was judged to be good. Teachers are clear about what they want pupils to learn in their lessons and confidently share this with them at the start of the lesson. However, the teachers frequently lack the confidence or questioning skills to extend pupils' thinking and to open up discussions. This lack of probing causes some pupils to lose interest and become very passive. This is not always the case, however, as in one Year 6 lesson, the teacher employed skilful questioning to challenge pupils to express their own feeling about God. They were motivated to think deeply and share their feelings, which they did in a very positive manner. In most lessons, pupils answer questions correctly, but they are often unable to develop their ideas successfully due to their restricted vocabulary. They do, however, listen with respect to one another and teachers take care to ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are fully included in lessons. This was evident when pupils in Year 2 spoke about their hobbies, during a lesson based on special places, when all pupils were well motivated and eager to contribute and all contributions were valued. Teachers are beginning to develop the use of information and communication technology within lessons, such as when pupils in Year 3 were shown how to use the Internet to find information about baptism and Christian festivals and when pupils in Year 4 had word-processed their work on hobbies. Pupils' written work in religious education is, however, generally of a poor standard and does not make a significant contribution to literacy standards within the school. Pupils need to be encouraged to produce more independent writing, to use correct spellings and punctuation, and to ensure that their written work is presented in a neat and attractive form.
141. The new subject coordinator is enthusiastic and knowledgeable, having already reviewed and revised the school's overall planning to correspond with the recently produced locally agreed syllabus. As yet, there is no monitoring of pupils' progress, or of teaching, but these developments are planned and should contribute towards the raising of standards within the subject. Although the school does make regular visits to the local church, the co-ordinator is aware of the need to increase the range and number of appropriate visits and visitors. Resources for the subject are

adequate, but there is a need to purchase more non-fiction books, and to provide a greater range of Christian and Islamic artefacts.