

INSPECTION REPORT

ST. JAMES' CE JUNIOR SCHOOL

Gloucester

LEA area: Gloucestershire

Unique reference number: 115606

Headteacher: Miss K A Maloney

Reporting inspector: Mr C Kessell
20695

Dates of inspection: 5th - 8th November 2001

Inspection number: 230251

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

| | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Type of school: | Junior |
| School category: | Voluntary controlled |
| Age range of pupils: | 7 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils: | Mixed |
| School address: | Upton Street Gloucester |
| Postcode: | GL1 4JU |
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| Appropriate authority: | The Governing Body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Mrs P Gifford |
| Date of previous inspection: | 9 th February 1998 |

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|--------------|--------------|----------------------|--|--|
| 20695 | Mr C Kessell | Registered inspector | Mathematics Information and communication technology Music | The characteristics and effectiveness of the school 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 |
| 19664 | Mr J Bayliss | Lay inspector | | Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well the school cares for its pupils How well the school works with parents |
| 25771 | Mr P Sandall | Team inspector | English Art and design Design and technology Religious education | Provision for pupils with special educational needs |
| 25775 | Mrs V Wilson | Team inspector | Science Geography History Physical education English as an additional language | The curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils |

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St James' CE Junior School has 155 full-time pupils; 86 boys and 69 girls, aged between seven and 11. It is slightly smaller than other schools and is situated near the centre of Gloucester. The school is part of Gloucester's Education Achievement Zone and serves a diverse population, including a number of pupils who are socially and educationally disadvantaged. Currently, the attainment of pupils when they start school is average, but this can vary significantly. Some year groups have started the school with well below average attainment. The majority of pupils are of white ethnic heritage, although other ethnic groups are found in the school, including pupils from Black Caribbean and Indian backgrounds. At 17 per cent, the proportion of pupils speaking English as an additional language is high when compared to other schools. Nine pupils are at an early stage of learning the English language. Fifty-one per cent of pupils are identified as having special educational needs; of which four per cent have a statement of special educational needs; these figures are well above the national average. The majority of these pupils are identified as having learning difficulties, although some have behavioural problems. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals, at 37 per cent, is above the national average. Pupil mobility is high as the school often receives refugees and asylum seekers. These pupils often make good progress in the school with the support they receive for their language development.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a school that provides a friendly and caring environment for its pupils. Standards are not high enough, although there was improvement between 1998 and 2000. Teaching is satisfactory overall and there are a significant number of good or better lessons. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall. There is a shared commitment amongst the staff and governors to continue improving standards and the quality of education. Between them, there is the capacity to succeed. The headteacher manages the school satisfactorily and is supported well by the new deputy headteacher. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Relationships throughout the school are very good. The pupils have positive attitudes to learning and good provision is made for their personal development.
- Procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare are good.
- Pupils' moral and social development is good.
- The school's links with the local community are strong. They make a significant contribution to the pupils' educational experiences.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs, and those who use English as an additional language, is good.

What could be improved

- Standards in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology.
- The school library.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Improvement since the previous inspection in 1998 has been satisfactory overall. Standards are still not high enough in English, mathematics, and science, although, between 1998 and 2000, the school's trend of improvement was in line with the national trend and the school was awarded a School Achievement Award. Standards were not as high in 2001. The school is well placed to improve standards in information and communication technology now that its resources have been re-organised and computers are more reliable. There has been a significant improvement in the attitudes and behaviour of the pupils since the previous inspection. Attendance has improved, but continues to be below that achieved by other schools nationally. The quality of teaching has improved, with a reduction in the proportion of unsatisfactory teaching. The school's monitoring and evaluation processes are becoming

more effective and the health and safety issues identified at the previous inspection have been addressed.

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 ¹ |
| | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2001 |
| English | E | E | E | E |
| Mathematics | E | E | E* | E |
| Science | E* | C | E | D |

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

The results of the National Curriculum tests in 2001 indicated that standards in English and science were well below the national average. Standards in mathematics were very low and within the bottom 5 per cent nationally. When compared to similar schools, standards were below average in science, and well below average in English and mathematics. The pupils taking these tests started school with attainment that was well below average, and 50 per cent of this year group were on the school's register for special educational needs. In addition to this, 30 per cent of the year group joined the school after Year 3. All these factors have an adverse effect on standards, as do the high levels of absence of some pupils. The school did not achieve its targets in English and mathematics last year. They were unrealistic and too demanding. Between 1997 and 2001, the school's trend of improvement was broadly in line with the national trend.

The pupils currently in Year 6 are attaining standards well below average in English and mathematics and below average in science. Standards in information and communication technology are also below those expected. Pupils reach the expected standards in all other subjects. Although pupils' achievements are generally satisfactory, some pupils, particularly higher attainers, do not always make the progress of which they are capable.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|--|
| Attitudes to the school | The pupils have good attitudes to learning and show an interest in their lessons. |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms | Behaviour is good, both in and around the school. |
| Personal development and relationships | The pupils' personal development and relationships are very good. Pupils enjoy responsibility and take their duties seriously. |
| Attendance | Attendance is below that of other schools and has a negative impact on the standards achieved by some pupils. |

¹ '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.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

| | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| Teaching of pupils in: | Years 3 – 6 |
| Quality of teaching | Satisfactory |

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

The majority of lessons observed during the inspection were satisfactory. In the good or better lessons, the teaching had pace, teachers had high expectations of what pupils could achieve and pupils learnt effectively and made good progress. Although the majority of satisfactory lessons were well planned and behaviour was managed well, pupils did not always make the progress of which they were capable, particularly the more able, who could have often been challenged more effectively. Literacy and numeracy lessons are generally well planned and pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language are supported effectively. Overall, pupils' learning is satisfactory through the school. Pupils are interested in their work and apply appropriate effort. Introductions to lessons are always very clear and the pupils have a good understanding of what they are doing. The learning support workers make a significant contribution to the pupils' learning experiences.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect | Comment |
|---|---|
| The quality and range of the curriculum | The school provides a satisfactory curriculum for its pupils and fulfils all statutory requirements. Appropriate provision is made for religious education. Extra-curricular provision is very good. Although the school works hard to include all pupils in the curriculum it offers, pupils who receive extra support in withdrawal groups regularly miss the same lessons, which often include teachers' introductions to new parts of the curriculum. |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs | The management of special educational needs is good and there is effective and well-organised provision. These pupils often make good progress, particularly in English and mathematics. |
| Provision for pupils with English as an additional language | These pupils are provided with good quality support and make good progress in developing and acquiring language skills. |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | Pupils' moral and social development is good and promoted well through the school. The provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. Provision for pupils' personal development has improved since the previous inspection. |
| How well the school cares for its pupils | The school provides a caring, supportive and happy environment for its pupils. However, ventilation and heating are poor in several classrooms. |

The school's partnership with parents is satisfactory.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|---|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | The headteacher's leadership is satisfactory. She is effectively supported by the new deputy headteacher and they are developing an effective management team. Many subjects are managed well by the curriculum co-ordinators, for example, English and information and communication technology. Management responsibilities are now better organised than at the time of the previous inspection. |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities | The governors have developed their role well since the previous inspection and now have a clearer focus to their work. They have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are well led by the chair of governors. |
| The school's evaluation of its performance | Satisfactory. In the past, weaknesses have been identified in the school's evaluation of its own performance. However, monitoring and evaluation have become better organised and the governors are more involved in fulfilling their role as a critical friend. |
| The strategic use of resources | Financial procedures to support the educational needs of the pupils are satisfactory. Additional funding is well directed to ensure extra support and resources for pupils. The school has a good number of teachers and support staff. Overall, the school's accommodation and resources are satisfactory. The school obtains best value when purchasing its services and resources. |

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

| What pleases parents most | What parents would like to see improved |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • The school's links with the local church and the community. • The school is caring and supportive. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils' behaviour. • Homework arrangements and information about their children's progress. • The school working more closely with parents and being more approachable. • The promotion of children's personal development. • Leadership and management. |

The views above are taken from the pre-inspection meeting that was attended by only eight parents, and from the 28 responses to the parents' questionnaire. Given these low numbers, care should be taken in assuming that these views are representative of all parents. Many of the parents who spoke to inspectors during the inspection hold the school in high regard. The inspection team supports the positive views above and found no weaknesses in the areas that parents would like to see improved.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is currently average, but there are weaknesses in their speaking and listening skills, their ability to work independently, and the behaviour of a very small minority of pupils. The standards achieved by pupils on entry to the school are not consistent. For example, the pupils in Year 6 last year joined the school with attainment that was well below average. The National Curriculum test results taken by pupils in Year 6, in 2001, showed that results were well below average in English and science. Results in mathematics were very low and in the bottom five per cent nationally. When compared with similar schools, standards in science were below average and well below average in English and mathematics. Although these standards are not high enough, the school is working in difficult circumstances. The variation in pupils' attainment on entry is one factor, but, in addition, 30 per cent of the year group taking the tests in 2001 joined the school after Year 3. Also, half of this group were on the school's special educational needs register, which is well above average, and 15 per cent of the pupils had a statement of special educational needs, which, again, is well above average. Prior to the 2001 results and since the previous inspection, in 1998, standards in English, mathematics and science had been improving. The school received a government School Achievement Award in recognition of this improvement. When taking the years from 1997 to 2001 together, the school's trend of improvement was broadly in line with the national trend.
2. Pupils in Year 6 are currently achieving standards that are well below average in English and mathematics, and below average in science. Although these broadly reflect the results in the 2001 tests, there is likely to be a small improvement, when the tests are taken in 2002, in the number of pupils who achieve the higher level in these subjects, but not enough to make a sufficient impact on the standards overall, although there has been an improvement in science. On this evidence, the school will not achieve its statutory targets in English and mathematics; this was also the case during the last academic year. The targets are unrealistic and too demanding. They do not reflect the ability of the current pupils. Standards in English and mathematics in Years 3 and 4 are higher overall and are nearer to those found nationally.
3. By the time pupils are eleven, standards of speaking and listening are well below those found nationally. Although pupils tend to talk confidently about their everyday interests and experiences, their responses to more challenging questions are limited because of their underdeveloped vocabulary. Pupils are keen readers, but display below average standards. They use successful strategies to 'work out' unfamiliar or difficult words and generally read with expression. However, pupils often struggle to understand what unfamiliar words mean, and their skills in making use of a library are weak. Their presentation is inconsistent and most pupils have difficulty in putting together a significant piece of written work, such as a story. In mental mathematics sessions, pupils enthusiastically work out calculations in their heads, but many of the lower-attaining pupils perform at levels well below those expected for their age. Higher-attaining pupils have a satisfactory understanding of place value and solve number problems at an appropriate level; however, a significant number of pupils have a limited range of problem-solving strategies. Pupils' use of mathematical language is weak and very few pupils are confident in discussing their work and how they have reached answers to calculations. In science, pupils work on practical investigations and some are able to make predictions and judge whether testing is fair. They are not experienced at devising their investigations, or in making evaluations. Their understanding of scientific matters is below that expected.
4. The pupils currently in Year 6 are characterised by much of the social and educational disadvantage that was evident in the previous year group. However, some of these pupils have not achieved as much as they could have in relation to their prior attainment. Although pupils' achievement through the school, and over time, is judged to be satisfactory overall, some pupils could make better progress. This relates in particular to some of the higher-attaining pupils who are not always challenged as effectively as they could be, even though the school operates ability groups for English and mathematics in all years and in science in Years 5 and 6. Some teachers could have higher expectations of their pupils and what they achieve.

5. Conversely, pupils with special educational needs make good progress due to the quality of support they receive both in lessons and when withdrawn from lessons. Their needs are planned for well. Likewise, pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress because of carefully planned teaching support. These pupils achieve a good level of improvement over time. Success is recognised by language achievement awards, which encourages these pupils to take a pride in their learning. Specially focused individual teaching helps pupils in the early stages of acquiring English.
6. By the end of Key Stage 2², standards in information and communication technology are not high enough. They are below those expected because pupils' achievement in the subject has been inconsistent, particularly for the older pupils. Pupils reach the expected standards in the remaining subjects of art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music, physical education and religious education. Pupils' achievement in these subjects is satisfactory. This is a similar picture to the previous inspection.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. Pupils' personal development and relationships are very good. Pupils' attitudes to school and their behaviour are good. This is a much improved picture since the previous inspection when there were problems with the attitudes and behaviour displayed by a significant minority of pupils that impeded the progress made by themselves and by others. This is no longer the case, although there continues to be a very small number of pupils in the school that presents a challenge to teachers and other staff. Attendance is unsatisfactory. Although it has improved considerably since the previous inspection, attendance continues to be at a level below that achieved by schools nationally.
8. Throughout the school pupils display good attitudes to learning. They are not distracted when, very occasionally, a very small number of pupils with recognised behaviour problems display negative attitudes. In lessons, pupils enjoy taking part in question and answer sessions, during which they are happy to take turns without shouting out inappropriately. They show an interest in what they are doing and readily involve themselves in whatever activity is presented to them. They enjoy conversations with each other and adults and listen carefully to what is being said, for example, when they read to inspectors, or when pupils in Year 6 discussed with inspectors their views of the school and the part they play in its activities.
9. The behaviour of pupils throughout the school is better than that in many similar schools. It is good both in and around the school. Little was seen during the inspection to support the very small number of parents that have concerns about behaviour, although, as in all schools that have pupils with recognised emotional and behavioural problems, there are occasional instances of inappropriate behaviour in lessons when these pupils lose concentration. The school rules are clear and understood and accepted as fair by the pupils. To ensure that an orderly and constructive atmosphere was maintained in classrooms and around the school last year, when some pupils in Year 6 presented particularly challenging attitudes to school, a rigorous response to their inappropriate behaviour resulted in a much higher incidence of fixed-term exclusions. However, there were no permanent exclusions. Changes to the population of pupils this year have resulted in an improving picture.
10. The school is inclusive in its practices and harmonious relationships exist throughout the school community. Boys and girls get on well with each other and, as found at the time of the previous inspection, the pupils show tolerance and respect for the feelings of others. Pupils of all ages and backgrounds mix well together at playtimes and lunchtimes. Nothing was seen to suggest that when misbehaviour occurs it is oppressive, or that there is vindictive bullying, sexism or racism within the school. There is some boisterous behaviour, but no more than that to be expected when pupils are given the opportunity to let off steam away from the constraints of the classroom.

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

11. The pupils respond very well to the school's extensive provision for their personal development. They have many opportunities to assume responsibility, which steadily increase through their school life. The pupils mature as individuals, becoming socially aware, developing views and opinions that are soundly based, and are able to express them sensibly, as was seen in Year 6 when pupils talked about the deficiencies in the school library, or the sorry state of the overgrown pond area. They are conscientious in fulfilling their classroom and school responsibilities. They enjoy being prefects and house captains, being 'reading buddies', and being part of the School Council. Those trained to be peer mediators³ take their responsibilities very seriously and their sensitive support is much appreciated by those they help. All the pupils readily involve themselves in charitable activities, showing recognition of the need to help those less fortunate than themselves. Pupils respect the values and beliefs of others and this is apparent in the way the majority relate to each other both in lessons and elsewhere.
12. In recent years, pupils' attendance has been consistently below that found in schools nationally. It is, however, significantly better than at the time of the previous inspection and it is showing further improvement so far this school year. The very rigorous recording of absence and punctuality, and adherence to local authority guidelines for keeping transient pupils on roll, when their whereabouts are unknown, makes the figures look considerably worse than might otherwise be the case. The large majority of the pupils are happy at school and attend when they can. There are, however, some pupils with poor attendance records, whose parents display a relaxed attitude to the importance of school attendance and punctuality, and the need to comply with school procedures. The attainment of these pupils is seriously affected by their inconsistent attendance and punctuality record.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

13. Teaching is judged to be satisfactory overall. This is a similar picture to the previous inspection although there have been some improvements. The percentages of good and very good teaching have improved. Whereas, 13 per cent of lessons were judged unsatisfactory during the previous inspection, during the current inspection only one unsatisfactory lesson was observed. Sixty-one per cent of lessons were satisfactory. When responding the parents' questionnaire, the majority of parents felt that teaching in the school was good.
14. There are a number of strong features related to teaching in the school. The management of the pupils is consistently good. There are some very challenging pupils who are managed well in a positive, caring environment. This is an improvement on the previous inspection. Relationships are also good and, consequently, the majority of pupils are keen to work hard and apply effort to their lessons. Most classrooms are well organised, with a purposeful atmosphere, where pupils want to learn and concentrate on their work. A weakness in this area is that some teachers are too inhibited about challenging pupils further about their work, because they are concerned about confronting some pupils who might react negatively at being asked to do some more work. Likewise, some teachers are prepared to conduct lessons whilst pupils are talking to each other rather than demanding total concentration. Consequently, not all pupils learn as effectively as they could in these lessons. Most lessons are planned and organised well. Resources are managed effectively, and learning support workers are well briefed. Good emphasis is placed on sharing lesson objectives with the pupils so that they have a good understanding of what they are learning. Teachers follow the national guidelines for literacy and numeracy planning successfully, and the basic skills of English and mathematics are taught satisfactorily.
15. The main area for development in teaching across the school is the pace of lessons and teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve, particularly the higher attainers. Lessons start well. The majority of lessons are introduced to pupils well with clear explanations and demonstrations. Questioning is used effectively to challenge pupils and assess their understanding. However, the quality and pace often seen at the beginning of lessons does not continue when pupils begin their main activities or tasks. Insufficient demands are made of pupils regarding the amount of work expected from them in a certain period of time. Time limits are not imposed in order for pupils to know what is exactly required of them during the lesson. Insufficient use is made of activities, which could challenge pupils further, particularly the higher-attaining pupils. Even when these

³ Peer mediators are older pupils who support other pupils during breaktimes.

activities are planned, they are often introduced with the phrase, 'if you finish your work', rather than these challenges being given to specific pupils. In the main, this affects the higher-attaining pupils most. Teachers' expectations of these pupils are not high enough. An analysis of pupils' work showed that some pupils do not finish work of which they are capable.

16. Very good teaching was observed in the Years 3 and 6 upper literacy sets, and in a Year 5 upper numeracy set. In these lessons, the teachers showed good subject knowledge and a very good understanding of the standards pupils were achieving. Work was well directed to their needs, pupils were productive and they worked at a very good pace. These lessons were introduced positively, with a good balance of teacher input, questions and answers, and whole-class discussion. Most importantly, the teachers of these lessons had high expectations of what their pupils could achieve and of their behaviour, and maintained very good pace all through the lesson. No time was wasted. These good aspects were not seen consistently enough in some other lessons, particularly in literacy and numeracy, where the percentage of good lessons was lower than would normally be expected. In the one unsatisfactory lesson, a significant number of pupils did not make the progress they should have, as they did not have sufficient understanding of their own learning, and the teacher's management of the pupils could have been better.
17. All teachers mark pupils' work regularly and the comments made are generally supportive and encouraging to pupils. However, insufficient information is provided on how pupils might progress to the next stage of learning and there is confusion amongst the pupils about their targets for improvement. For example, in Year 3, pupils were unable to explain what their group targets meant, although they were displayed in the classroom and, although some pupils' exercise books displayed their targets, others did not. In Year 6, pupils who had been given targets could identify them, but did not know how to reach them. Although many of the teachers know their pupils well, the use and quality of ongoing assessment, particularly in literacy and numeracy, could be improved. The teachers' evaluations of lessons are not always rigorous enough and comments are sometimes too general or uninformative. Day-to-day interactions with pupils are not always used effectively to develop future planning, reorganise ability groups within classes, or to challenge individual pupils further. Regular homework is set to support the curriculum and extend pupils' skills in literacy, numeracy and other subjects. A significant percentage of parents responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire disagreed with the statement that their child got the right amount of homework. At the pre-inspection meeting, parents also commented that the amount of homework varied between classes and that it was not always marked. The evidence found during inspection indicates that homework provision is satisfactory overall. In Year 6, pupils spoke to inspectors very confidently about the homework they received and they felt that it supported their learning in class. They were also very clear about the sanctions in place if homework was not completed.
18. Although, in many lessons, teachers could have higher expectations, particularly of higher-attaining pupils, support staff are used consistently well. The learning support workers are very professional and contribute significantly to the positive learning experiences that many pupils receive. The teachers are very caring and most do their best to ensure that the pupils work in pleasant, comfortable and well-organised surroundings. There is a shared commitment to improving standards, and teachers are keen to listen to advice and reflect carefully on what they are doing and whether it is effective. Teachers could, however, make better use of information and communication technology to support other areas of the curriculum.
19. Pupils who have special educational needs are taught well. A good number of learning support workers is effectively used to support them. The withdrawal of pupils for focused work is well organised, including the arrangements for additional literacy support. Teachers identify clear, achievable targets for pupils and work is focused to meet pupils' needs. Teaching and support staff work closely together, for instance, in writing pupils' individual education plans. However, some pupils regularly miss important parts of lessons.
20. Effectively focused, individual teaching, by the part-time language support teacher, helps pupils who use English as an additional language make a confident start in learning English. Shared planning with class teachers ensures that this is accompanied by additional in-class support and suitable learning activities for pupils in lessons. These are carefully based on pupils' individual targets and help them to make good progress. The language support teacher monitors pupils' learning meticulously as they become more proficient and keep pace with the rest of the class. Teachers

make good efforts at raising pupils' self-esteem by sharing pupils' national and cultural celebrations and teaching about their lifestyles.

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

21. The range and quality of the curriculum is satisfactory. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum that is relevant to the needs of all its pupils. It meets the requirements for each subject of the National Curriculum and for religious education. Several improvements have helped to maintain a satisfactory curriculum for all pupils since the previous inspection. The successful introduction of the literacy and numeracy strategies has improved the effectiveness of teachers' planning in English and mathematics. Schemes of work in all subjects are now satisfactorily based on nationally approved guidelines. The curriculum for religious education is covered appropriately. Pupils do not yet have sufficient opportunities to use information and communication technology to support other subjects.
22. The whole-school curriculum plan clearly shows how each subject is developed through the school. Effective timetable planning ensures that all subjects have an appropriate amount of teaching within a two year rolling programme of topics. However, science and design and technology have unduly long lessons in Years 3 and 4. This means that pupils do not always maintain concentration and motivation throughout the two hours. Geography and history are planned to be studied in alternate one term or two term blocks of time. Although these subjects have an equal lesson time, this sometimes results in a gap of two terms before pupils return to studying one or the other. This means that the impetus of practising the relevant skills lapses.
23. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who use English as an additional language, have equal access to the whole curriculum in principle; however, some pupils who receive extra teaching support in withdrawal groups regularly miss the same lessons. This means that they do not cover some subjects in sufficient depth.
24. There are good arrangements to promote personal, social and health education through a recently introduced programme. This ensures that a suitable range of topics is taught, with good opportunities for pupils to discuss issues that confront them in everyday life. It also provides good opportunities for pupils to learn about their equal rights, responsibilities, and opportunities. The responsibility taken by pupils in Year 6 as peer mediators is particularly helpful in encouraging pupils to resolve disputes amicably amongst themselves. Sex education and awareness of healthy lifestyles are included in the science curriculum. The school nurse supports topics such as pupils' awareness of the dangers of the misuse of drugs or other substances.
25. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Arrangements are well organised and successful. Pupils' individual education plans contain specific short-term targets that are acknowledged in teachers' planning. Pupils who need support in their emotional and behavioural development have separate plans. Planning for pupils with special educational needs is very clear.
26. The school has maintained the positive situation found at the time of the previous inspection in relation to its extra-curricular provision. It provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities that are enjoyed by the pupils. There is something for everyone, including a variety of sporting and cultural activities. There is good involvement of the local community in support of the pupils' learning. 'Reading buddies' from a local commercial organisation, regular liaison with partner schools, including activity afternoons, exchange visits, and shared sports activities, and regular use of the school by community organisations, cement relationships and enrich the curriculum, making a good contribution to the pupils' personal development, as well as to their learning in subjects.
27. The school's provision for pupils' personal development has improved since the previous inspection when it was found to be generally satisfactory but with a weakness in the promotion of moral development. This weakness has been addressed and provision is now good.
28. The school's arrangements for spiritual development are satisfactory overall, although, as was found during the previous inspection, there is room for improvement in how spirituality is promoted in lessons. Little evidence of the promotion of spirituality was seen during the inspection, except for

brief prayers before lunch in some lessons, and, in one instance, a feeling of wonder being felt by the pupils as they listened to a classmate reading in her native tongue during a Years 5 and 6 religious education lesson. Statutory requirements for a daily act of worship are met, with all staff involved, and pupils' spiritual development is promoted in class, and through school assemblies with opportunities for reflection on assembly themes. The local Anglican priest frequently visits the school, where his contribution is valued and enjoyed by staff and pupils. Parents are invited to attend weekly class assemblies. Although worship is predominantly Christian there are opportunities throughout the school to acknowledge and understand other faiths.

29. Provision for pupils' moral development is good. The school aims to develop attitudes of self-respect, trust, honesty and self-discipline, and in this it is successful, despite having pupils with emotional and behaviour problems that present teachers with some challenges. The school's response to the weakness found at the time of the previous inspection has been very positive and there is now a consistent all-school approach to the promotion of good moral attitudes. The school rules and a Code of Conduct are prominently displayed throughout the school. Personal, social, and health education lessons promote social responsibility in pupils and a caring for others. Teaching, support, and ancillary staff provide good role models for pupils. The school has a clear moral code that encourages pupils to behave responsibly and most pupils distinguish clearly between right and wrong. They learn about being honest, to tell the truth, and the large majority show respect for the things around them.
30. Provision for pupils' social development is also good. It is encouraged in a number of ways. School assemblies provide opportunities to show consideration for others, to empathise, listen to others, and learn to respect their views. The pupils are polite to visitors and to other members of the school community. They show an awareness of the needs of those less fortunate than themselves, when, for example, they involve themselves in charitable activities. The pupils are frequently given the opportunity to work together in pairs and in larger groups, in team games and sports coaching, and most do so in a positive way. They undertake a wide range of responsibilities and duties that promote their social development, such as when older pupils help younger ones, or when they are involved in residential visits. Relationships between adults and pupils are very good and underpin much of the work of the school.
31. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. There is recognition of the cultural diversity that exists in the school. A sense of the pupils' own and other cultures is fostered through history, art and design, religious education, and music, and through a range of extra-curricular activities, such as an art club. There are also satisfactory opportunities for pupils to appreciate all faiths, and they learn about Hinduism, Sikhism, Islam and Judaism as well as the Christian faith. Parents are invited into school to share their experiences of other traditions and cultures. The school is raising pupils' awareness of cultural traditions through the curriculum and by a variety of displays throughout the school. During the inspection, for instance, pupils in Year 6 enjoyed a visit to the local technology college to see a production of 'Macbeth'.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

32. The school has improved its provision for the overall care and support of its pupils since the previous inspection. Many aspects were then judged to be satisfactory, but there were some key issues needing to be addressed in respect of the school's procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance and behaviour, and for identifying and addressing health and safety issues, to ensure adherence to statutory requirements and appropriate regulations. The issues that were the responsibility of the school, and about which it could take action, have been suitably addressed, and the school's overall provision for the care and support of the pupils in its charge is now good. Inspection evidence supports the views of the majority of the parents that the school is a caring one that provides a safe and supportive environment in which their children can concentrate upon their learning.
33. School staff and governors, undertake regular risk assessments and have proper regard for the health and safety of the school community. Effective supervision ensures that the physical well being of all is protected. First-aid arrangements, and the school's procedures for dealing with the very occasional accident, are secure and appropriate records are maintained. Procedures to ensure Internet safety are satisfactory. There are good procedures for liaison with parents when

necessary. Fire safety arrangements are satisfactory. However, despite the best efforts of the school, there continue to be some unsatisfactory features about the welfare provision for the pupils in its care. Ventilation and heating arrangements in several classrooms are a matter of concern. The incidence of damp and consequent mould growth in several classrooms presents a potential health and safety hazard to all members of the school community. The school understands that a financial commitment has been made by the local authority to attend to these problems in the near future.

34. All staff respond sensitively and positively to the individual needs of the pupils. All pupils, whatever their circumstances, are provided with support that recognises their individual needs. There is a supportive atmosphere within the school that supports learning. The school seeks to be fully inclusive in its work and ensures that all pupils, whatever their background or personal circumstances, are treated equally and given proper support appropriate to their individual needs. Lunchtime supervisory staff, who relate well to the pupils, provide effective support during lunchtimes that has a positive effect on behaviour and safety. The pupils are happy at school and confidently turn to adults when they need help or advice knowing that they will be dealt with sensitively.
35. Child protection arrangements are very good. They meet statutory requirements. All members of staff understand their duty to be aware of the need to be attentive and they undertake this responsibility conscientiously and well.
36. There is a good level of care for pupils with a statement of special educational needs. The pupils' individual education plans are written by their class teachers, together with their learning support workers, ensuring that the support they receive focuses well on each pupil's specific needs.
37. In response to a recognised need to improve attendance levels, the school has significantly strengthened its procedures for monitoring and improving attendance since the time of the previous inspection and they are now very good. The school tries hard to improve its attendance and punctuality rates and is enjoying some success. Records of attendance are properly maintained and comply with statutory requirements. Procedures for recording absence and punctuality are very rigorous. Through its involvement in the local Education Achievement Zone, the school has appointed an attendance officer who undertakes close monitoring of individual attendance performance, liaises regularly with the school's Education Welfare Officer, who visits the school every week, and undertakes daily contact with parents when pupils are absent. It is not for want of trying that the school has been unable to raise overall attendance levels further.
38. The measures that are in place for monitoring and promoting good behaviour, and eliminating oppressive behaviour, are good. The school's policies focus well on the need to promote good behaviour and there is a good range of rewards and sanctions. These are well understood and accepted by the great majority of the pupils. The inconsistency in the implementation of the written procedures that was found when the school was inspected previously has been overcome and there is now a successful whole-school approach to the promotion of good behaviour and the development of positive attitudes and self-discipline. Despite having a number of pupils with recognised behaviour problems, all teachers have positive relationships with the pupils within their classes and have good strategies for dealing with the occasional instances of inappropriate behaviour and as a result there is very little disruption to the flow of lessons.
39. The school's arrangements for the promotion and monitoring of pupils' personal development are good. The promotion of personal development is a strong feature of the school's provision, with many opportunities being provided, such as individual monitor responsibilities, 'circle time'⁴, school council, peer mediation, and 'reading buddies', all of which contribute successfully to producing mature, well-rounded individuals. Formal arrangements for monitoring, including teacher records and summaries in the pupils' annual reports, are satisfactory overall, with some good elements, such as the objective reporting of non-academic progress included in pupils' annual reports. Pupils' individual personal files and achievement folders provide useful supporting evidence.

⁴ '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.

Informal arrangements for supporting pupils' personal development, which benefit from teachers' knowledge of pupils as individuals, are good.

40. Procedures for assessing pupils' academic attainment and progress are satisfactory. There is a suitable range of assessment strategies for measuring pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science. Evidence is gained from national and non-statutory tests, supported by careful analysis of pupils' work. Assessment data is also used to group all pupils according to their ability in English and mathematics, and in science for pupils Years 5 and 6. This helps teachers to focus more effectively on the needs of all pupils. Teachers are beginning to collect information from tests, following each section of work, to assess pupils' understanding in history and geography. Assessment of standards in art and design, music, and physical education, is more informal and provides less precise details of pupils' individual progress. The school works closely with the part-time language support teacher in thoroughly assessing the needs of pupils learning English as an additional language. This information is used effectively to create individual language plans that focus on pupils' particular communication needs.
41. Recently improved procedures for monitoring pupils' learning include subject co-ordinators' analysis of samples of work and sharing results with staff. This helps to give a clearer overall comparison of standards throughout the school and has had a positive impact. For example, recent evaluations have led to pupils producing neater writing, and to teachers making their marking more thoughtful. Teachers invariably share lesson objectives with pupils, and discussions at the end of lessons help pupils to evaluate their own learning. The National Curriculum test results are analysed in order to monitor the progress of boys and girls, and to compare standards with those in other schools. Monitoring of non-statutory tests indicates which pupils gain higher standards. However, this data is not used effectively to challenge these groups of pupils sufficiently. Assessment information is used to set targets for pupils in order to improve standards in English, mathematics, and science. However, they are not linked rigorously enough to the National Curriculum levels that pupils achieve.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

42. At the time of the previous inspection it was judged that the school had developed a satisfactory partnership with parents. However, the parental survey was much less positive than is usually seen, with concerns about a number of the elements of the school's provision. The position is the same now. Although there has been improvement in some areas of the school's links with parents, nevertheless, despite the low numbers involved, a significant number of parents responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire, and attending the pre-inspection meeting, continue to have some concerns. The result is that, although there are clearly many parents who hold the school in high regard, the overall view of parents who provided inspection evidence, both before and during the inspection, is that though the school is a satisfactory one, it has not improved its relationship with them in any significant way since the previous inspection.
43. Only 18 per cent of parents responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire, and only eight parents attended the pre-inspection meeting with inspectors, so care is needed in assuming their views are representative of all parents. However, these parents had concerns about many aspects of the way in which the school undertakes its duties, as perceived by them. The most significant aspects were that behaviour is not good, homework arrangements are not liked, there is too little information about progress, the school does not work closely with parents and is not easy to approach, it does not promote maturity and responsibility, and is not well led and managed. Inspection evidence does not support these views and finds no significant weaknesses in the school's provision for its pupils, its relationship with parents, or its leadership and management as referred to in the concerns of parents.
44. The effectiveness of the school's links with parents is judged to be satisfactory. Home-school links are supported by a home-school agreement that provides for commitment by all to the improvement of standards. The school encourages parents and other helpers to participate in its work. Those that do so make a significant contribution to the work of the school. There is a supportive Friends' Association that fosters relationships between home and school. Its activities provide opportunities for parents, staff, and pupils, to socialise and raise funds that provide much welcomed additional financial support to the school.

45. The quality of information provided formally by the school is satisfactory. It has improved since the previous inspection, when weaknesses in the prospectus and governors' annual report to parents were identified. Newsletters, school bulletins, homework information, and a variety of liaison activities held throughout the year keep parents well informed about school activities. There are regular opportunities, formal and informal, for parents to meet with teachers to discuss their children's progress. Parents are welcome to visit the school at any time, though preferably by appointment to ensure availability of staff. The school prospectus is a well-organised, though somewhat formal, comprehensive document that gives parents all the information to which they are entitled. The Governors' Annual Report to Parents is also a well-organised, informative document. It provides parents with all the required information in a user-friendly way that is attractive and accessible to parents and providing much to interest them. Both documents now fully meet statutory reporting requirements.
46. Parents are provided with regular opportunities to be informed of their children's progress throughout the year and, annually, through a written report. The quality of reports, which parents like, is satisfactory overall. Statutory reporting requirements are met. All subjects are reported separately, although, except for English, mathematics, and science, the comments are very brief and give parents little indication of how their children are performing in comparison with what is expected of them. For English, mathematics and science the information is more comprehensive, including judgements on effort being made by the pupil as well as their reading age for English. A general comments section is used very well by teachers that clearly indicates pupils' non-academic strengths and weaknesses and gives a good guide to their personal development. Observations are objective and, taken together, provide a good record of personal development through pupils' school life.
47. The school works hard to involve parents of pupils with special educational needs and those needing extra language or behaviour support.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

48. The respective strengths of the headteacher and deputy headteacher make them an effective team. Although the deputy headteacher has only been at the school for about seven weeks, it is already clear that they work well together and that their individual personalities, management styles, and experience, complement each other well. Leadership and management shown by the headteacher and key staff is currently judged to be satisfactory, but with a new leadership team now in place the school's commitment to improvement and capacity to succeed is good. The headteacher's educational vision will be supported well by the deputy's systematic approach to her work. The headteacher cares passionately about the school and pupils. She has developed a team of teaching and non-teaching staff who work well together and have the confidence of most parents. Everyone on the school staff works hard for the benefit of the pupils and this is a noticeable feature. There is a very caring ethos where staff and pupils are valued. The deputy is very well organised and brings a cohesive and structured approach to management. She has already looked to bring a greater consistency to some of the school practices and has worked hard to provide a greater balance to the curriculum. Many subjects of the curriculum are managed well, for example, literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology. Most co-ordinators have a good understanding of their subject's strengths and weaknesses and a clear view of how they are going to develop. There is now a better balance of duties being undertaken by members of the senior management team than was found during the previous inspection. When responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire, a number of parents disagreed with the statement that the school is well led and managed. There have been weaknesses in the past but these are being overcome.
49. The special educational needs co-ordinator works diligently and very effectively, co-ordinating the work of teachers, support assistants and visiting specialists. This involves a considerable amount of personal time, as she has little time away from teaching. There is a strong ethos of teamwork shared by everyone working with special educational needs pupils, which is reflected in the good progress they make.
50. Because of concerns about the development of the school, the headteacher initiated a review of the school by the local education authority. As a consequence, there has been a rigorous monitoring

and evaluation of the school by external advisors. One positive impact has been the improvement in teaching since the previous inspection. The school also has a proposed programme for the monitoring of teaching and learning over the current academic year. In principle, it is appropriately organised, and it is also intended to help develop the role of the subject co-ordinator and governors. However, it is too early to judge its impact. One of the weaknesses identified by the local education authority review was inconsistency in the school's own self-evaluation of its performance. With a more focused approach to development and evaluation, this will be overcome. Although the school's current priorities for development are appropriate and focused on raising standards and the quality of education, the format of the school improvement plan is confusing and unhelpful to new members of staff or governors who are less confident with educational issues. The school's statutory targets for English and mathematics were not achieved last year. The targets for the current academic year are equally unrealistic and will not be achieved. There is a strong commitment in the school to staff development through staff meetings, in-service courses that are run at the school or operated externally. Appropriate links are made with the priorities identified in the school improvement plan and the school's performance management strategy. The school has recently been re-awarded 'Investors in People' status.

51. At the time of the previous inspection the school had governors that were supportive of the school and with an appropriate understanding of their duties and responsibilities. However, their strategic role in directing the development of the school was not secure and a number of statutory requirements were not met. This position has improved. The present governing body, very capably led by its Chair with effective support from the Vice-Chair has, over the past 12 months, brought a sharper focus to its work as a critical friend. A number of initiatives have been introduced that have directed attention to a range of supportive activities. Working closely with the headteacher and senior staff, governors now take part in all aspects of the school's operation, although they recognise that their involvement in the development of the school's improvement plan needs more attention. They are proud of how the school has responded to the challenges it has faced and they show an active interest in all aspects of its work. They liaise closely with the school, offer support and monitor developments in provision and standards. Governors are properly involved in the work of the school both as members of various committees, such as those for finance, premises and personnel, and as individuals properly undertaking their responsibilities for literacy, numeracy, and special educational needs, as well as link activities. Curriculum matters are given particular attention, with the whole governing body taking an active interest, meeting every term to discuss how the curriculum is developing. They are provided with reports from the headteacher, and from subject leaders, that inform them about school activities and the opportunities open to it. As a result, they have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and, whilst continuing to be supportive, have started to challenge effectively what the school is doing and how it might do better. Governors fulfil their statutory duties, helping to shape the direction of the school in a very positive but supportive way. The mix of professional expertise available in the school and the objective view that independent governors can bring to the operation of the school, is now working well to improve the overall management.
52. The school has satisfactory procedures for ensuring that the financial resources available to it, which are higher than those enjoyed by many similar schools nationally, properly support the educational needs of its pupils. Governors, especially those directly involved in financial matters, feel ownership of the budget. There is a satisfactory identification of priorities related to improving the quality of education and raising standards. There is a clear cycle of financial planning, linked to the school's improvement plan, and the monitoring of expenditure is secure. Overall the situation has improved since the previous inspection, when, although the day-to-day control of the school's finances was sound, weaknesses were identified in the school's administrative arrangements.
53. The amount of money the school holds in reserve to protect it against unexpected occurrences, is planned to reduce this year, from a very high level, to one that is more realistic. Monies are being released to directly benefit pupils' attainment and progress by supporting planned improvements to the buildings and grounds, maintaining the present level of educational support staff and improving the provision of learning resources in line with the school's improvement plan. Governors have proper regard for the use of accumulated financial reserves. They are aware of the risk of falling roll numbers and their decisions are taken against this background. Prudent contingency planning is in place aimed to ensure, as far as possible, that the school's finances will be sufficient to ensure the continuation of its present strategies.

54. The use of the specific funds element of the school's finances, and other additional funding, including the school's involvement in the local Education Achievement Zone, is well directed. It has a positive impact on the quality of learning provision for the pupils who receive extra support, such as addressing pupils' special learning or language needs.
55. The school's overall administration arrangements and the day-to-day control of its finances are satisfactory. The weakness identified previously has been overcome. The school's office now works smoothly and effectively. There is appropriate use made of new technology to support the work of the school. Effective use is made of the information available from the school's computerised management system for monitoring and there are financial and administrative procedures in place that allow the school's administration staff to make a positive contribution to the effective running of the school. There were only minor recommendations made as a result of the school's most recent audit, in May 2001, and none remain a matter of concern.
56. Within the governing body, supported by the headteacher, the application of the principles of best value is developing. It is presently satisfactory overall, with some good elements. The proper implementation of these procedures means that the school's spending is evaluated and targeted to ensure that the quality of education provided for the pupils is consistent with the school's development planning.
57. Governors have made good progress in their understanding of the principles of best value since the previous inspection, when arrangements for monitoring the impact of spending decisions on attainment and progress had yet to be established. Governors are now playing an increasingly effective role as a 'critical friend'. They question the school's performance using a variety of information to inform them about how the school's performance compares with what is expected and what is achieved elsewhere. They understand that it is important to obtain best value in purchasing services and resources and have good procedures for ensuring that value is obtained.
58. The match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum has improved since the previous inspection and is now good. The school places a high priority on the provision of teaching and support staff. The teachers are appropriately qualified, with a suitable range of teaching experience to properly support the needs of all pupils in the school, especially those with special educational and language needs. Staff are used well and the school is fortunate in being able to allow its recently appointed deputy headteacher to provide focused support wherever needed, rather than having a class of her own. Pupils with special educational needs, or others with identified needs, are supported well in class by suitably experienced staff. All members of staff are committed to the well-being and support of the pupils. They work well as a team and, in their various ways, make an effective contribution to the running of the school that enhances the quality of education provided.
59. The overall adequacy of accommodation for the delivery of the National Curriculum and religious education, with two large classrooms on an upper floor, is satisfactory for the present numbers on roll. Provision for the disabled is satisfactory on the ground floor, but there is no easy access to the rooms upstairs. The main part of the building is old and is showing its age, with a tired feeling in many areas despite the efforts of the caretaker and the cleaning staff. Classrooms are of a reasonable size for the present numbers on roll. They provide adequate facilities for the effective delivery of the planned curriculum. In many of them, however, there is inadequate ventilation, leading in one instance to condensation dripping from pipe work, and there is a problem of damp throughout much of the school, which has resulted in mould and fungal growth that presents a potential health and safety hazard. Teachers try hard to brighten the school environment and, in most classes, there are displays that promote learning. There is some untidy storage throughout the school. The school recognises that the library suffers somewhat from its location in a main thoroughfare, and has plans in hand to make improvements.
60. Although improved since the previous inspection, there is barely sufficient hard surfaced playground space for the size of the school. It suffers from being enclosed by high buildings on three sides but it is of acceptable quality with provision for pupils to sit and talk quietly. There is a small grass playing field within the school grounds and there is access to a larger playing area off-site. A small pond and wildlife area has been allowed to become overgrown and a valuable learning resource has been lost.

61. Despite expenditure on learning resources since the previous inspection, the overall provision has not improved. At that time it was judged to be adequate in all subjects except information and communication technology. That weakness has been overcome, but, elsewhere, the situation has deteriorated. Whilst still satisfactory overall, no subject is well resourced. There are a number of subjects for which provision is unsatisfactory. For English, resources are unsatisfactory with too few books of good quality in the library, and an unattractive library environment not conducive to learning or a love of books. In history there are too few artefacts, and in physical education the provision of small apparatus is inadequate.
62. Despite the low standards, but taking into account pupils' positive attitudes to learning and their good behaviour, the satisfactory teaching and learning, the sound progress made by pupils, the good provision for pupils with special educational needs, and those who use English as an additional language, and the good care taken of the pupils, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

63. The inspection team recognises the school's drive to raise standards and the quality of education. In addition to the work already undertaken, and in order to improve the standards achieved, and the quality of teaching and learning still further, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

Raise standards in English, mathematics and science by:

- ensuring that additional activities are planned for higher-attaining pupils and that these pupils are more consistently challenged;
- raising the proportion of good teaching in these subjects, particularly through improving teachers' expectations and the pace of lessons;
- identifying accurate end-of-year targets that are based on National Curriculum levels;
- reviewing the length of some science lessons.
(Paragraphs 4, 14, 15, 16, 17, 22, 41, 69, 70, 73, 75, 77, 78, 80, 84 and 85)

Raise standards in information and communication technology by:

- monitoring rigorously pupils' access to class computers at time other than during information and communication technology lessons;
- providing more challenge in information and communication technology lessons for higher-attaining pupils, by ensuring that work is planned and organised for different ability groups;
- developing further the use of information and communication technology in other subjects.
(Paragraphs 6, 18, 21, 73, 79, 83, 91, 94, 97, 102 and 107)

Develop the school library by:

- improving the quality and quantity of the books and making the library a welcoming and attractive area;
- planning for classes to use the library in order to develop pupils' library skills and encourage a love of reading.
(Paragraphs 59, 61 and 67)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

43

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

31

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

| | Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|------------|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| Number | 0 | 3 | 13 | 26 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Percentage | 0 | 7 | 30 | 61 | 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 | Y3 – Y6 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils) | N/A | 155 |
| Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals | N/A | 56 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

| | Nursery | Y3 – Y6 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs | N/A | 7 |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | N/A | 79 |

English as an additional language

| | No of pupils |
|---|--------------|
| Number of pupils with English as an additional language | 26 |

Pupil mobility in the last school year

| | No of pupils |
|--|--------------|
| Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission | 13 |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving | 22 |

Attendance

Authorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 5.9 |
| National comparative data | 5.6 |

Unauthorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 1.9 |
| 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 2 (Year 6)

| | | | | |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
| | 2001 | 24 | 20 | 44 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above | Boys | 11 | 11 | 18 |
| | Girls | 11 | 6 | 12 |
| | Total | 22 | 17 | 30 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School | 50 (63) | 39 (67) | 68 (82) |
| | National | 75 (75) | 71 (72) | 87 (85) |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above | Boys | 11 | 8 | 12 |
| | Girls | 9 | 6 | 9 |
| | Total | 20 | 14 | 21 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School | 45 (44) | 32 (50) | 48 (70) |
| | 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 | 6 |
| Black – African heritage | 0 |
| Black – other | 2 |
| Indian | 12 |
| Pakistani | 1 |
| Bangladeshi | 1 |
| Chinese | 0 |
| White | 119 |
| Any other minority ethnic group | 14 |

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y3 – Y6

| | |
|--|------|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 9.3 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 16.7 |
| Average class size | 25.8 |

Education support staff: Y3 – Y6

| | |
|---|----|
| Total number of education support staff | 5 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 88 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

| | Fixed period | Permanent |
|------------------------------|--------------|-----------|
| Black – Caribbean heritage | | |
| Black – African heritage | | |
| Black – other | 27 | |
| Indian | | |
| Pakistani | | |
| Bangladeshi | | |
| Chinese | | |
| White | 18 | |
| Other minority ethnic groups | 4 | |

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

Financial information

| | |
|--|---------|
| Financial year | 2000/01 |
| | £ |
| Total income | 377,292 |
| Total expenditure | 354,169 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 2,060 |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 24,484 |
| Balance carried forward to next year | 47,607 |

Recruitment of teachers

| | |
|--|---|
| Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years | 3 |
| Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years | 2 |
| Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE) | 1 |
| Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE) | 0 |
| Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE) | 0 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

| | |
|---------------------------------------|-----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 155 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 28 |
| Percentage of questionnaires returned | 18 |

Percentage of responses in each category

| | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school. | 39 | 57 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| My child is making good progress in school. | 18 | 64 | 7 | 4 | 7 |
| Behaviour in the school is good. | 21 | 43 | 25 | 0 | 11 |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home. | 14 | 43 | 29 | 11 | 4 |
| The teaching is good. | 18 | 64 | 14 | 0 | 4 |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on. | 11 | 61 | 25 | 4 | 0 |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 29 | 50 | 18 | 0 | 4 |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best. | 36 | 57 | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| The school works closely with parents. | 11 | 57 | 29 | 0 | 4 |
| The school is well led and managed. | 7 | 54 | 21 | 14 | 4 |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible. | 11 | 64 | 25 | 0 | 0 |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. | 14 | 68 | 11 | 0 | 7 |

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

ENGLISH

64. Standards in English are well below the national average in speaking and listening, and writing. They are better in reading, although still below average. However, the school has maintained satisfactory improvement in English since the previous inspection. A dip in standards in 2001 related to a year group with a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, whose results were relatively low, despite some pupils achieving above the expected level. The high proportion of pupils throughout the school with special educational needs, most of which are language and literacy based, has a direct effect on standards. The performance of boys and girls in National Curriculum tests between 1997 and 2001 showed some differences in attainment. The school is aware of this but had not addressed this issue.
65. Pupils' speaking skills are well below average. While many pupils are confident enough to answer questions, their ability to put forward an argument or personal opinion is limited. Although most pupils listen with attention, some find it difficult to follow instructions or pick up the thread of what the teacher is saying. Writing skills are taught effectively and thoroughly, for the most part, but while pupils are aware of the requirements, they lack the skills and vocabulary to put them into practice, particularly at any length. Teachers make good use of technical vocabulary in all subjects and encourage pupils to follow their example, and this is good practice. In discussion, pupils respond well to questions, where there is only one answer. They are less confident in replying when it is their opinion that is being sought. This is particularly true of many lower-attaining pupils who, despite teachers' efforts, often play little part in class discussions. Pupils talk with more confidence about their interests and topics within their everyday experience, but lack the vocabulary to respond with appropriate language to challenging questions. No use made of 'response partners', where, in pairs, pupils discuss a point put forward by the teacher for a short time, ensuring that all have the opportunity to speak and to listen. Chances for drama, debate, choral speaking, poetry, and play reading are not clearly identified across all subjects, and these are missed opportunities to enhance pupils' speaking skills.
66. Although pupils' reading skills are generally below what might be expected for their age, the majority enjoy reading and were keen to read to inspectors. They are able to use letter sounds to work out unfamiliar words, and read aloud with expression, using punctuation to help them. However, whilst pupils are able to pronounce words, they often struggle with their understanding, and are not practised at using the context of the story to have a good guess at a word's meaning. Many can name books written by their favourite author. Time is set aside for personal reading, and pupils are listened to regularly. While records are kept, there is little evidence of diagnostic comments that isolate specific problems. Pupils do not write reviews of books they have read on a regular basis.
67. Pupils' skills in using the library are weak overall. Older pupils are able to use an index and a glossary, but very few know how to find a non-fiction book on a particular subject, or to skim and scan for information. This may be due in part to the poor quality of the school's library, which is sited in a corridor outside the hall, and which is not used by the pupils, indeed, some pupils in Year 4, while sitting in the library, said the school did not have one. Both the quality and quantity of non-fiction books is unsatisfactory; some have their spines hanging off. In Year 6, pupils pick the library as one of the few things they do not like about the school. One pupil commented, 'the books are wrecked'. The library is not a welcoming and attractive area. The library does not contribute to the objectives of the National Literacy Strategy.
68. Inspection evidence, both from lessons and pupils' books, indicates that, despite the school's efforts, many pupils have great difficulty with writing. Aspects such as handwriting are systematically taught, with pupils being encouraged to join their letters, but many pupils find this difficult and are inconsistent. Spelling is also taught regularly, and more able pupils in Year 4, when tested, are able to spell difficult words, such as 'acquire', 'correspond' and 'immediately'. However, this does not transfer to their work when pupils are asked to write imaginatively. The major area of weakness in written work is the inability of pupils to plan, write, edit, and produce a completed piece of written work of an appropriate standard. It is significant that some of their better writing is in

poetry, when there is less content, they are given a clear structure, and there is a strong focus on a rich and varied vocabulary.

69. While much of the literacy hour is devoted to writing, it is not always effective in raising standards. Pupils are well aware of the objectives they are working towards, and there is often a helpful discussion beforehand. However, the time allocated to actual writing is usually only 20 minutes, and teachers rarely make clear the amount of work they expect pupils to produce. This lack of time and urgency contributes to low standards. Higher-attaining pupils, in particular, are not set challenging targets in terms of either quality or quantity. There is no consistent planning to ensure that pupils are given the opportunity to write for different purposes in other subjects, where there is a real point to what they are doing, and this is unsatisfactory. There are no examples of extended pieces of writing, for example, a story consisting of several chapters.
70. The assessment of pupils' abilities in English is thorough, but not always used to the best advantage. Pupils have targets to aim for in their English lessons, which may be individual or shared with a group. These are usually, although not always, pasted in the front of their writing book, and older pupils in particular are aware of them. They are often referred to in teachers' marking, which is helpful and informative, but less frequently in lessons. Teachers make regular assessments of pupils' skills in reading, and the results are used to support less able readers. Writing assessments are also carried out regularly. The school has records of pupils' progress in relation to National Curriculum levels, but these are not used to set targets for achievement by groups of pupils in an effort to improve standards. Despite using optional tests to assess pupils' progress annually, some teachers still spend time testing pupils again at the beginning of the new school year, which should be unnecessary.
71. Pupils with special educational needs, as well as those with English as an additional language, make good progress. This is because the targets set for them are clear and achievable, and there is a good level of support provided by the school. The learning support workers are briefed well and work as part of a team, forming good relationships with their pupils. The work is usually carefully chosen to provide pupils with an appropriate challenge. Support staff and teachers know their pupils very well, and work together to write pupils' individual education plans.
72. The National Literacy Strategy has helped the school to improve the quality of teachers' planning, which is now good, and has also improved the teaching of basic skills. Additional literacy support is planned very thoroughly, and effectively used to improve skills in Years 3 and 4. Lessons have clear objectives that are shared with the pupils and which they write down at the beginning of each piece of work. These are also discussed as part of the session at the end of each lesson. As a result, pupils are well aware of their learning targets. Introductory discussions are led well, with good use of questions. Sometimes, support staff have little to do during these periods, and could be more productively occupied, for example, by making observations and notes on individual pupils' responses. The 'setting' of pupils by ability makes a good contribution to the quality of both teaching and learning, not least by keeping numbers of pupils in the groups relatively low.
73. Teaching in English is generally sound, with some examples of good and very good teaching. The quality of relationships between teachers, support staff and pupils is a definite strength, especially in classes where there are pupils with challenging behaviour. Despite this, in some lessons the behaviour of these pupils inevitably affects the amount of learning taking place. In general, pupils are managed well, and given clear expectations. In the less successful lessons, teachers' expectations are too low, particularly of average and higher-attaining pupils. Teachers are sometimes too easily satisfied with both the quality and quantity of work produced, and do not make demands which extend these pupils. Insufficient use is made of information and communication technology to support the subject.
74. The subject is led well by an enthusiastic and well-qualified co-ordinator who has a good understanding of the subject and the school's response to it.

MATHEMATICS

75. The standards achieved by pupils currently in Year 6 are well below those expected for their age. This is a slightly improved picture when compared to the results of the National Curriculum tests in 2001, however, the number of pupils who are likely to achieve the higher level 5, in 2002, should be somewhat higher. Standards consistently improved between 1998 and 2000, but have fallen a little in 2001. Standards are not as high as they should be as they are influenced by the variation of pupils' attainment on entry, the high pupil mobility in the school, the high percentages of pupils with special educational needs, and those who use English as an additional language. Teachers do not always expect enough of some pupils, particularly the higher attainers. These pupils do not always make the progress over time, and in lessons, that they could. Pupils with special educational needs often make good progress when they are well supported by teachers or learning support workers. This also applies to pupils who use English as an additional language. Taking the performances of boys and girls in National Curriculum tests from 1999 to 2001, there are some slight differences between boys and girls. The school's own analysis of the results in 2001 shows some underachievement by girls, but there were no noticeable differences during the inspection.
76. By the age of eleven, the higher-attaining and average pupils are able to double and halve numbers confidently, multiply and divide numbers by a hundred, and a thousand, and multiply decimals by a single number. They add and subtract two-digit numbers, mentally, and find the difference between numbers, by counting up through multiples of ten, a hundred, and a thousand. When working with fractions they understand the relationship between mixed numbers and improper fractions, solve problems related to ratio, and successfully obtain information from graphs and charts. However, their range of strategies for problem solving are limited and much of their work has to be guided by adults as they are not confident in trying out their own ideas. Lower-attaining pupils, representing about 40 per cent of the year group, have a limited mathematical language and are not always confident discussing their work, or how they have reached certain answers. They are able to complete simple addition and subtraction problems, complete number patterns and order decimals. They interpret data from bar graphs and find pairs of numbers that add up to a hundred. After adding several numbers mentally, they check their answers using calculators.
77. The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school are satisfactory overall. Although some good and very good teaching was observed, teaching could be better. Most lessons are planned using the recommendations of the National Numeracy Strategy. The pupils are placed in ability groups or sets for numeracy, and teachers' planning indicates that they provide specific work for the wide range of ability found in these groups. Most lessons start with a dynamic and enthusiastic mental mathematics session. Questions are carefully directed to different groups of pupils and encourage a positive and challenging start to numeracy sessions. However, this good start is not always maintained and, as many lessons enter the main activity of the session, the pace, challenge, and pupils' enthusiasm wane. Pupils always have a good understanding of what they are learning because lesson objectives are consistently identified and explained by the classteachers, however, some pupils spend too much time copying these objectives into their exercise books at the expense of their learning. Although the majority of pupils show satisfactory concentration during the main activity, some pupils, often the higher attainers, could complete more work and be challenged more effectively. In many classes, pupils are not provided with time limits in which to complete a certain amount of work, nor are additional activities consistently planned to challenge pupils further. A very good lesson observed in the Year 5 upper set on data handling was characterised by very good pace and the continual challenge provided by the teacher. Carefully directed questions were used well to extend pupils' thinking and the teacher interacted with all ability groups to provide support and to further challenge pupils. Independent learning by the pupils was good. They were prepared to take responsibility for their work and were keen and well motivated. However, in a number of lessons observed, opportunities were lost to extend and challenge pupils' thinking. Scrutiny of pupils' work also provided examples of unfinished activities, where insufficient demand had been made on some pupils to complete their work. Conversely, pupils with special educational needs and those who use English as an additional language were supported well in lessons and made good individual progress.
78. Pupils' work is marked regularly and encouraging comments are always given. However, little information is provided for pupils about how they might move on to the next stage of learning. Good reference is often made to learning objectives and whether pupils have achieved these or not. The

only concern about this is that, in some classes, too many pupils achieve the objectives, which raises questions about the how challenging the objective is for some pupils. Inspection evidence indicates that some pupils could have been challenged more effectively. Teachers evaluate their lessons as part of their day-to-day assessments, but, very often, the evaluations are too general and are not specific enough. For example, insufficient detail is recorded about individuals, or groups of pupils, and how well they have done in lessons so this information can be used to aid future planning. Comments are too general and unhelpful, such as 'all work completed' or 'discussed patterns'. Homework is used well to support lessons. During the inspection some good examples were observed of pupils taking work home.

79. The use of information and communication technology to support numeracy is poorly developed. Very few examples were observed during the inspection and opportunities are limited. Pupils use mathematics in other subjects. For example, pupils have measured themselves, as part of a science topic in Years 3 and 4. The subject is well promoted in many classrooms with good quality displays that reflect current areas of learning.
80. The subject is managed well by the subject co-ordinator. Although she has only been in post for a few weeks, she has a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, both in terms of teaching and learning and the curriculum offered to the pupils. She has had good experience through managing the subject in another school, and has already rewritten the school policy, scrutinised pupils' books, and regularly monitors teachers' planning. She is determined to raise standards and has introduced additional numeracy support for targeted pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5. There is a good range of useful assessment procedures that are monitored by the co-ordinator, with the eventual intention of using this information to plot pupils' progress against National Curriculum levelled targets, as the pupils move through the school. Pupils do have individual and group targets, but their understanding of these is inconsistent. The co-ordinator is looking to develop a process where pupils will undertake self-assessments of their work and is currently working on this process with her own numeracy group. This will be good practice.
81. The school has made satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection. The subject is now managed well and, although standards are not rising as quickly as they could, the pupils currently in Years 3 and 4 are achieving standards similar to those expected for their ages. The co-ordinator is also putting into place strategies that will effectively support teaching in the future.

SCIENCE

82. Standards in science are currently below those expected of pupils by the end of Key Stage 2. There have been some improvements since the previous inspection but these have not been consistent. The current improvements in standards in relation to the National Curriculum test results, in 2001, are due to a number of factors. Careful analysis of the information has helped teachers to identify in which topics pupils' understanding has been less successful. As a result, they have modified lesson plans to clarify these areas. The data has also enabled the school to put pupils in Years 5 and 6 into groups, according to their ability. This allows teachers to plan lessons that help both groups progress at an appropriate rate. Within these arrangements, most pupils are achieving satisfactorily. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language make good progress because of the good levels of support they receive. Over the past four years, boys' standards have fallen below the national average to a greater extent than those of girls. The school is now monitoring boys' work more closely to identify ways in which they may improve their achievement.
83. The curriculum guidelines have been recently improved and ensure that pupils study a suitable range and balance of science topics that are well based on practical investigation. This helps most pupils to enjoy science lessons and to increase their understanding of science concepts. Pupils in Years 3 and 4, when exploring the properties and use of rocks, satisfactorily distinguish natural samples from manufactured materials. They correctly identify some properties of rocks and compare some of their basic similarities and differences. Although most pupils take part amicably in group discussions, a small minority of disruptive pupils make it difficult for the majority to gain fully from the lesson. In Year 5, pupils in the lower ability group begin to understand that air resistance is a force that slows down movement. Throwing a paper aeroplane and lifting and lowering a large parachute help pupils to feel this effect for themselves. Pupils in the Year 6 higher

ability set experiment with a good variety of soluble and insoluble materials. They share ideas and resources very co-operatively to discover whether adding water can change substances such as salt, sand, flour or coffee. Although excited, pupils are totally absorbed in observing and smelling the materials and discussing whether the changes can be reversed. They make suitable predictions and understand that conditions need to be the same for a fair test. In one lesson seen for the lower ability set, pupils looked at objects including an egg, sponge and candle to describe how they could be changed. Although the lesson was appropriately planned to bring out pupils' ideas, some practical experiment might have helped them to describe changes more vividly. For example, they knew what happened to a candle when lit, but could not describe the melting of the wax. A suitable variety of labelled diagrams, lists, and descriptions, help pupils to understand that experiments and findings can be recorded in different ways. This is helpful for pupils who are limited by weaknesses in their writing. However, more able pupils do not always successfully transfer their literacy skills to their science writing, resulting in spelling mistakes and inconsistent letter formation. Simple line and bar graphs provide suitable opportunities for pupils to present and interpret data using the skills practised in numeracy lessons. No evidence was observed of pupils using information and communication technology for research or presentation. There is no indication that pupils have opportunities to design their own investigations. Their work does not show any evaluation of experiments or suggestions for doing things differently.

84. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with some good lessons. Teachers invariably share learning objectives with the class at the beginning of a lesson. This usually includes a valuable recap to gauge the success of pupils' earlier learning. Where learning is reinforced well, teachers use questions effectively to help pupils explain their findings at the end of lessons. One teacher followed this with a 'fun finish' to show how quickly materials can be changed to produce another form. This usefully conveyed the message that 'science is fun' to maintain pupils' enthusiasm. When teachers call for precise answers to probing questions, pupils are encouraged to use correct scientific terminology, such as 'reversible', 'irreversible' and 'air resistance'. All teachers prepare lessons carefully, using suitable resources and materials that promote the learning intended, but insufficient use is made of information and communication technology. In most classes, teachers manage pupils' behaviour positively so that pupils make the best use of their time. However, when teachers do not insist that pupils listen courteously and take turns to speak in discussion, pupils lose interest and lesson time is wasted. In all lessons, teachers plan work for groups of differing abilities, but do not develop tasks sufficiently to challenge higher-attaining pupils. Frequently, these pupils are working at a level below their capability and, therefore, do not make sufficient progress.
85. The subject is managed well and the subject co-ordinator uses her knowledge effectively to give helpful and detailed advice on resources and lesson planning. However, this guidance is not sufficiently modified to plan tasks to raise the standards of higher ability pupils. Thorough monitoring and subsequent feedback has led to pupils improving the presentation of their work, and more constructive comments by teachers on how pupils can make better effort. Analysis of test results and other assessments is being used well to plan more effective teaching for areas where learning is less successful. However, targets are not rigorously linked enough to National Curriculum levels. Recently extended lesson time for science allows pupils to benefit from increased opportunities for practical investigation but, in some cases, teachers do not plan enough science-focused activities to actively involve pupils for two-hour sessions. Pupils' literacy skills are not always well promoted and some work is poorly presented. Pupils' numeracy skills, such as those for measuring and data handling, are soundly supported through science.

ART AND DESIGN and DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

86. Standards in art and design, and design and technology, are as expected. As the two subjects are timetabled alternately, each half term, no teaching was observed in art and design, and judgements are based on discussions with the co-ordinator and pupils, scrutiny of teachers' planning and the work on display. Standards are similar to those found during the previous inspection.
87. Pupils' work on display clearly relates to the planned curriculum, and is of sound quality. Lower school pupils design a chair for a particular character, either in real life or fiction. They consider the character's needs and preferences, sketch their ideas, evaluate them and then produce a three-dimensional chair from card, decorating it appropriately. They show good imagination and sufficient technical ability to reproduce their designs. 'Hats' are the focus in the upper school. Again, the

design process considers who will wear the hat: examples include a wizard, clown, sleeping beauty and someone going to a carnival. Real hats are considered and evaluated before the pupils design and make their own. A neat touch in one class is a hinged flap that challenges the viewer to guess who the hat is for.

88. Design and technology is appropriately planned and meets National Curriculum requirements. Lessons seen in the lower school relate to the first stages of making a photo frame. Pupils draw designs with a particular user in mind, considering their interests, and, from these, produce a labelled sketch of their chosen design. While these lessons are appropriately planned and pupils achieve the stated objectives, they are too long, lasting for two hours without a break. While this length of time might be suitable when pupils are making something, it is too long for a design session.
89. The quality of teaching in these lessons is sound, and occasionally good. The good relationship between teachers and pupils helps pupils concentrate on their work over a lengthy time. Teachers' individual planning is sound, although, as all lessons have identical objectives, it would be helpful to share this task, thereby making use of everyone's ideas. Where teaching is better, a clear link is made with practicality, and pupils are frequently reminded that designs will need to be eventually made. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are well supported, by both support staff and helping parents. The instructions are also made easier for them to follow, and, as a result, they make good progress.
90. Some pictures painted by pupils in the style of Van Gogh, produced during the school's 'Art and Science' week, are of good quality. Layers of colour have been carefully built up to produce the impression of depth, and pupils display sound techniques. Talking to older pupils indicates that improvements such as this are still at an early stage. The co-ordinator also takes the weekly art club, where her personal knowledge and understanding contribute strongly to the quality of work produced.
91. The co-ordinator for design and technology is well qualified and enthusiastic. She has had little time to make an impact on the subject, having been in post only six weeks. However, the quality of her subject files and action plans suggests that both subjects are in a position to make progress. The adoption of national guidelines will help to ensure that pupils receive a balanced curriculum that builds on their skills and develops their understanding. Insufficient use is made of information and communication technology to support the subject. There are satisfactory resources for art and design and design and technology.

GEOGRAPHY

92. Standards similar to those expected of pupils at the end of Key Stage 2. Only one lesson was observed, but additional evidence was gained from discussion with pupils and analysis of teachers' planning and pupils' work. This indicates that standards are comparable with those reported at the previous inspection. Pupils' work shows that their achievement is satisfactory. Good support for pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language ensures that they make good progress.
93. In Year 6, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of places being part of wider areas. For example, they accurately name the countries of Europe and describe the continent's location. Pupils name major rivers and cities in the United Kingdom. They have a sound vocabulary associated with the course of a river, for example 'source' and 'meander'. Pupils satisfactorily describe some effects of flooding and erosion on people and landscape. A weather study allows pupils to compare the effects of winds such as tornadoes and, thus, develop an awareness of the similarities and differences of weather around the world. Their pictures effectively illustrate how different wind forces affect people and trees. Practical investigations include pupils keeping a local weather diary and measuring rainfall. Pupils record their findings in an appropriate variety of ways, such as carefully labelled diagrams and bar graphs. They do not yet use computer programs to support their work in geography. In a lesson comparing hot and cold areas of the world pupils in Years 3 and 4 compare local resorts with those in distant countries. Pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress because work is planned for all ability groups and all pupils are able to record their ideas

of holiday activities in contrasting climates. They share their understanding well to identify the resorts on a map of the world.

94. From the evidence of pupils' work and observation of one lesson, teaching is judged to be satisfactory. Teachers plan suitable activities that allow pupils to investigate the local environment and contrasting places, such as the mountainous regions of the world. There is little evidence, however, of map interpretation or study of more distant world regions. This suggests insufficient emphasis on developing these skills. Appropriate questions help pupils to focus on why a place has particular features and how they can be changed. Pupils' ideas for improving the school's grounds, usefully address both science and geography learning objectives. A sensitive awareness of pupils' varying holiday experiences was observed in Years 3 and 4. This ensured that pupils were encouraged to talk about local as well as more exotic resorts when expressing their views about different landscapes and activities. Teachers' positive comments, within their marking, are helpful, indicating where more thought is needed to extend answers, however, information and communication technology is not used sufficiently to support the subject.
95. The management of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has recently reviewed and modified the learning programme to broaden the study of weather. Teachers' satisfactory analysis of half-termly assessment units indicates which aspects need further study. Current monitoring evaluates a cross-section of pupils' work and teachers' planning. This effectively highlights overall areas for improvement, such as neatness of writing and teachers' marking. As with history, the geography timetable shows gaps of two terms in alternate years. Consequently, pupils' opportunities to practise and apply geography skills are not constantly reinforced. Some pupils have difficulty in retaining and remembering what they have learnt.

HISTORY

96. Pupils reach the standards expected at the end of Key Stage 2. The achievement of all pupils meets the expectations for their age. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, as do those who speak English as an additional language, because of the extra support they receive. The school has maintained the standards observed at the last inspection.
97. By the age of 11, most pupils are aware of some of the main events of different periods in the past. They describe some of the changes that have taken place and compare them with their experiences today. Pupils learn to use appropriate vocabulary to describe periods of time, such as 'decades' or 'centuries'. Current lessons for pupils in Years 5 and 6 offer suitable opportunities for them to find information from an interesting selection of evidence. In one lesson, for instance, pupils shared books to discover and discuss how life has changed since the end of the Second World War. They made good attempts to identify in which decade significant events took place. This activity was enjoyed by pupils but limited by insufficient details in books and some pupils' poorer reading ability. A similar lesson in which investigation was based on first-hand evidence was more successful in increasing pupils' understanding. They were very interested in handling objects kept for their sentimental value, such as photographs, toys, records and football programmes. Pupils closely examined and compared objects and made reasonable suggestions as to dates. They handled the items with great care and shared them harmoniously. However, they did not create a 'visual timeline' with the objects or give reasons for their sequencing as planned. This prevented pupils making the progress intended to reach higher standards. There was no evidence of pupils using information and communication technology for research, but old school documents and letters from older people contribute well to the school history archive. Pupils' descriptions and letters describing the life of an evacuee allow them to use their imagination to consider events from different points of view and understand the reasons for national decisions. This gives higher-attaining pupils good opportunities to extend their understanding of past events and to practise their literacy skills.
98. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers share their enjoyment of the subject and this leads to enthusiasm in pupils. Suitable lesson planning and provision of interesting resources, such as replicas of propaganda posters, help pupils to recognise and interpret different ways of representing the past. Homework frequently makes good use of parents' and grandparents' memories in the collection of information. This is effective in linking the past with the present. The recently improved marking, with appropriate comments, helps teachers to correct pupils' misconceptions

and encourage deeper thinking. Teachers do not always efficiently use the time allowed for history. For instance, when the pace is too leisurely, pupils do not achieve all that is planned and some activities are carried over into the next lesson. Lack of organised discussion procedures hold up the lesson as teachers stop pupils calling out. These issues slow down pupils' learning and their rate of progress.

99. The newly appointed co-ordinator includes monitoring the curriculum and increasing resources in the action plan for the subject. Assessment, undertaken at the end of each unit of study, allows teachers to focus on less successful learning. An area for development is the need to offer an appropriate means of recording for pupils with lower literacy skills. Appropriate topics, which include Ancient Egypt as part of world history, are taught over a two-year rolling programme. Because of the alternate timetable for history and geography, no history lessons were observed in Years 3 and 4. These pupils do not return to the subject until the summer of 2002. Pupils' vague recall of earlier learning indicates that this lack of continuity is likely to impede their retention of knowledge and skills.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

100. By the age of eleven, pupils achieve standards in information and communication technology that are below those expected. This is a similar picture to the previous inspection. However, improvement overall since the previous inspection has been satisfactory and the school is now well placed to continue its development in this subject. Although pupils' current achievement is satisfactory, there has been underachievement in the past, particularly for the older pupils. Much of this was due to ineffective resources and equipment not working consistently.
101. The pupils in Year 6 do not talk confidently about information and communication technology. They have a limited understanding about the use of computers outside school, or the power of the Internet. Pupils have not used e-mail in school, and only a minority have used the Internet. Many of the pupils do not have access to computers at home. Their recall of previous work is poor and they could only identify previously using the computer for word-processing and graphics. Although the pupils are currently working on databases, they do not clearly understand the reasons for collecting information and saving it in this form. Standards for the younger pupils are appropriate. In Year 4, pupils looking to combine text and graphics to communicate information, show levels of understanding similar to that expected for their age. This highlights the negative impact that poor resources have had in the past.
102. Teaching and learning is judged to be satisfactory overall, although during the inspection some good teaching was observed. In a Years 5 and 6 lesson, led by the subject co-ordinator, good questions were posed to the pupils about the differences between a computer database and a written one. This encouraged the pupils to compare information and communication technology with alternative methods and their respective merits. Subject specific language was encouraged, for example, the term 'fields', was used and the teacher tried to ensure that all pupils were involved in the initial debate. Pupils were also encouraged to use the Interactive Whiteboard, where computer programs are projected on a large screen, when 'brainstorming' their ideas for the type of information they might like to collect for a database on class members. Likewise, in a Years 3 and 5 lesson, the subject was introduced well by the class teacher. She ensured that pupils of both genders and year groups were involved in the class discussion and, again, as in the previous lesson, encouraged pupils to use subject related language, such as 'graphics', 'text' and 'scan'. A good debate evolved, with pupils discussing whether greetings cards had been handmade or generated by computer. This well-managed debate about the subject challenged and inspired pupils. They all had a good understanding of what they were learning about. Although information and communication technology lessons are planned well, and learning is at least satisfactory during these sessions, the teachers have a challenging task to ensure that all pupils have access to the class computer to follow up their work later on. Pupils will not achieve sufficiently unless the management of this situation is carried out rigorously. There is evidence of information and communication technology being used to support some other areas of the curriculum. In two of the Year 3 and 4 classes there are examples of word-processing being used to write reports and block graphs being produced as part of a data-handling exercise linked to science. However, during the inspection information and communication technology was not used sufficiently to support other subjects.

103. The subject is managed well by the co-ordinator who has good subject knowledge and is able to offer good support to other members of staff. Resources for the subject are satisfactory, with a computer in each classroom and a mini-suite for some intensive learning. There is Internet access in all classrooms. The school did originally have a computer suite, but it was beset with technical problems and was not used efficiently. Teachers were not confident under these circumstances so the decision was made to return to class based computers. Teachers are now more confident, they are currently undertaking professional development, but they have to be very well organised to ensure that pupils have good access to the class computers all through the week. The school uses the national guidelines to ensure that the subject develops appropriately through the school. The co-ordinator has put together a good 'overview' or scheme of work to support teachers. This is a particularly helpful document for class teachers who may lack confidence in the subject. The curriculum is planned on an appropriate two-year programme to ensure that the subject can be delivered successfully to mixed age classes. Good assessment procedures have been recently introduced, but it is too early to judge their impact. However, if they are followed and maintained rigorously, they will enable teachers to successfully track pupils' progress and plan future lessons. Currently the development of the subject has a high profile in the school. As part of the Education Achievement Zone the school has been given an Interactive Whiteboard and an action plan has been put together on how this resource will be developed in the school. The information and communication technology provision is enhanced by an extra-curricular club, which is attended by five or six pupils. There is enthusiasm, particularly from the subject co-ordinator, to continue improving this subject.

MUSIC

104. By the age of 11, most pupils achieve standards expected for their age, although there are weaknesses in the pupils' knowledge of a range of music. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory through the school. They enjoy singing and perform confidently in assemblies. All pupils have an opportunity to take part in a school concert and later this term there are plans for the school choir to perform in Gloucester Cathedral. A singing club also enhances the school music provision. No tuition is provided by visiting specialist teachers. Pupils are expected to use musical instruments in class assemblies, and, during the inspection, pupils, in Year 3 and 4 played untuned percussion instruments to accompany the hymn in their assembly.
105. Younger pupils in Years 3 and 4 sing satisfactorily, showing appropriate control. They are beginning to appreciate terms such as pitch, rhythm and beat and recognise that musical sounds can be used to represent other things such as the movement and actions of cartoon characters. The older pupils find it difficult to express their own musical preferences and have a very limited knowledge of composers or different styles of music. Although music is promoted as pupils enter and leave assemblies, very few pupils retain information about the different composers that they have heard. However, during a discussion in Year 6, pupils talked confidently about composing simple melodies using the pentatonic scale and playing these on tuned percussion instruments. They are able to use non-musical starting points such as poetry to develop their composing skills and can evaluate their work.
106. The quality of teaching and learning through the school is satisfactory overall and the pupils' achievements are satisfactory over time. However, the two lessons observed during the inspection were good. In Years 3 and 4, pupils had a lively and interesting discussion on how an interaction between two cartoon animals could be represented by musical sounds. The teacher mentioned 'The Flight of the Bumble Bee', which the pupils had listened to previously, as an example of musical sounds representing an animal. The pupils showed obvious enjoyment of the subject as they set about trying to link their own characters to musical sounds. In a Years 5 and 6 lesson, pupils' literacy skills were promoted well as they composed collections of sentences that could be used for a 'Dragon Song'. They were asked to carefully consider how their work would fit in with their previous experiences of composing and with the breathing required singing a song. The pupils worked enthusiastically and co-operatively, comparing ideas and thoughts and developing poetic ideas such as 'nostrils as big as doughnuts', 'shimmering as a star' and 'fierce as my dad!'
107. Improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory. Positive features, such as the pupils' enjoyment of the subject, have been maintained and the school has adopted the national guidelines for the subject to replace a commercial scheme. The co-ordinator has good subject

knowledge and manages the subject satisfactorily. She is currently developing a school 'overview', or scheme of work, to support teachers using the national guidelines. This is in place for the current term; however, she is leaving the school and it is unclear how the subject will be managed in the future or how the curriculum 'overview', which is invaluable to teachers who are not confident in the subject, will be developed. Assessment procedures require further development to be effective in influencing future planning and rigorously monitoring individual pupils' progress. Pupils' compositions are recorded for the subject co-ordinator to evaluate and this is good practice. Little use is made of information and communication technology to support learning. Resources for music are satisfactory.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

108. By the age of 11, most pupils achieve the expected standards. The school has maintained the standards found during the previous inspection. All pupils make satisfactory progress in developing appropriate physical skills. Pupils with special educational needs receive good levels of support for suitable kinds of activities and this enables them to progress well.
109. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 practise throwing and receiving a large ball, in pairs and in small groups. They make good efforts to be aware of others' movements and in dodging to avoid opposing partners. Most of the class improve satisfactorily in their attempts to direct the ball by pushing it through with one hand as demonstrated by the teacher. Pupils understand that to perform efficiently their bodies need to warm up before exercise. Where sufficient, this leads to an effective start to a lesson. There are occasions, however, when this activity is too brief to achieve its aim and lacks sufficient direction by the teacher. In Year 6, pupils enjoy keeping close control of the ball with their hockey sticks. Suitably short periods of practice mean that their concentration and enthusiasm are well maintained. Pupils work sensibly and co-operatively with a partner and successfully improve their co-ordination skills and control techniques. Passing the ball within small teams allows pupils to reinforce these skills as they put them into practice. The school operates an adequate programme for teaching swimming for all pupils. Boys and girls take part in a variety of team games, including netball and football in the school grounds and at the nearby field. This involvement makes a valuable contribution to pupils learning to co-operate as a group, within a specific set of rules. Out-of-school clubs, inter-school matches, and sports days, provide further opportunities for pupils' participation. More adventurous activities, such as abseiling, are undertaken during residential visits and at the nearby Wilderness Centre. A particular success celebrated by the school is the 'centre of excellence' achievement of three pupils at playing tennis. This led to an award of extra equipment for the school. The more limited provision for dance means that pupils have fewer opportunities to develop imagination and movement in response to music and other stimuli.
110. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Learning was satisfactory in each of the lessons observed. Teachers emphasise the need for safety and for pupils to wear appropriate clothing during activity sessions. Lessons are suitably planned to include warm up, demonstration and time to practise. Appropriate coaching in technique helps pupils to refine and improve their movements and to control equipment effectively. During outdoor lessons in cold weather teachers' well-paced activities keep pupils continuously active and thoroughly involved in their tasks. Good relationships between teachers and pupils mean that most pupils are well motivated and want to do their best. In some lessons, where small groups have an unequal gender balance, boys dominate the activity and disrupt the atmosphere. As a result, pupils' learning loses impetus and their rate of progress slows down.
111. The subject co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and has begun a review of the scheme of work. A competent start has been made on identifying areas for improvement and bringing the learning programme in line with other subjects to improve curriculum balance. At present, teachers assess pupils' standards informally, but pupils are encouraged to comment on their own efforts. There is some attempt to include non-participating pupils in lessons by giving them a role as equipment monitor. However, this does not involve them sufficiently in observing and evaluating other pupils' achievements, which would be a more useful exercise. Resources are satisfactory overall, although the provision of small apparatus is inadequate.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

112. Pupils reach expected standards in religious education by the age of 11. This is a similar picture to that found during the previous inspection. Pupils' progress then was satisfactory, although this was not always reflected in their written work. This remains the case, as links with literacy are underdeveloped. Pupils with special educational needs, as well as those who use English as an additional language, make better progress due to the level of support they receive, and planning that sets them suitably challenging targets.
113. The school's curriculum follows the locally agreed syllabus, but has been adapted to cover a wider range of religions. While the school is affiliated to the Church of England, the number of pupils belonging to other faiths, particularly Islam, makes this a positive response to the school's wide cultural mix. Within the school, pupils show respect for other faiths, and all pupils attend assemblies and religious education lessons.
114. Older pupils' knowledge of different religions is limited. They are unable to talk about creation stories, even the Christian one, and are unsure why we celebrate occasions such as harvest time. Younger pupils learn what Christians think about God. The teacher's emphasis on this is to discover facts, rather than share beliefs, which allows all pupils to participate. While discussion is lively, pupils' recording of what they learn is weak, with higher-attaining pupils, in particular, producing little work. This is echoed in other lessons and in the work seen in pupils' books. In the upper school, pupils learn why the Qu'ran is important to Muslims, and how they show respect to this holy book. This is most successful where an actual Qu'ran is used and treated with appropriate reverence by both teacher and pupils. When a Muslim girl read from the book in her own language, for instance, the expression on the faces of many pupils showed that this was a real moment of wonder which would not easily be forgotten.
115. Teaching is at least sound and sometimes good. Teachers are very sensitive to the different religions pupils follow, and there is a good emphasis in subject planning in comparing religions and looking for similarities, for example, the rites surrounding events such as birth and marriage. Strong attention is paid to both tolerance and respect. There are visits to other places of worship, such as the local Muslim temple, and visits to the school by people representing different faiths. Current planning is very thorough and is intended to help remedy the deficiencies in pupils' knowledge and understanding.
116. Work related to religious education is scattered round the school and is largely limited to posters, with only a small amount of pupils' work. There is no real focus for pupils to develop their knowledge or, perhaps, more importantly, their sense of spirituality and wonder at the world and its creation. There is little opportunity for pupils to meditate or stand back for a while and think. The school's policy, which is appropriate and well written, refers to pupils experiencing 'stillness', but this was not the case during the inspection.
117. The co-ordinator is new both to teaching and her post, but has already developed an appropriate action plan and put in place an effective system for assessing pupils' work. She also completes very thorough and supportive planning for religious education for all classes, and is developing a portfolio of pupils' work to assist assessment and monitoring.