

INSPECTION REPORT

BRADSHAW HALL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Cheadle, Cheshire

LEA area: Stockport

Unique reference number: 131554

Headteacher: Mrs. J. Lowe

Reporting inspector: Mr. R. Gill
4074

Dates of inspection: 5th –8th February 2001

Inspection number: 230399

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3-11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Vernon Close
Cheadle Hulme
Cheadle
Cheshire

Postcode: SK8 6AN

Telephone number: 0161 282 7858

Fax number: 0161 718 7224

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Reverend Charles Nevin

Date of previous inspection: N/A

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr R Gill 4074	Registered inspector	Mathematics, English as an additional language and music	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
Dr J Cross 8988	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with its parents?
Mrs S Cook 14842	Team inspector	Foundation Stage and English	How well are the pupils taught?
Mr D Wilkinson 3240	Team inspector	Equal opportunities, science, information and communication technology and physical education	
Mrs J Schaffer 23698	Team Inspector	History and geography	
Mrs P Peaker 12060	Team Inspector	Special educational needs, art and design, design and technology and religious education.	How good are the curricular opportunities?

The inspection contractor was:

Independent School Inspection Services (ISIS)
 15 The Birches
 Bramhope
 Leeds
 LS16 9DP

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33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This is a slightly larger than average sized primary school for boys and girls aged between three and eleven years old. It has 258 pupils on roll with 39 children in the nursery who attend part-time. At the time of the inspection there were 32 children on roll of reception age. They are taught in one reception class and one mixed-age class for reception and Year 1 children. The majority of pupils are from the immediate locality. Taken together, pupils' attainment on entry is generally above that found nationally. However, there are some years when the attainment of the intake is closer to that found nationally. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is close to the national average. There are currently no pupils with a statement of special educational needs. There is a high proportion of pupils (14 per cent) for whom English is an additional language. About a third of these pupils are at an early stage in their learning of English. Currently, seven different heritages are represented in the school with a small proportion of refugees. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is broadly typical. The school became an amalgamated infant and junior school in April 1999, but only opened on a single site in September 2000.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Bradshaw Hall Primary School is already an effective school with many strengths. This results from a very well managed process of amalgamation. The proportion of pupils reaching nationally expected levels at the age of eleven in English, mathematics and science has, in the past, exceeded national expectations. This year standards are currently closer to the average because the number of pupils who find difficulty with learning is higher than normal. The good quality of teaching generally has a positive effect on pupils' learning throughout the school. The headteacher, staff and governors have been very effective in establishing the new school and a context in which good teaching and learning can take place. Expenditure for all pupils is slightly higher than average, but nevertheless, the school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Provides strong leadership that has managed the process of amalgamation very well.
- Creates the context in which pupils are very keen to learn and behave very well.
- Teaches pupils well with one in four lessons promoting a high quality of learning.
- Manages funds, resources and the school building very well to create a positive culture of learning throughout the school.
- Involves parents very closely in the education of their children.
- Provides the context in which pupils' moral and social development is very good.

What could be improved

- Pupils' achievements in information and communication technology (ICT).
- The use of assessment information to plan new work, provide targets for individual pupils and track their progress more closely.
- Further challenges for higher attaining pupils.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

This is the school's first inspection. It has made very good progress since the process of amalgamation started in 1999. Where relevant, the headteacher and governors have continued to tackle successfully the key issues for action contained within the report for the,

now closed, infant school – for example, in the standards achieved in religious education. The junior school was never inspected due to the timetable for amalgamation. The teaching of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy has continued to play a major feature in the curriculum. The provision for pupils with special educational needs has improved rapidly of late. The system for identification of older pupils was inadequate at the time of the amalgamation. This meant that pupils who found learning difficult were not identified soon enough and their low achievement continues to effect the school's average grades. There is now a good system in place and pupils with a special educational need are well supported. The governing body is very well organised to carry out its responsibilities of developing this new school even further. There is still more to do to complete the work of amalgamation and to ensure that all teaching fully meets the needs of pupils, particularly those who are capable of higher attainment.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	N/A	A	C	C
Mathematics	N/A	B	D	D
Science	N/A	B	C	C

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

This table shows that pupils' average attainment, at eleven in 2000, was similar to the national average in English and science, but below it in mathematics. The same pattern exists when the school's results are compared to those achieved by schools with a similar free school meal figure. This was a year group that contained many pupils who found learning difficult and a significant proportion that had joined the school in the juniors. There were, in mathematics, too few that achieved at the higher level and comparatively too many that did not reach the expected level. This had a detrimental effect on the school's average grade. Standards have been better in previous years. For example, in 1999, the year of amalgamation, pupils were well above the national average in English and above it in mathematics and science.

Standards achieved by eleven year olds in English, mathematics and science are currently average. Once again the number of pupils that experience difficulties in learning is likely to effect the school's average grades, but the governors have set some very ambitious targets for Year 6 pupils and strategies are in place to attempt to achieve them. Currently, pupils are on course to meet or at least get close to them in mathematics, but in English the targets may be over-ambitious.

Overall, pupils' learning, throughout the school, is good and they achieve well. This includes the pupils for whom English is an additional language. They are well taught and make rapid progress in learning English. Most invariably do as well at eleven as other pupils in the year group. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well due to the good support they receive from teachers and special needs assistants.

By the age of five, children well exceed expected levels in language work. They exceed them in mathematics and in finding out about the world. In creative development, physical development and personal, social and emotional development achievements are, as would be found in many other schools. Pupils in the juniors fall well below expected levels in ICT. This is because the school has only just received enough computers to teach the skills required and it is too soon to see the benefits. Computer skills in the infants are well established and pupils reach expected levels by the time they are seven. In all other subjects most pupils achieve what is expected for their age except in art and design where standards are higher than found elsewhere.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very positive attitudes towards their learning. They like school, are very enthusiastic about their work and are highly motivated.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils are very well behaved in lessons and around the school. There are no exclusions.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are very good throughout the school and pupils' personal development is good. They enjoy taking responsibility for minor duties and show reasonable initiative. Pupils do not use the school library enough to find things out for themselves.
Attendance	The attendance level is good and the rate of unauthorised absence is typical of primary schools nationally. The vast majority arrives at school punctually.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching and learning was satisfactory or better in all but one of the lessons observed: in 60 per cent of lessons teaching was good or better and in 20 per cent of all lessons it was very good. Five per cent of teaching was excellent. In the one unsatisfactory lesson, teaching expected too little of the pupils in physical education and they made slow progress in developing skills in dance. Teaching is generally good throughout the school and, as a result, learning is good overall, except in ICT where pupils' experience with computers, in the juniors, has been too limited. Very good and excellent teaching is characterised by enthusiasm and exciting ways to promote learning to which the pupils respond in a very positive way making rapid progress. The weakest aspect of teaching is in the use made of test results to set targets for pupils' learning, the assessment of pupils' progress in lessons and the involvement of pupils in talking about their own successes and areas for development. The teaching of English is good in the infants and very good in the juniors. It is often very good in lessons devoted to the National Literacy Strategy, where reading and writing are most proficiently taught. The one drawback is that higher attaining pupils do not write enough, at length, and have limited opportunities to carry out research tasks that involve

a wide variety of writing skills – from note taking to the finished copy. The teaching of mathematics, using the National Numeracy Strategy, is generally good throughout the school with some excellent teaching in the lower juniors. Good teaching is now helping pupils to make achievements that are good compared to their levels of attainment at the age of five. This is partly because the school is now meeting successfully the needs of older pupils with special educational needs. However, there is still more to be done to provide challenge for those pupils capable of higher attainment, particularly in writing, mathematics and ICT in the juniors as well as science in the infants. Beyond English and mathematics, teaching is good overall in religious education, physical education and art and design. It is good in science for seven to eleven year olds. It is also good overall in the nursery and reception classes.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. Pupils experience an interesting range of activities including extra-curricular activities. The school makes very good use of its links with other schools in the area to ensure a broad and interesting curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well due to the helpful support they receive.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Teachers provide the right level of work for these pupils. Consequently, they make good progress and achieve the standards they should by the time they are seven or eleven.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	This is good overall, the strongest element being the very successful cultivation of pupils' moral and social development. The spiritual dimension is well provided for and cultural developments are promoted well through art, music and religious education in particular.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Suitable emphasis is placed upon pupils' welfare, health and safety, and the school aids their personal development well. The procedures to monitor and support pupils' academic progress are not well developed because assessment information is not used sufficiently as a guide.

The school has established effective links with parents and they are generally supportive. Parents of new entrants to the nursery are provided with particularly good quality information by the nursery staff. The involvement of parents has a very significant impact on the work of the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher and deputy headteacher have been particularly effective in managing the amalgamation. Managers for English, mathematics and science are working extremely hard to ensure that pupils reach even higher standards.

How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors have successfully steered the amalgamation through many difficulties. They have been instrumental in creating a new school which is well established for high quality learning to take place.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school is well aware of its strengths and weaknesses related to the creation of a new school. The headteacher is particularly skilled at managing the developments in teaching and learning that are required.
The strategic use of resources	Very good use is made of resources, including grants for staff training and special educational needs. There is currently a large financial surplus, but this is all allocated for use in furthering the development of this new school.

There is a good number of teachers and support assistants. They are all generally well deployed although some classroom support assistants are not well used in lessons where the teacher needs to speak to the pupils as a class. On these occasions support staff play too passive a role. The accommodation is very good and maintained to a high standard. The outside play area for the youngest children is not well equipped for physical development, but this is a key priority for the school and funds have already been allocated to remedy this situation. Resources for teaching and learning are good and used well, but software for use with computers is in short supply. The governors take a very forward looking and active interest in all aspects of school life. They seek information from all sources, including parents, and they work very well to find ways in which to run the school more efficiently and effectively.

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 staff are approachable. • The help given to their children to become mature and responsible. • Their children are expected to work hard and do their best. • The school is well led and managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homework. • Information about how their children are getting on. • The range of activities outside lessons.

Inspection findings agree with all that pleases the parents most and with what they would like to see improved apart from the range of activities outside lessons. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular clubs. Although the amount and content of the homework set is appropriate, parents' concerns about the new homework arrangements are well founded because there is too much confusion, in parents' minds, about the way in which children ought to tackle these tasks and how parents can support these activities at home.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The overall attainment of eleven year olds in 2000 was similar to the national average in English, mathematics and science when these subjects are taken together, but below the average in mathematics. The same pattern exists when the school's results are compared to those achieved by schools with the same number of free school meals.
2. The school's results at eleven often relate to the number of pupils who find learning difficult and the number of pupils who joined the school in the junior department. The Year 6 class in 2000 contained many pupils who found learning difficult and who had not enjoyed a full system of support for those difficulties over a number of years. The number of pupils reaching the expected level in English and science equated well with the national figures. In mathematics, however, not enough achieved at the higher level and too many did not reach the expected level for the school to equate with, or do better than, schools nationally. In 1999, the year of the amalgamation, Year 6 pupils did considerably better. For example, in 1999, pupils were well above the national average in English and above it in mathematics and science.
3. Standards achieved by eleven year olds in English, mathematics and science are currently average. This is another year group in which there are a significant number of pupils who find learning difficult. The school is now well organised to cater for their needs, but time is short. Challenging targets have been set in English and mathematics for eleven year olds, but the school will struggle to meet them given the ground that some pupils have to make up. Nevertheless, many are on course to reach or go beyond the expected level. There are suitable plans to provide extra tuition for all pupils that need an extra boost, but some pupils' lack the ability to write at length and do not possess speed and flexibility in mental arithmetic. This means that the ambitious targets may not be achieved.
4. The results for the national tests taken in 2000 show that pupils' reading, writing and mathematics, at the age of seven, are much higher than that which is achieved at eleven. In 1999 the results were even better for seven year olds. This comparison of two different year groups is not helpful to understand how the new school works. The results at the age of seven depend a great deal on pupils' attainment on entry to the school. In some years this is above what would normally be expected. Where this is the case, pupils generally achieve well above average at the age of seven. However, there are years when the attainments on entry are more typical and therefore results at the age of seven are not so high compared to the national average. The 1997 group of seven year olds, in the now closed infant school, achieved standards that were similar to those found elsewhere. Most of these pupils are now approaching their Year 6 national tests, but have been joined in the juniors by a significant number of pupils who find learning difficult. This explains why standards are as they are in 2000. Current attainment in Year 2 is more typical in terms of the national average.
5. Initial assessments on entry to the reception class show that this year the intake was above typical levels in literacy and mathematics. This is borne out by the findings of the inspection. In all areas of learning except physical development, creative development and personal, social and emotional development where attainment is typical of that found in most other schools, children are on course to achieve beyond what is expected of them by the age of five. They make considerable progress in the nursery class and then progress flattens out to satisfactory in the reception class except for the

small group of reception-aged children who are in the mixed-age class, where progress is good.

6. In English, pupils' current standards in Year 6 are better in reading than they are in writing, because general standards in handwriting, spelling and composition do not often extend beyond average. Pupils' achievements in reading are well supported by adults from within the school and at home. This is having a positive effect on standards. Pupils' achievements in listening and talking about their ideas are good. They are encouraged to take part in lively discussions during the lessons, but they are not so good at explaining and drawing conclusions verbally about what they have done.
7. In mathematics, pupils in Year 6 are reaching required levels. The crucial factor in whether or not the school will achieve its ambitious target is the number of lower attaining pupils and how many of them will reach the expected level. The amount of individual help they receive to tackle their own particular gaps in understanding is not always sufficient. This has an effect on their achievements.
8. In science, many pupils have acquired a satisfactory level of scientific knowledge by the time they are eleven. They are able to conduct experiments into physical processes, make predictions and record results well. This good work is not developed further to allow the older and higher attaining pupils, in particular, to carry out more advanced independent learning activities. For example, there are too few opportunities for pupils to use reference materials such as CD-ROMs to broaden their scientific knowledge. This lack of additional opportunities in learning affects achievements and the results overall.
9. Beyond English, mathematics and science, pupils' attainment is typical for their age in virtually all subjects. In ICT, standards are not high enough in the juniors because, until very recently, a lack of computers has not allowed teaching to build up skills and knowledge, in a step-by-step fashion, that would help pupils to achieve expected levels by the age of eleven. The school also makes too little use of computers in classrooms to extend pupils' learning and provide extra challenges for those capable of higher attainment.
10. Pupils who speak English as an additional language and pupils who have come as refugees are assessed by the specialist service from the local education authority, often in their home language. This provides good guidance for teachers to provide the right level of work for them. In consequence, they make good progress and achieve the standards they should, even in English, by the time they are seven or eleven.
11. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well due to the special support they receive from teachers and classroom assistants. There are good procedures in place that help the school to identify at an early stage pupils who may be having difficulties. The school follows guidance issued by the local education authority and regularly receives good quality professional help from the Learning Support Service. Individual education plans are thorough and are very helpful in enabling class teachers to provide work that helps pupils to make good progress.
12. Pupils who are capable of much higher attainment often lack extra challenge. For example, in mathematics they are given more difficult work to do but in too great a volume. Consequently, their achievements are not always as high as they should be because they have too little time to tackle the more demanding work that require more advanced skills in problem solving. The attainment of boys and girls is generally similar

although the test results show slight variations from year to year depending on the individual pupils involved.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

13. Pupils of all ages, including those with special educational needs and pupils for whom English is an additional language, have very positive attitudes towards their learning. Right from the nursery they like school, are very enthusiastic about their work and are highly motivated. They have a very high level of interest and involvement in the activities set for them. As they get older pupils in the infants and juniors work very well independently for sustained periods during lessons such as in the daily lessons in literacy and mathematics. They collaborate and co-operate very effectively when working in small groups, thinking things through well and sharing ideas and materials maturely. For example, in a very successful Year 4 mathematics lesson the pupils gave the teacher their full attention and interest. Their oral contributions to class and group discussions and their application to subsequent set independent work were excellent and enabled high quality learning to take place.
14. Parents are correct in thinking that pupils of all ages are generally very well behaved in lessons and around the school. Pupils' very good conduct also significantly contributes towards the good progress made in lessons because their learning is usually uninterrupted by distractions. For example, in a mixed-age reception and Year 1 gymnastics lesson pupils' excellent behaviour throughout played a large part in their very successful, safe setting up and use of the apparatus. No time was wasted through inappropriate behaviour, which enabled the pupils to concentrate fully on practising and refining their sequences.
15. In the playground pupils generally play happily, organising their own games and making good use of the equipment that is provided to channel their energies. Pupils from ethnic minorities and those with special educational needs are fully integrated into friendship groups. During the inspection period no child appeared isolated in the playground and there was no anti-social or racist behaviour. The school's detailed records show that such incidents do arise very occasionally. No pupil has been excluded from the school since the amalgamation. The school has received refugees from a number of countries and pupils from several different ethnic communities, which have been settled for some time. All are given a warm welcome and made, as far as possible, to feel at home. They respond very well to this. They are polite and very well behaved.
16. Relationships are very positive throughout the school and pupils' personal development is good. They enjoy being helpful to others, undertake their roles as monitors responsibly and show reasonable initiative, for example, by organising fund-raising activities. Older pupils take pleasure in looking after younger ones on rainy days when playtimes are spent indoors, a new opportunity for them since the amalgamation. Pupils of all ages show a very high level of respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of others within their culturally diverse school community. They show particular sensitivity, kindness and consideration towards those for whom English is an additional language by befriending and offering help to try to overcome their difficulties. An insufficiently developed aspect of pupils' personal development is their capacity to take initiative for their learning within lessons. This is only at a broadly typical level because, for example, pupils do not use the school library enough to find things out for themselves.

17. Attendance is good, the level being above the national average. The rate of unauthorised absence is broadly typical of primary schools nationally. Pupils generally arrive punctually at the start of the school day and lessons begin on time. The small minority of latecomers, although in the main just a few minutes late in reaching their classrooms, interrupt the registration period and may miss important messages.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

18. The quality of teaching is good overall. It is very good or excellent in a quarter of lessons and satisfactory in 35 per cent of lessons. In only one lesson seen during the inspection was the teaching unsatisfactory. The school's system of monitoring teaching has identified aspects that need to be improved. The school has started on many initiatives to improve teaching and these are being successful.
19. Children in the nursery make good progress and receive good teaching. In the reception year teaching is often good in the mixed-age class and satisfactory in the other class. The keynote to the successful teaching in the nursery is the way in which teachers and support staff create confidence and instil in children positive attitudes to all tasks and activities. This has a beneficial effect on children's learning. They are engrossed in all the activities they do, whether they are playing on their own or with others, or learning a new skill with the teacher. All teachers skilfully target questions to individual children to ensure their understanding, and teachers of the mixed-age class make sure children are learning at a level according to their age and ability. Occasionally, in the reception class teaching does not have effective strategies to ensure children's good behaviour, and work sometimes is not well matched to children's level of attainment. Support staff often effectively help children with their learning, but on occasions they are not briefed well enough. For example children were ecstatic about blowing bubbles with giant bubble blowers. They were 'saucer eyed' with wonder at the huge bubbles they produced, but the support staff did not capitalise on children's experiences and encourage them to observe what was happening. Teachers of children aged three to five are well organised and make good use of lots of imaginative and stimulating resources. Imaginative play areas like the 'fairy godmother's castle' make learning exciting.
20. Teaching is good for five to eleven year olds. It is of a very high quality in Year 4. In this class the enthusiastic teaching communicates itself to pupils and motivates and stimulates their thirst for learning. Excellent preparation, novel ideas for presenting lessons, the challenging tasks and the imaginative use of resources inspired pupils to think deeply and do their best. For example, in an excellent English lesson in Year 4 the music of Smetana was used very well to denote the progress of a river. Pupils also sketched before they wrote their pieces about the river. As a result of this superb scene setting, the writing produced was picturesque and evocative.
21. Examples of good teaching are found in all classes and very good teaching is seen throughout the school. However, there is a wide variation in the quality of teaching between classes, particularly in the juniors where the lessons range from excellent to generally satisfactory. This is because there is no finalised policy for teaching in this new school and consequently teachers lack the formal guidance for their work. There is a draft document being discussed and the headteacher and deputy headteacher have been very active in promoting discussions about good practice in teaching and learning. Teachers' planning is usually good. The teachers' plans mostly indicate what is to be learnt in lessons and lessons begin effectively with a good discussion about what pupils will learn. However, there is not enough oral assessment at the end of lessons, which requires the pupils to explain what they have done, how well they have

achieved and what they need to try harder in, or improve, next time. This weakness in lessons applies just as much to art, for example, as to mathematics. Occasionally teachers do not plan well enough for the higher attaining pupils. They provide extra work for pupils when they have completed their work but this is not always sufficiently challenging, for example in mathematics.

22. Staff have a good knowledge of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy. The school's implementation of the strategies is good and has helped in providing more brisk teaching that concentrates on what pupils need to know. Classes are split in Year 6 for English and mathematics and while this arrangement works well in English it is not as effective in mathematics. Pupils are sometimes grouped in Year 6 mathematics lessons according to ability with the higher and lower attaining pupils grouped together which makes it difficult for the teacher to challenge the higher attaining pupils in the mental arithmetic sessions and at the same time include the lower attainers.
23. Teacher's management of pupils is a strength. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and expect pupils to apply themselves to their work with commitment. In both the infant and junior sections of the school, teachers are well prepared and use a range of good quality and stimulating resources. Support staff are mainly deployed effectively, particularly to support pupils with special educational needs or those for whom English is an additional language, but there are times when they are not well deployed in the oral parts of lessons.
24. Teaching in all subjects, except in ICT for seven to eleven year olds, helps the pupils achieve what is typical for their age. Teaching is particularly good in English, mathematics, and science for the juniors, for physical education, religious education and art and design it is good throughout the school. Pupils who are capable of achieving highly, in English, mathematics and science, are generally well catered for but are sometimes disadvantaged by not being set challenging enough activities, and having too few opportunities to talk about their own learning at the end of the lesson. Apart from in the nursery, pupils throughout the school do not have enough opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning and undertake activities to increase their independence. These are relative weaknesses in otherwise good teaching.
25. Pupils who speak English as an additional language and those from different ethnic groups are assessed well. This helps teachers provide work at the right level for them and they learn quickly because of this. They benefit from well-planned collaborative work. In Year 5, for example, pupils worked well together in small groups, talking amongst themselves about the options open to them to produce collectively a large diagrammatic picture of the gods of Ancient Greece.
26. The good teaching results in good learning where pupils' levels of concentration are high, and pupils gain knowledge and understanding at a good pace. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well. Good support is given to pupils who speak English as an additional language particularly when they are supported by specialist teachers who act as interpreters. The often high level of learning that these pupils achieve sometimes surprises teachers. For example, one child was able to understand the complex issues and arguments of a debate. Often these pupils achieve as well or better than their classmates do, as they become more proficient in English.

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

27. A good range of learning opportunities is provided through the formal curriculum, which meets statutory requirements. The school is at an early stage in implementing the new national guidelines for most subjects. In response to these documents, each subject has appropriate status.
28. Children in the nursery and reception classes are provided with a wide range of activities. The curriculum for the reception children is not the same in each class. Although children in the mixed-age class receive a slightly different curriculum, the quality of the teaching compensates for this.
29. The National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy are effectively implemented and are firmly embedded in the school's routines. Planning is firmly rooted in the programmes of study of the National Curriculum. Consistency is good because teachers' planning makes good use of the agreed schemes of work. It is monitored effectively by the co-ordinators. A weakness in planning, however, is that there is a lack of opportunities for higher attaining pupils to tackle more demanding tasks, for example, to research and write at length about their findings. On these occasions, they make unsatisfactory progress in relation to their ability. ICT is underdeveloped and there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to use and improve their computer skills in a range of subjects.
30. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and they enjoy access to the full breadth of the curriculum. The recommendations of the Code of Practice are met successfully. Good clear records are kept and the provision is monitored well by the co-ordinator. Problems are identified at an early stage. Individual education programmes set out clear targets showing how these will be achieved and evaluated. Careful arrangements are made to ensure that special provision does not compromise pupils' access to the full curriculum. The generally effective use of classroom support assistants enables pupils with special educational needs to participate as fully as possible in lessons and to make good progress in relation to their abilities.
31. The pupils for whom English is an additional language have full and equal access to the curriculum regardless of gender or ethnicity.
32. Provision for out-of-school activities is good for all pupils and does much to enrich the curriculum. There are opportunities for pupils to participate in cross-country, drama and country dancing as well as a number of other sporting activities. All teachers are involved in providing activities. Older pupils enjoy a residential visit in the summer term where they concentrate on outdoor pursuits and developing their skills in ICT. This has a positive effect on their physical, intellectual and social development. Visitors to the school include a local minister and a volunteer from a national charity. The school's involvement with this project is helping pupils to appreciate the contribution which older people can make to their school community.
33. Although not yet timetabled consistently through the school, personal, social and health education is given a high profile in the way that it is taught informally or included in National Curriculum lessons. There is a good policy and a scheme of work, which includes sex and drug education. Religious education makes a positive contribution to pupils' learning about membership of a community and individuals' roles and responsibilities.
34. In addition to links with the primary partnership schools, there are good links with the secondary school to which most pupils transfer at the age of eleven. In Year 6, a member of the modern foreign language department teaches pupils French and German each week and this helps to prepare pupils for their next school.

35. The school's overall provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of its pupils is good. All aspects are promoted well, but a great strength is that the school teaches pupils to make decisions based on good moral values.
36. Provision for spiritual development is good. There is a well-planned programme of assemblies with a variety of themes predominantly Christian in character. Pupils come together to spend time thinking and learning about issues related to their own growing awareness of the choices that confront them. For example, in an assembly for the younger pupils, a little drama presented by Year 2 helped others to think about what they expect from a good friend, whilst in a whole school assembly a visitor from the local church led thoughts on the great variety of ways we love one another. Time for quiet reflection and recognition of a Supreme Being help pupils to experience worship. The enjoyment and spontaneous expression of feeling which characterises singing in the juniors is a significant factor in raising pupils' awareness of spirituality. However, the cramped space for infant assemblies does not contribute to pupils' awareness of occasion and contemplation. High quality displays on aspects of Christianity and other world religions demonstrate to children the importance adults place on religion.
37. The very good provision for pupils' moral development starts in the nursery. Through careful planning and organisation children are made aware of, and quickly learn, what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. In the infants and juniors, teachers have high expectations that pupils will behave well without the necessity of reward or sanctions. This is under-pinned by the code of behaviour which teachers and pupils draw up together as a whole school at the beginning of each academic year. Because pupils have participated in making the rules they have ownership of them and an understanding of their purpose. The very good relationships between teachers and pupils ensure that moral issues are discussed and pupils feel that their opinions are valued. The headteacher sets a high standard in all areas of moral teaching with the clear support of the whole staff.
38. Pupils are aware that parents and governors are very supportive of the school's values and this contributes to the good feeling of a school community and the very good development of pupils' social awareness. Pupils are given appropriate responsibilities within the everyday working of the school. They are also given regular opportunities to put forward their own views and to share them with others. However, there is room for further improving provision for developing pupils' initiative, and the school has already discussed plans to start up a school council. Pupils have the opportunity to join one of the several after-school clubs and there is a much enjoyed school production at Christmas. There is a tradition of generosity in raising funds for charities and very often pupils use their own initiative to propose a way of supporting a charity or responding to a disaster in the news. The recent floods in the Gujerat particularly concerned the pupils because the village they had been studying in geography was in that region. The pupils in Year 6 have the opportunity to develop their social skills further during a residential visit.
39. Cultural development is good. The school has planned numerous outside visits and invitations to visitors in order to develop pupils' understanding of their own cultural traditions and the ethnic and cultural diversity of society. For example, a recent focus on Chinese culture and religion resulted in a memorable musical experience provided by a Chinese musician and a demonstration of traditional Chinese watercolours by a painter. Pupils' study of art highlights the role great artists play in society and pupils in Year 4 learnt to appreciate the vibrancy of African art when designing and making African masks. An appreciation of literature including the work of Shakespeare is an

integral part of pupils' work in English. Stories from different cultures are studied in all year groups. The school promotes a good understanding of the culture of others by asking parents, relatives and other adults to share their own stories and artefacts with pupils. In this way, for example, the school takes good account of the different religions and cultures of its pupils.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

40. The school places a suitably high emphasis on pupils' welfare, health and safety, and aids their personal development well. Parents appreciate greatly this aspect of school life. The school's procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress are less successful because assessment information is insufficiently used as a guide.
41. The mid-day staff are suitably trained to provide effective supervision and maintain the high level of care, further helped by half-termly meetings with the deputy headteacher to discuss any issues that arise. They are alert to pupils' needs and sensitivities and deal with these well. In lessons pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are ably supported by teachers, non-teaching assistants and visiting specialists.
42. Suitable procedures are followed for dealing with emergencies, child protection issues, accidents, illness and the administration of medicines. Although good documentation exists to clarify most of these procedures, this is not yet collated into a staff handbook for the new school. This would make it easier for new staff, including supply teachers, to assimilate the information. Health and safety considerations received a high priority during the amalgamation and the governors are appropriately involved in promoting health and safety. Staff make regular checks of the premises, but risks are not formally recorded.
43. The school has good procedures for overseeing and promoting regular attendance. The registers are monitored closely for class attendance levels and patterns of absence by individuals. The education welfare officer makes fortnightly checks and follows up any concerns. Reasons for absence that the school cannot authorise are explained well to parents in the prospectus. The small minority of parents who fail to inform the staff if their child is absent are suitably contacted by the administrative staff for explanations. Full annual attendance is appropriately rewarded but there are no rewards that are realistically attainable by the majority of pupils. Punctuality is promoted satisfactorily. Late arrivals are noted down and persistent lateness appropriately followed up but the recording system is only applied after the first ten minutes of the school day. This does little to deter those who arrive during registration. The registers of attendance are kept open for half an hour, the maximum recommended period. Although this process meets statutory requirements it fails to improve punctuality to any extent.
44. High standards of behaviour are promoted well with particularly good procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppression. The good support of parents is suitably encouraged by clearly explaining the rationale behind the school's positive approach to behaviour and discipline. The emphasis is rightly placed on working together with parents to promote behaviour in school that 'reflects the standards expected in a good home'. The keystone to the approach is respect for others, achieved by praising and rewarding good practice to set the example, and firmly yet calmly curbing inappropriate behaviour. Staff expectations regarding pupils' conduct are consistently high. Very occasional incidents of bullying and racism are dealt with appropriately and sensitively once staff are aware of the problem. Parents are suitably involved at an early stage,

detailed records are kept and appropriate reports made. The headteacher plays a major role in moderating unacceptable behaviour by talking to pupils about their feelings and emotions and helping them to understand the impact of their actions upon others.

45. The school is able to contact the local support service for pupils who speak English as an additional language and for pupils who are refugees to ask for an assessment of their knowledge in their own language. This is then considered alongside their need to learn English. Pupils at an early stage of acquiring English have an individual education plan. There are clear procedures for the early identification of pupils with special educational needs. The provision is good and pupils make good progress. There is consistent support for the pupils from classroom assistants who contribute well to the good progress these pupils make. They work alongside the pupils in the classroom promoting self-esteem and supporting learning effectively. Work is carefully planned to match the needs of the pupils. Pupils receive good support from the Learning Support Service, which helps the school with the identification of pupils with special educational needs and regularly provides essential support to the pupils.
46. The pupils undertake a series of nationally recommended assessments as they pass through the school and a lot of data is collected. Having gained this information, the school is only now able to make the best use of it to set targets for individual pupils or groups of pupils. The school is currently making use of computer software to collate all the test information and use it to provide vital information about what needs to be improved for classes and individual pupils. This is a very good initiative, but it is too soon to judge its benefit. There are no consistent arrangements for assessing progress in subjects other than English, mathematics and science, whether to inform the planning of work or to give parents clearer information about their children's progress in annual reports. The new assessment co-ordinator recognises, correctly, that a lot more emphasis needs to be placed on oral assessment during a lesson that involves both teachers and pupils. This is usefully a tenet of the new teaching and learning policy. The nursery staff monitor closely what children are doing, and adults leading activities complete assessments which are used to keep a record of children's individual achievements, and to inform teachers' planning. The good arrangements for assessment in the nursery have a positive influence on children's learning. Staff in the reception and reception/Year 1 classes keep records of what children can do, but not enough use of these assessments is made to help teachers plan the next steps in learning.
47. The quality of the marking of pupils' work is variable. At best, teachers offer encouragement and suggestions as to how work might be improved. On occasions, however, marking is little more than a series of ticks. The use of the plenary sessions, advocated in the National Strategies for Numeracy and Literacy, has been enthusiastically embraced by the teachers and is also used in other subjects. Teachers use these sessions to build pupils' confidence, but the effect of this work is variable because in many cases teachers do not pinpoint the essential learning that has taken place. They do not talk about specific targets that pupils may have been challenged with or involve the pupils in discussing their own learning.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

48. In the short time since the amalgamation the school has established an effective partnership with parents. They, in return, are generally supportive and their practical help makes a very significant impact on the work of the school. Parents are very pleased with the way that the staff managed the amalgamation and see a 'ripple effect of improvements'.
49. The partnership with parents is fostered very well by the nursery staff through the very good information provided about nursery routines, what and how young children learn and the progress they are making. Every half-term parents of nursery children are informed about topic themes and are given a brief outline of what the children are to be taught in each area of learning. Parents are suitably encouraged to talk to their children about these activities and to provide artefacts to stimulate their learning - for example, unusual clocks in relation to the theme 'Night and Day'.
50. In the infants and juniors the quality of information is good overall but parents are right to point out that there are weaknesses, particularly in relation to the annual written reports on their children's progress. These reports meet statutory requirements and are broadly satisfactory. They inform parents well about achievement in English and mathematics, albeit in rather stilted language, but do not sufficiently identify the next steps needed for improvement. Other subjects are reported upon too generally, more in terms of coverage and enjoyment levels than in attainment and progress.
51. However, the many strengths in the school's communication with parents far outweigh these weaknesses. Parents appreciate the welcome they receive in school and the approachability of the staff when they have questions or concerns. They are updated effectively about everyday school life through regular newsletters and are actively encouraged to learn more about what is taught through very successful occasional meetings. Recently the focus has been on mathematics and the enjoyable informative evening attracted a large appreciative audience. All parents, including those who did not attend the meeting, received a useful leaflet explaining in simple terms the typical targets in mathematics for pupils in each year group. It also included helpful suggestions as to how parents might help their children to learn mathematics at home. However, regarding curriculum information generally, once children have left the nursery parents are not briefed about current topics and planned learning. This makes it more difficult for parents to support their children's learning at school.
52. Parents are given three formal opportunities annually to consult with class teachers about their children's progress and the broad choice of appointment times encourages high attendance. Parents are welcome to make arrangements to contact the staff at other times and an informal annual open evening successfully enables them to view pupils' work. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are involved at an early stage and kept well informed about their children's progress.
53. Parents expressed significant dissatisfaction with several aspects of homework. Whilst they appreciate the school's quick response to their previous requests for more homework some have reservations about the packs of work introduced recently in the juniors. The school joined an initiative with other local schools to issue these packs for completion by the pupils over six weeks. Some parents are critical of the system, others critical of the content of the packs. Their concerns regarding content question whether the work is matched appropriately to their child's level of attainment and whether it sufficiently reinforces work in current lessons. Inspection findings are that the homework is broadly typical of that set in primary schools nationally in quantity and

content. However, inspectors are in agreement with parents who feel that children of this age range lack the maturity to organise their work effectively over a six-week period. Follow-up of completed work, particularly important where there are problems, is also insufficiently timely.

54. Parents are included and involved from all ethnic groups represented in the school, sometimes to talk to a class about their religion or culture. This is a very productive way of helping all pupils learn about religion. Parents at the school have welcomed pupils who have come from other countries and in particular those who have suffered the trauma of war and disturbance.
55. Parents support their children's learning effectively at home and the contribution that they and other volunteers make in school to standards and pupils' personal development is very good. The parent and friends association is extremely active in organising and publicising an extensive programme of social and fund-raising events for all the family to enjoy. A parent representative successfully links each class, including both nursery groups, to the association. The staff appreciate the way that the former infant and junior associations have amalgamated to create this thriving body that raises substantial funds for the benefit of the pupils.
56. The misgivings that some parents have about the range of activities outside lessons are unfounded. The school provides a broad range of extra-curricular clubs for infants and juniors.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

57. The school is led in a very positive way. The governors, headteacher and staff have all worked very well to accomplish the amalgamation of two schools. The school, in its present accommodation, has only been in operation since September 2000. However, it is so well organised and displays of pupils' work are so well presented that it is hard to believe that the school is not a well-established one. The governors have a close working relationship with staff, parents and children and this has helped to achieve the task. Many of the governors have a wealth of good experience to bring to their new responsibilities and have quickly helped to establish effective procedures for school management. The headteacher, in particular, has led with calm conviction that places teaching, learning and raising standards at the heart of the process. This has resulted in a shared commitment, amongst the staff, to succeed. The headteacher has been very ably assisted by the new deputy headteacher who manages to combine very successful teaching with a senior management role. There is still more to do to complete the work of amalgamation in the respect of making sure that all staff adhere to a common approach in their teaching, but this does not detract from the high quality work already undertaken.
58. The success of the amalgamation has pleased and surprised parents many of whom did not want to see the schools amalgamated at all. Moreover, many would have preferred the option to keep the original buildings intact and for the headteacher to divide her time between the three departments. The governors fought for the option that exists now and their vision has paid off. Parents are very positive about the new school and appreciate the hard work that has taken place.
59. The headteacher's leadership and the governors' regular involvement in the school ensure that they know the school's strengths and weaknesses. These issues are represented very clearly in the school's plan for development. The school has adopted a very reasonable approach to policy production. There has been no rush to create

policies for the new school. The old ones are available and replaced in turn when the staff and governors have discussed fully any new policy. This management approach ensures maximum involvement of all parties.

60. Parents' views about the way that the school is managed are very positive and they are involved very well in their children's learning. For example, those that attended a recent evening for staff and children to explain current practices in teaching mathematics were highly delighted with the school's approach and what they learnt about new teaching methods. There is no shortage of homework being set, but some parents understandably find the system a little hard to supervise at home.
61. The school has many strengths. It is impossible to judge progress since a previous inspection because the junior school was never inspected and this is technically a new school. Any matters arising from the infant school's last inspection have been dealt with successfully. The school provides well for the majority of children, irrespective of their attainment on entry, but there is more to do to make sure that the higher attainers are fully challenged in their learning. The headteacher and staff have had to concentrate initially on getting the system for special educational needs fully operational, but now the way is clear to raise the standards of higher attainers even further.
62. The leadership and management for children in the nursery and reception classes are good. Planning is thorough and takes account of the most recent national guidance for this age range. This impacts positively on children's learning and ensures that they can make best use of the National Curriculum in Year 1. There are one or two operational difficulties due to the fact that some reception age children are in a mixed-age class with Year 1 pupils. However, these are being resolved and are easily balanced by the good teaching that these children receive. The management of learning in the reception class is often good, but very occasionally children misbehave and they are not checked quickly enough.
63. The school has a strong ethos that is based on very positive relationships between adults and pupils and between pupils themselves. As a result, pupils are very well behaved. The school tackles the teaching of personal and social education very well. There are regular opportunities for pupils to learn more than the National Curriculum, including French and German before transferring to the secondary school.
64. The school has begun an effective programme for monitoring teaching, which includes support from the local education authority. The governors for literacy and numeracy are also involved in monitoring the effects of teaching and of standards in general. The headteacher has concentrated, wisely, on observing literacy and numeracy lessons, but has not been able, in the time available, to do a lot more. Subject co-ordinators have seen a limited number of lessons to judge the quality of teaching and suggest improvements, but a systematic programme of monitoring is not yet in place which would link into the national requirements for monitoring in relation to Performance Management. Co-ordinators, particularly in English, mathematics and science, have begun to see pupils' books and work to evaluate learning. They also analyse test results to determine how teaching needs to be improved so that standards can be raised. The use of assessment information to set individual pupils targets for improvement is not yet undertaken so well. The whole aspect of judging standards and using assessment information to help set new targets is in its infancy. The school recognises this and staff are keen to extend their influence in this area.

65. The school has developed an excellent equal opportunities policy that makes it quite clear that racism will not be tolerated and that all pupils will learn their responsibilities to others in a multi-ethnic society. Staff have received two days of training recently on supporting pupils who speak English as an additional language and those who come to this country as refugees. This, and the experience the staff have acquired generally, has resulted in good provision for these pupils. There are a few occasions when they are not prompted to join in with discussions, but in the majority of cases they make good progress and attain results in line with expectations for their age and prior attainment.
66. Teaching staff and the co-ordinator make sure that all pupils with special educational needs are able to achieve well through the structured procedures which are in place. This is a good continuation of the procedures that existed in the previous infant school, but a major advance on the lack of a concerted approach to special educational needs in the juniors.
67. There is a good number of teaching staff who are deployed and trained effectively. The governors have employed extra teachers so that class sizes can be reduced in the juniors in English and mathematics lessons. This is having a beneficial effect on learning in most cases. Classroom support assistants play an effective role when the pupils are working in groups, but there are occasions when they sit with nothing to do while the class teacher is talking. This represents an ineffective use of resources. The accommodation is very effectively designed for learning. The new nursery and infant classrooms are very well set out for a range of activities to take place. Junior classrooms have been transformed to make best use of the space for large numbers of pupils and to allow for groups to collaborate well together. Resources for learning are generally good, although software for the new computers is not yet adequate. Computers are beginning to be well used in the computer room, but other computers are underused in classes to allow pupils maximum opportunities to extend their learning. The area for reception age children to play outside is generally lacking in equipment for play, but the school is treating this as a priority.
68. The school makes very good use of available grants. These grants are largely designated for specific purpose and have been put to productive use, for example for staff training. Funds available for ICT have been well used to provide computers in a well-designed computer room. Funds for special educational needs are used effectively, mostly to secure the services of staff from the local education authority.
69. The headteacher and governors have managed the financial aspects of the amalgamation very well. The school's current development plan is a very clear document based on a thorough system of evaluation carried out at all levels within the school. The governors, headteacher, teachers and office staff make sure that money is spent wisely by researching how to spend it and choosing the goods and services that represent the best value for the school. The school has a sizeable balance, but this is all accounted for and comprises extra funds related to the amalgamation and reserves set aside for the major work planned for the school's grounds.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

70. The headteacher, staff and governors, with support from the local education authority should:

1. Improve standards in information and communication technology throughout the school. To do this they should:

- ensure that pupils are taught a comprehensive programme of work in each class and year group;
- improve teachers' expertise and confidence with computers; and
- improve the range of software to enable a broader curriculum to be taught.

(Paras 8,9,24,29,67,89,103,114,123,128,130,133,153)

2. Improve the use made of test results, and assessment information from lessons, to set targets for individuals and groups of pupils and track their progress more closely.

(Paras 21,24,40,46,47,64,83,100,134,143,146)

3. Provide further challenges for higher attaining pupils. To do this they should:

- allow pupils to tackle more demanding problems in subjects like mathematics and science;
- get pupils to use computers regularly in their class work; and
- ensure pupils can use research skills to find out their own information in subjects like history and geography.

(Paras 8,9,12,22,29,61,89,98,103,105,123,126,128)

Other areas for improvement identified during the inspection are:

- (i) homework (paras 53,60,99);
- (ii) outside play area for reception children (para 78);
- (iii) pupils' annual reports (para 50); and
- (iv) formal recording of health and safety risks (para 42).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	67
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	39

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
5	20	35	39	1	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	20	238
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	N/a	24

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	49

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	28

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.6
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2000	13	18	31

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	12	13
	Girls	18	17	18
	Total	30	29	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (95)	94 (97)	100 (97)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	13	13
	Girls	18	18	18
	Total	30	31	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (92)	100 (95)	100 (97)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2000	17	19	36

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	10	15
	Girls	15	13	16
	Total	27	23	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	75 (86)	64 (86)	86 (94)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	11	14
	Girls	17	14	17
	Total	29	25	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81 (63)	69 (83)	86 (91)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	7
Pakistani	10
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	6
White	191
Any other minority ethnic group	4

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10.7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.2
Average class size	29.5

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	123

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32.5

Number of pupils per FTE adult	10
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	485868
Total expenditure	465402
Expenditure per pupil	1744
Balance brought forward from previous year	11930
Balance carried forward to next year	32396

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

280

Number of questionnaires returned

101

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	62	35	2	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	35	56	5	1	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	38	53	4	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	25	50	18	3	5
The teaching is good.	42	49	5	0	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	29	46	23	2	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	63	33	3	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	50	43	3	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	37	48	11	1	3
The school is well led and managed.	54	36	3	0	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	39	55	2	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	32	45	12	4	7

Parents feel that their child's annual report could be written in a clearer, more helpful, fashion.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

71. Children are admitted to the nursery in September following their third birthday and transfer to the reception and reception/Year 1 classes in the September of the year in which they are five. The ten oldest children transferring from the nursery to full-time school are taught in the mixed-age class. This arrangement makes it difficult for the teachers in this class to plan for the very wide ability range and to cater for the needs of all children. However, they tackle this difficult task with enthusiasm and achieve a large measure of success. It sometimes means that the curriculum is not the same for five year olds in both classes, but this does not have a detrimental effect on their learning.
72. When children start school their attainment is generally above what would be expected for children of this age in literacy, mathematics and personal, social and emotional development. This is not always the case as there are some years when children are closer to the levels found in most schools. This year, reception-aged children are making sound progress, overall and good progress in literacy. They are likely to well exceed the nationally recommended goals in the areas of communication, language and literacy and exceed them in mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world, by the end of the reception year. They are on course to meet the goals in the creative, physical and personal and social areas of learning.
73. The quality of teaching is good overall because it promotes such good progress in the nursery and the mixed-age class in particular. There is some good teaching in the reception class, but it is mainly satisfactory which means that progress slows down a little as most children approach the age of five. Very occasionally, the management of behaviour is weak in the reception class and this tends to slow the rate of progress. Support, throughout these classes, for children with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language is good throughout the six areas of learning.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

74. There is a strong emphasis placed on the personal, social and emotional development of the children, particularly in the nursery. Teaching in the nursery is very good because of the calm atmosphere created by the staff and very high expectations of the children's behaviour. Staff provide lively and interesting tasks to motivate the children to want to learn and provide the kind of activities where they will gain in independence. Children in the nursery choose their activities very sensibly and quietly. They share equipment and take turns with a high level of co-operation. For example, two children played with a train layout for over 20 minutes, discussing where the trains were going. Children try very hard to please and become engrossed in everything they do. Staff in all classes set good examples for the children by treating them with respect, valuing their individuality and expecting them to be responsible and to play together. This leads to trusting relationships and helps the children to understand one another's points of view. Adults in the reception and mixed-age classes promote children's personal development effectively by allowing children to make choices about some of the activities they undertake, for example playing in the sand and water. Children settle into routines quickly and come to school with confidence. When engaged in whole-class discussions, children take turns, concentrate when others are speaking and know to put up their hands if they have a particular point to make. Children are much better at this in the mixed-age class than they are in the reception class because the teachers

have higher expectations of children's application to work and their behaviour. In both classes many children concentrate on activities such as writing for increasingly long periods of time, but occasionally a few children in the reception class are not well behaved when they are not directly supervised.

Communication, Language and Literacy

75. Children are well on course to go well beyond the early learning goals by the time they leave the reception classes because of the very good teaching in nursery and good teaching in the other classes. In all classes teachers are particularly good at extending children's spoken language by taking every opportunity to ask them questions and getting them to expand their answers by giving reasons. During a lesson in the nursery looking at the characteristics of different animals, children made good comparisons between the stuffed fox, badger and owl. Children are very attentive in the nursery and mixed-age class; they listen with rapt attention, for example to the story of, 'Little Red Riding Hood' and know what they would say to the wolf, in a letter. In the nursery, the teacher helps children learn their letter sounds by sensitive and skilled questioning. Good use is made of appealing alphabet books and a 'secret' box of objects beginning with a certain letter. Children are delighted by these and make great strides in their learning. Reception age children make good progress in learning the sounds of letters and in reading, and are on track to well exceed the recommended goals. The highest attaining children read well beyond their years; reading fluently and expressively, and work out words like 'information' competently. Other children read simple texts and some common words. Nursery children quickly learn the enjoyment that can be gained from books and are very keen to talk about books and share them with adults. They know how to treat books carefully and many of the four year olds know that print has meaning. Children are interested in writing and often practise their writing by attempting to make signs and letter patterns in the nursery and reception classes. Children's progress in writing in the reception year is not as good as in reading. There is a good range of small equipment on the writing table in the reception class, which attracts children to try to write. Most children can form some letters correctly. A few are writing sentences or individual words. Children in the mixed-age class write words to say what the wolf was like and what he would eat. Staff of reception-aged children place an important emphasis on children learning to write. This is not as well taught as the other aspects of English because the school does not have a writing policy which outlines how skills in writing are to be taught. A strong feature of the teaching in all classes is the good use staff make of praise and encouragement. This lifts the self-esteem of the children and helps them to make effective progress.

Mathematical Development

76. Children are on course to exceed the early learning goals by the time they leave the reception classes. The teaching of mathematics is good overall. It is very good in the nursery, good in the mixed-age class and satisfactory in the reception class. It is this satisfactory teaching for the majority of the reception aged children that tends to lessen the pace of progress and causes the standards in mathematics to be slightly lower than those for literacy. Teachers provide many activities for children to count and learn about numbers and staff in the nursery take every opportunity to count out objects such as the biscuits and beakers needed for milk at snack time. The teacher makes learning fun by providing soft toys and 'food' for them when counting out objects to six. Children are quick to identify and name common shapes such as triangle, circle and square. Children in the reception classes enjoy learning to count to 50. They begin to recognise coins and learn their value. Higher attaining children shop for toys using 1p coins and can correctly order coins of up to a pound in value. Children check their

estimates when weighing objects and know which is lighter and which are heavier. In one reception/Year 1 lesson, which was typical of the best teaching for these young children, the teacher's energy and enthusiasm carried the children along in their well-paced learning of new mathematical vocabulary. Good learning was summed up at the end of the lesson when children enjoyed a real sense of achievement in having explored the ideas of weight in the context of heavy and light shopping bags and learnt to make direct comparisons between two different bags – a well resourced and imaginatively taught lesson. By contrast, in a reception class lesson, work was not so well targeted to children's individual needs and as a result a few children became restless and bored.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

77. Children make satisfactory progress in the reception year and by the time they reach the end of the reception year; they are on course to exceed the required standard. In the nursery much of the work in this area is learned through play, talk and through participation in practical activities. Teaching provides children with good opportunities to look closely at stuffed animals, for example and talk about what they see. As a result, they learn that owls have feathers not fur as one child suggested and that badgers' legs are short and stubby compared to the foxes'. Children in the nursery create well-constructed model robots from boxes using different fasteners and make simple models using construction kits. Children in the reception classes develop their model-making skills and in a well-taught group lesson built different types of walls and then tested the strength of them. These children gained a good basic idea of a 'fair' test. In the mixed-age class the teacher provides challenging and motivating geographical activities which show a good level of progress in the skills gained from the beginning of term. Children develop a good idea of maps through sequencing a route for the postman to take on his round. Children who speak little English show they understand stories and what they are to do by their pictures and through talking to adult interpreters. Children understand, as a result of good teaching, about the passage of time through their role-play in the 1900 schoolroom and through looking at Victorian washing items and comparing those used today. In the nursery the children are enthusiastic and keen to demonstrate their skills using the special keyboard and mouse. Children in the reception classes are equally keen to use computers and make satisfactory progress.

Physical Development

78. The teaching of physical development is satisfactory and children are on track to meet the early learning goals. Children in the nursery have daily opportunities to play outside and the staff make good use of the equipment they have to promote learning. They encourage children to ride their wheeled toys through obstacles and are imaginative in getting children to improve their balance and jumping techniques. Children climb, slide, jump and balance beanbags on various parts of their bodies with confidence and satisfactory control. They are enthusiastic about their physical activities and take turns with the wheeled toys very well, often playing imaginatively. Few opportunities are provided for reception age children to play outside with wheeled toys, but this is compensated for by having physical education lessons in the hall and outside. Children in reception bounce and catch large balls adroitly and are developing their skills in kicking a ball. Children have a satisfactory level of skill in using small equipment such as scissors. The planning for children to use a variety of small equipment permeates all areas of learning. Consequently, children have ample opportunities to practise and improve their skills in a safe way.

Creative Development

79. Children are on course at the end of the reception year to meet the early learning goals. The children particularly enjoy the imaginative play areas in which they can dress up and assume different roles. These areas contribute to the high standards in talking and listening. In the nursery the children's creative work is good and staff provide a beneficial balance of activities between those directed by the teacher and those chosen by the child. Children in the nursery and reception classes greatly enjoy making their own collages because the teaching provides a good range of enticing resources. Children try hard to get their collages as they want them and persevere for a long time using twirled and twisted paper adeptly. Children sing in tune and know songs by heart. Nursery children listen intently to 'Vivaldi' whilst appreciating the different parts of the violin the teacher shows them. In the reception class children are raring to pick up their musical instruments and many learn to play a complex rhythm accompanying 'Boom, Chicka Boom'. Children found it difficult not to play their instruments when they were supposed to be listening. This was because the teacher did not have good enough strategies for managing the class and as a consequence some time was wasted. The musical standards reached by children in the reception/Year 1 class are very high. Teaching is very well informed and children who are barely five can sing and play instruments as well as many six year olds.

ENGLISH

80. Currently standards achieved by eleven year olds are average and slightly improved on pupils' broadly average results in the national tests in 2000. Standards over the two years are no higher because a large proportion of pupils have special educational needs and as a result too few pupils manage to achieve the expected level for their age. The trend over time is impossible to judge because this is a new school, but standards in 1999, the year of amalgamation, were well above the national average. This was a year in which many pupils were capable of reaching the higher levels. Governors have set a very ambitious target for Year 6 pupils and strategies are in place to attempt to achieve it. The school may find it very difficult to reach this target because a significant minority of the current Year 6 class joined the school in the junior department with special educational needs. There may not be time for them to make up for any gaps in their knowledge and understanding.
81. The achievement of seven year olds has been well above average in recent years. However, current attainment is similar to that found in most schools because there are many pupils in the year group who find learning difficult and whose writing, in particular, is not as well developed as it could be.
82. Standards in reading are generally higher than for writing. The school has usefully identified writing as a priority for development and improvements, for example in handwriting, are already evident. Large classes in the juniors are split up with the help of additional staff so that weaknesses can be tackled more effectively. This strategy is working well.
83. Pupils listen thoughtfully to their teacher and to each other's contributions. During literacy lessons teachers give pupils good opportunities to speak at length and to explain their thinking. This results in good standards in speaking and effective learning. Teachers explain new ideas carefully and pupils respond sensibly to teachers' questions. Infant pupils demonstrate their knowledge of phonemes and say how words can be split into these. Teachers challenge pupils to think carefully and to express their ideas thoughtfully. A particularly effective example of speaking and listening was seen

when younger juniors took part in a formal debate about stereotyping of males and females and their roles in society. Pupils prepared their questions and answers very thoroughly and spoke graphically without embarrassment. Pupils approached the debate very sensibly and were very keen to air their views. The discussion generated was of a high level because the teacher had fired pupils' enthusiasm and encouraged parents to talk to their children about the issues at home. Sometimes, in other lessons throughout the school, there is not enough discussion at the end of lessons about what has been learnt and what needs to be improved and this has a limiting effect on pupils' learning.

84. Older juniors enjoy reading and often read at home. They choose their own reading material from class and school collections. They are fluent and read with good inflection and good understanding. They recall previous reading of 'Shakespeare' and 'Mark Twain' accurately and make inferences from the texts. Basic reading skills are used effectively to work out new words and they use the context of the passage to understand the meaning of unfamiliar words such as 'dysentery' and 'democratic'. Pupils who excel at reading assume the voices of the characters in the story and gain great pleasure from the text. Pupils have a good knowledge of a range of authors. They compare those they have studied in class and talk freely about those for whom they have a passion – popular authors such as the writer of the 'Harry Potter' books, 'Dick King Smith' and 'Jacqueline Wilson'. Younger pupils make sensible predictions about what might happen next in stories and explain what words might mean from gaining the sense of the sentence. Infant pupils are usually enthusiastic readers. Pupils who excel in reading are fluent, accurate and read with developing maturity. They have a wide range of skills, which enable them to read difficult texts with few problems. Other infant pupils acquire basic skills quickly. They read simple texts by sight and are able to attempt unknown words using the skills they have learned.
85. Teachers and other adults working in classes take care to ensure that reading skills are taught and reinforced regularly. A feature of the reading is the good teaching of pupils when the teacher guides pupils through a story or text. In these sessions teachers ensure pupils know what the text means at a deeper level than is immediately obvious and encourage pupils to think what the author was trying to convey and how this was achieved. Parents and teachers make good use of the reading record booklet to communicate to each other about what is successful and what needs to be developed in pupils' reading. This system is well used to help pupils make progress in their reading. Pupils know how to use the library and infant pupils know how to use the contents, index and glossary. Older juniors know how to use the library and find books quickly using the 'Dewey' system but they have too few opportunities to use it for researching for information – an issue of which the school is aware. There are also too few chances for pupils to use computers to find out the information they need.
86. Pupils are not as competent in their writing as they are with reading. The school identified that handwriting was in need of improvement and the adoption of a common policy and regular lessons has resulted in an improvement in handwriting. Most junior pupils do joined writing and by the time they leave most write with a growing maturity of style. Nevertheless, in some classes the idea of 'best quality' work is not always evident. This is not always the case and there are examples, in the lower juniors for example, of very well presented work. Pupils have great imaginations and original ideas in discussion, but the descriptive expression of their writing, and the length of their finished pieces, could be better. Pupils' work is usually technically correct as they write clear factual accounts and interesting stories, sometimes at great length. They have a wide vocabulary and good knowledge of grammatical conventions, which they use to good effect. Younger juniors often write a first draft and then re-draft their work.

They think carefully between these two stages and often make sensible and interesting changes in their final drafts.

87. The teaching of English is good in the infants and very good in the juniors. It ranges between satisfactory and excellent in the juniors. The school has only been open for a short time and it does not have policies for all aspects of English and practices differ in some classes. This accounts for the differences in teaching styles. The National Strategy for Literacy is generally well implemented throughout the school, but it is the emphasis on high quality writing that accounts for much of the difference in teaching. Good teaching occurs when teaching ensures that the writing tasks are well matched to what pupils can do. Effective questioning by teachers helps pupils to think clearly and to demonstrate their knowledge of words, when thinking about their contribution to the writing of a shared text and when thinking about parts of speech. Excellent and very good teaching is seen when the teacher inspires pupils by their enthusiasm and lively approach to lessons. In these lessons teachers introduce the work in novel ways, sometimes using music as a stimulus for writing. All teachers have good relationships with their class and this allows lessons to proceed at a good pace with few interruptions of misbehaviour. The good behaviour of the pupils was a hallmark of all the lessons seen. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, work with a good level of concentration when not directly supervised and they make good progress. Teachers keep the lessons moving at a very brisk pace and encourage pupils to widen their vocabulary and creativity by their questions and recap of new learning. They use praise well to raise pupils' self-esteem and as a result the pupils exhibit very positive attitudes in the lessons.
88. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. They are well supported by their teachers and the adults who work with them. They participate fully in all written and spoken work and adults and other pupils appreciate their contributions. Their achievements are similar to the expectations outlined in their individual education plans. Often those pupils who speak English as an additional language have become proficient in English by the time they leave, particularly if they have joined the school at three or five years of age. Older pupils who have been in school a short time make good progress because of the good level of support and sensitive targeting of tasks to their level of understanding. Specialist staff who act as interpreters enable pupils to reaffirm their learning and to address any misconceptions. A good level of communication between the specialist staff and the class teacher enables the class teacher to build effectively on the pupils' learning.
89. The subject co-ordinator is new to the post, but already is aware of what needs to be improved and has ideas how this may be achieved. The National Literacy Strategy is firmly embedded in the life of the school and in general teachers use it well. They concentrate well on the reading elements of the lesson and provide time for pupils to complete pieces of writing beyond the literacy lesson itself. However, ICT is not well used to supplement the work in English. Higher attaining pupils, however, do not receive enough opportunities to research and write at length in subjects like history and geography.

MATHEMATICS

90. Pupils' attainment at eleven, in terms of the number of pupils achieving the nationally expected level, has swung between above and below the average level achieved by schools nationally in the last two years. The above average attainment, in 1999, was more typical of previous results achieved by juniors before the amalgamation. In that year, the number of pupils achieving the expected level was well above the national

figure, but there were too few that scored at the higher levels. This lowered the school's average. The results in 2000 fell below national expectations because it was a year in which there was an unusually large number of pupils, about a third, who found learning difficult. Consequently, few pupils reached the higher levels and too many failed to reach the nationally expected level.

91. This year the school has set its sights high. The target is for 88 per cent of pupils to reach the expected level for eleven year olds and for about a third of the class to attain a higher level. Current attainment is more typical of many schools nationally and therefore the school has much to do to achieve its ambitious target with a year group that contains a sizeable number of pupils who find learning difficult. However, the school has already begun to tackle the gaps in pupils' knowledge and is on course to reach, or get very close to, its target. Since the amalgamation, the school is particularly conscious of ensuring that those pupils who began their education in the infant department build as firmly as possible on their previous successes.
92. The attainment of pupils at seven was very high in 1999 and went beyond that found in schools nationally in 2000. However, achievements at the end of the infants are variable depending on the attainment of pupils when they enter the school in the reception class and the number of pupils that join the school part way through the infants. For example, current standards are more in line with those found nationally because the year group contains many who find the work difficult and are in need of extra support and few that exceed the nationally expected level.
93. Achievements through the school lend weight to this picture of variable year groups – a fact that was mentioned by parents at their pre-inspection meeting. For example, currently in Years 4 and 5 there are many pupils who are capable of reaching higher levels. In fact about a third of pupils in Year 4 are currently achieving levels usually expected of eleven year olds. This is in marked contrast to the current achievements in Year 2 and Year 6. The rate of learning throughout the school is variable and linked to the teaching that ranges from excellent to satisfactory.
94. Teaching is generally good throughout the school and has a positive impact on pupils' learning particularly since the larger classes in the juniors have been split between two teachers for some lessons in the week. This successful strategy is, with one exception, making learning more productive because pupils receive the individual help that they need. Occasionally, in Year 6, the average attainers are taught by another teacher while the higher and lower attainers are taught by the class teacher. This method, which was devised to concentrate on the needs of the average attaining pupils, results in pupils that find difficulty with their learning being out of their depth for most of the lesson. These pupils are appropriately catered for in a special class established to help them achieve their best in the forthcoming national tests. However, even here, the relatively large number in the group sometimes militates against their individual achievement.
95. All teachers insist on good presentation of work. This helps pupils to be accurate in their calculations. The practice of asking pupils to record their work in different exercise books reserved for: arithmetic; shape, space and measures; and statistical work serves well to emphasise the different, but overlapping, skills involved in these three aspects of mathematics. The care with which teachers mark and generally look after these books sets a very good example to their pupils. However, the content of marking is too varied. Sometimes work is marked with just a few words added while on other occasions there is a full dialogue with pupils as to how they have done and

what they could do to improve. The latter improves pupils' understanding particularly in arithmetic.

96. The National Numeracy Strategy is well taught. All teachers understand the need for well-paced work that is properly pitched to meet the individual needs of pupils. Those pupils with a special educational need are well catered for with work that has been well adapted to suit their current level of achievement. Those for whom English is an additional language are generally included well in class discussions that assist the development of ideas before the written exercises have to be completed.
97. Teaching of a high standard exists in both the infants and the juniors. The hallmark of this teaching is the emphasis on genuine understanding of the ideas involved rather than necessarily, for example, the production of a volume of written calculations. This style of teaching was seen in a Year 1 and 2 class where the pupils were learning about metric weight. Teaching was very carefully organised so as to promote very good learning step by step to the point where pupils had acquired a really good understanding of the topic and could estimate reasonably the weight of various common items. This represented achievement for the pupils in Year 1, in particular, that was well beyond the standard expected for their age. Excellent teaching in the lower juniors went even further in promoting high achievement. Higher attaining pupils in Year 4, including those for whom English is an additional language, were able to think through the construction of various three-dimensional shapes in their mind by looking closely at two-dimensional cut outs of the shapes and record the eventual number of faces, edges and vertices. They tried, with some success, to discover a formula that would help them predict the number of these features in the future. Attainment in this first-rate lesson was more typical of eleven year olds.
98. Teachers and pupils enjoy interesting and lively mathematics lessons, but sometimes even in good lessons there are relative weaknesses that prevent learning from being as good as it could be. Sometimes higher attaining pupils are given extension work to complete that is too repetitive. This is the case for example when they have understood the teaching point after completing several examples, but then have to plough on until the end of the section leaving too little time to tackle the even more demanding problems that require collaborative thinking in a group. Moreover, sometimes discussions at the end of lessons do not concentrate enough on getting pupils to explain how they achieved an answer. Since the aims of the lesson are not always clearly explained at the beginning of the lesson, and pupils are not expected to say how well they think they have done in relation to them, learning is somewhat restricted, particularly in developing pupils' independence in thinking things out for themselves.
99. Pupils are usually quick at arithmetic. Teaching provides well-paced mental arithmetic sessions, which helps pupils to remember number facts and acquire agility when adding or subtracting. This was particularly well demonstrated in a Year 2 lesson where teaching was sharp, snappy and full of fun. Pupils' incorrect answers were used very well to make pertinent teaching points. Homework tasks are sometimes identified in the lesson plan and this has a beneficial effect on learning. This is not always the case. There is not a common approach to the setting of homework, which is a concern held by some parents.
100. There is a comprehensive system of testing in place that gives an annual picture of what pupils have achieved and what level they have reached. This is a new system that has been introduced since the process of amalgamation began. Currently, too little use is made of the test results to set individual targets for the pupils and identify in what

they need to improve. This is the most significant aspect for development in the school's overall provision for mathematics. The school is well aware that a more detailed knowledge of what individual pupils need to do to reach higher levels is essential if more ambitious targets are to be reached.

101. The management of the subject, for the new primary school, has begun very strongly. The co-ordinator has a great deal of experience and expertise. This was most ably demonstrated at a recent parents' evening at which teachers and pupils were able to induct parents into the benefits of the National Numeracy Strategy. Many parents stated how excellent the evening was in promoting the school's approach to the teaching of mathematics. The quality of teachers' planning is generally good, but computers are not used often enough in lessons to consolidate or extend learning.

SCIENCE

102. Standards of attainment for pupils' aged seven and eleven are broadly in line with the national average. Standards achieved by eleven year olds remain very similar to the average results achieved in the national tests in 2000 but below those achieved in 1999 when they were above the national average. This is because year groups vary so much in the number of pupils capable of reaching the higher levels. Similarly in the infants the current attainment of seven year olds, although satisfactory, is well below that achieved in 1999 and 2000. This is because there are many more pupils this year that find difficulty with their work. This is apparent not only in science but in English and mathematics as well.
103. Good teaching overall in the juniors is responsible for the substantial gains in knowledge and advances in the scientific skills of predicting, testing, recording and evaluating. For example, in a Year 6 study of reversible and irreversible changes in materials, most pupils gave good accounts of what they did and what they discovered. These accounts were very well presented and included a useful array of tables, charts and graphs. Higher attaining pupils often produce similar work but are more capable of expressing their conclusions in a more coherent way. Current standards in Year 6, whilst satisfactory, are restricted somewhat by insufficient opportunities for pupils, particularly those capable of more difficult work, to conduct advanced tests of their own devising and to use information gained from independent research on computers, for example.
104. Achievements are higher in the lower juniors where these opportunities already exist. In one lesson in Year 4, where achievements were well in advance of that found in other schools, pupils were asked to make electric circuits that lit bulbs in series and in parallel. The teacher introduced them to the challenge by using the analogy of farm gates and fields. The pupils' enthusiasm for this kind of demanding task was infectious. Their desire to find out and the teacher's skilful probing with apt questions made the lesson very productive.
105. Standards attained by seven year olds are satisfactory due to sound teaching that concentrates mainly on a thorough grounding in the basic knowledge related to the various topics being studied. Consequently, pupils know, for example, about forces, magnetism, materials and the human body. This is because lessons contain productive discussions between teachers and their pupils that promote good understanding about cause and effect. For example, in a Year 2 lesson about the force of air and how it affects the air inside a balloon, the teacher asked a series of very relevant questions that required the class to think really hard about what they observed. Teaching is well organised, but often relies too heavily on worksheets on which pupils are required to record their findings. These sometimes contain extra challenges for

higher attaining pupils, but, overall, there is too little emphasis placed on pupils using their own words to describe what they did and what they discovered. The sheets tend to limit pupils to one word or short sentence answers and restrict opportunities for more challenging activities with no set answer.

106. In both key stages teachers manage their pupils well. This, coupled with the very good behaviour of pupils, ensures little interruption to pupils' learning in lessons. In practical activities, pupils can be relied upon to behave sensibly; for example, pupils handle the equipment with care and safety. The learning within lessons is relaxed because relationships between the teachers and their pupils are good. All teachers try to ensure pupils broaden their knowledge and understanding of scientific language. Marking is generally satisfactory, but too often teachers miss the chance to add comments to pupils' work which indicates to the pupils how their work might be improved. Very little use is made of ICT to support the teaching of the subject; what does take place is chiefly seen in the infants. In some classes pupils have satisfactorily drawn graphs of their findings on forces and have used suitable software to label pictures of body parts accurately.
107. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language make similar progress to the rest of the class. Teachers give effective additional support for pupils with special educational needs to ensure that their work in science meets their requirements. On occasions, these pupils have the support of an additional adult as well as the teacher. Pupils for whom English is an additional language generally acquire the correct scientific vocabulary and their progress in science is not hindered in any way.
108. In the short time since the school opened the subject co-ordinator has made a very good start to monitoring provision of the subject. National Curriculum test results have been evaluated and lessons learnt for how the subject can be taught more effectively. However, a detailed analysis of pupils' work has not been undertaken to identify strengths and weaknesses in order to inform future developments. Nevertheless, the school has recognised that the differences in teaching and the way pupils learn needs to be the subject of a review.

ART AND DESIGN

109. Pupils at age seven and eleven achieve a good standard. Throughout the school, pupils make good progress in the acquisition of skills and their understanding of art and design as an expressive medium due to the consistently good teaching they receive. This includes pupils with special educational needs.
110. Younger pupils produce interesting collages and paper sculptures. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to explore and experiment with a variety of materials. Resources that are used are highly motivating. Pupils show care and thought in their composition and choice of materials. They concentrate closely on cutting fringes or sticking cellophane onto card. Pupils investigate, through the skills of weaving, the qualities of a variety of natural and made materials. They gain a sensory experience of the materials and enhance their expressive language as they describe what the products feel like. They show an appreciation of colour and texture in their talk. Year 2 pupils learn that material can be changed by the use of paint. They find the task of fabric painting challenging but those who master the technique well and learn to control the fine brush strokes produce a pleasing effect.
111. The teaching uses the work of other artists very effectively to engage pupils' interests and provide for the development of skills. Teachers choose the examples well to illustrate the technique they are teaching. Clear progression can be seen by pupils in

Years 1 and 2 who study Van Gogh's self-portraits before attempting their own. They make a start with pencil self-portraits, move on to pastel portraits of friends and finally self-portraits in paint, learning to use flesh coloured tones. Year 2 pupils extended the study of faces to make three-dimensional sculptures using quick setting clay. They achieved a good standard, delineating well the features and in some cases producing a recognisable result.

112. Pupils in Year 4 investigate line in perspective drawing. Using their sketchbooks, they identify the focal point on the page for their work. The teacher's very effective step-by-step demonstration enables all the pupils to make considerable progress and achieve a good drawing of buildings with depth and perspective. Year 6 pupils design and make hats. Whilst some making techniques are relatively unsophisticated, the quality and variety of the finished designs are good.
113. The quality of teaching and learning is generally good, but complemented by some very good lessons. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject, which helps them to prepare well-focused lessons. They encourage pupils to look carefully at colour, shape and form. As a result, pupils acquire a vocabulary which they can use to describe their own work and to appreciate the work of others. Lessons are carefully planned for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language who receive extra help with technical language.
114. There is a good balance of instruction by the teacher and practical time in which pupils can develop and refine their technique. Pupils work well with high levels of concentration. They can work co-operatively in pairs. They evaluate their work constructively, being frank when they observe deficiencies. They know what is successful and what needs to be done to take their work further. The opportunities that teachers give them to talk about their work enhance their speaking and listening skills. Teachers build successfully on previous learning, planning challenging activities which motivate pupils to sustain interest over time and to produce good results. Pupils receive good support from classroom assistants who question effectively and give encouragement. The main shortcomings in teaching relate to the limited use of computers in art lessons and the narrow multicultural dimension to the curriculum.
115. The subject is well managed. The school has adopted the national guidelines for art and design, but has not yet developed a school scheme of work, to provide relevant links to other areas of the curriculum. The school acknowledges the need to include the use of ICT and an enlargement of the multicultural dimension in its development plan.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

116. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve standards at seven and eleven which are typical for their age. Pupils' work is completed with care and enthusiasm showing good attitudes and thoughtful working practices.
117. By the time pupils are eleven, they have a sound experience of three-dimensional work, for example, making castles and houses to illustrate fairy tales they study in literacy. These older pupils can finish products showing a range of individual ideas using a variety of materials. They have produced well-finished bridges, for example, based on the various styles of bridges found around the world. Their construction techniques, however, are undemanding. They use paper clips and glued straws but they have no advanced building skills with resistant materials nor do they make accurate

measurements. Moreover, they do not undertake an evaluation of what works well in their finished product.

118. Younger pupils make masks using a range of materials. Their design sheets show that they begin by making very clear decisions in their planning, taking account of the feelings they want the mask to reflect. They consider at the planning stage the materials and the equipment they are going to need. They evaluate their work when it is finished, identifying what they could have done differently and how they could improve their work. These pupils can explain fluently how they accomplished the task. The written planning and evaluation link well to their work in literacy where they are learning to organise instructions sequentially.
119. Progress in the juniors is often good as a result of good teaching. For example, pupils in Year 4 drew up a design proposal for a reading light, which had to be fastened to a helmet or a hat and have a simple on/off switch. This work enabled the pupils to apply their knowledge about electrical circuits acquired in science in a purposeful and practical way. They saw how their prior knowledge and understanding could be used to achieve a working result. Pupils in Year 5 study sound and hearing in science. They too put this knowledge to a practical and creative use by carefully designing a variety of musical instruments. Working co-operatively in pairs, these pupils investigated how to achieve a different pitch on stringed and on percussion instruments. They understood how the choice of materials and the accuracy with which they made their instrument would affect the finished product.
120. A school scheme of work has been developed for pupils age five to seven which links to other subjects and in particular to science. National guidelines are used for the older pupils but teachers are monitoring their success with a view to altering some units of study to develop more relevant cross-curricular themes. The co-ordinator has rightly prioritised the development of a school scheme of work to cover the whole age range. There is no formal assessment of the pupils' work. It is informally monitored by the co-ordinator through the observation of displays and discussions with the teachers, but this lack of assessment has a limiting effect on progress throughout the school.

GEOGRAPHY

121. There is a good focus of interest in geography in the school and pupils of all age ranges are more knowledgeable about maps and how to use them than is usual. However, the emphasis the school has placed on literacy and numeracy in recent years has affected the standard of pupils' work in geography; some pupils could be achieving more. Although some higher attaining pupils in Year 6 are achieving above the standard one would expect, in general standards are average for pupils by the time they are seven and eleven.
122. Seven year old pupils talk well about their local environment. This is because teachers have used the locality well to help pupils establish an early understanding of describing places in terms of simple geographical features. In response to well-directed questions pupils begin to recognise how places have become the way they are. This was especially well done in a lesson when pupils described how features of a park had been spoilt by vandalism. Teachers use good resources including computer programs to develop pupils' understanding of plans and maps, and their uses. As a result, pupils make satisfactory progress. In one activity the teacher set a challenging task of drawing a plan of an area not in direct line of sight. All pupils tried hard, talking to each other and struggled to achieve the objective. Not all of them did, but all learnt a good deal about mapping in the trying. Teachers rightly focus on the need for pupils to talk

about their observations and opinions, making teaching in the infants satisfactory with many good aspects.

123. Teachers in the juniors effectively build on skills in map work established in the infants so that by the time pupils are eleven they confidently use maps and plans in a range of scales in their current investigations. However, other geographical skills are not developed systematically through each year, and in particular work is not always set to challenge the thinking of pupils with higher attainment. This is not the case in Year 4 where the teacher expected all pupils to identify the geographical features of an Indian village but posed more complex queries to be investigated by those who learn more quickly. As a result, all pupils tried their best with their work and learnt at a good rate. In Year 6, the teacher used homework well to extend pupils' understanding of how to select their own sources of information when studying a chosen area. Many pupils use computers well at home. For example, one pupil studying Ben Nevis chose to illustrate text with a picture, which he had picked up from the Tourist Information web site. Pupils have not had, however, sufficient experience in using ICT in investigations such as setting up a data file to analyse findings. Those without a computer at home do not do as much research on the Internet as the other pupils. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' presentation of work and pupils respond well to this. For example, in Year 5, on a topic on water, all pupils, including those whose home language is not English, produced labelled drawings and plans and maps with great care. However, teachers do not plan sufficient opportunities for pupils to collect and record evidence from fieldwork nor to analyse and draw conclusions, and this affects pupils' overall achievements.
124. The subject leader is keen to develop the subject further. The well thought-out plan for improvement recognises the fact that teachers' planning needs monitoring carefully to ensure that the new scheme effectively builds on all aspects of pupils' learning. The school has not yet had time to evaluate its planning or to ensure that those pupils who do not have computers at home are not disadvantaged.

HISTORY

125. The attainment of seven year olds is as expected for their age although some pupils who learn quickly have more historical knowledge than is generally expected. Pupils aged eleven have better than usual knowledge of historical facts. They do not, however, have a good enough understanding of historical enquiry and overall the standard of their work is average. The standard is not as high as it could be mainly because the school has been concentrating on literacy and numeracy, which has affected standards in history.
126. Satisfactory teaching in the infants has helped pupils develop a keen interest in the past. By the time they are seven, pupils can use simple historical vocabulary to compare the past with their own lives. For example, those pupils who learn more slowly use the terms 'in the olden days' and 'in the past' correctly when looking at earlier forms of transport such as horse and carriage or a steam train. Those of higher attainment can talk about a time when 'electricity was not invented' when retelling the life of Florence Nightingale. Pupils who learn more quickly and those of average attainment have begun to understand how to order events to match the passing of time. Teachers use stories and resources well, often obtaining artefacts which give pupils a real feel for the past, for example an old whipping top for a study on toys. This results in pupils in Year 2 remembering interesting details from their lessons such as the 'dirty' conditions in the Crimean hospital. However, teachers have not planned enough opportunities for pupils to question why events happened or how we know about the

past, or for pupils to record their knowledge and opinions. In consequence, pupils have not reached the higher standard which some would be capable of, in particular, the higher attaining pupils.

127. The picture is similar in the juniors. Satisfactory teaching where work is carefully planned and good resources used has helped pupils develop factual knowledge. In Year 6, pupils, including those who learn more slowly and those who are learning to speak English in addition to their first language, have developed a well-rounded view of the main events and persons of the Victorian period. They can draw conclusions about the stark differences in life of rich and poor, and they make insightful comparisons with life today. For example, a pupil with special educational needs wrote tellingly of life in a Victorian home: 'The sweeping, polishing, dusting, washing clothes and washing the pots had to be done by hand. There were no machines.' Teachers use homework very well. Pupils gain knowledge from their families, which is then reinforced in the class.
128. However, pupils' critical skills in evaluating information from different sources and in asking questions about the past are not as good as they could be because teaching has not focused sufficiently on these aspects. This is particularly true for higher attaining pupils associated with their limited use of computers for research purposes. This is not the case in Year 4 where teaching is of a very high standard. In this year group pupils are inspired, challenged and presented with work, which develops all their skills, particularly how to ask and answer questions about the past. During one lesson on the Viking invasion, pupils set about solving the 'mystery' of Lindisfarne with an excess of determination and enthusiasm. This was expertly channelled into using various source materials, weighing up options, and drawing on their previous learning. As a result, pupils in this year group can already make links between two historical periods. For example, one pupil said, "I think it was the Romans who brought silver to Britain", as he examined a silver artefact supposedly found at Lindisfarne. High attainment indeed!
129. The subject leader has a good plan of action to develop the subject. The school is aware that it needs to address the problem of helping to broaden teaching in all classes to challenge pupils to think more independently so that by the time pupils are in Year 6 they are working at a higher standard, particularly those pupils who learn more quickly.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

130. The standards attained by pupils at the age of seven are broadly typical of those expected for their age, but standards are well below those expected of pupils at the age of eleven because pupils have not had enough experience with computers.
131. The strength of the present provision across the school is the development of word processing. The opening of the new computer suite and the recent training for the majority of teachers has ensured a rapid rise in standards from a low starting point, particularly in the juniors. The majority of seven and eleven year olds attain standards commensurate with their age and many pupils achieve good standards in word processing. The pupils have quickly learned how to log on, access software, maximise windows and prepare the computer screen for word processing. However, for many pupils keyboard skills are slow. Pupils have a good knowledge of how to choose the style and size of font and use the scroll bars in drop down menus. More advanced skills are taught – for example, in Year 2 pupils have used the digital camera and with help are able to combine text and photograph. In Year 6 pupils have applied their newly learned skills to create articles about Victorian times and effectively illustrate them with pictures, taken from a data bank, which they have to position and re-size appropriately.

132. For pupils aged five to seven, the teaching is satisfactory and teachers are confident within the present range of work undertaken. Teachers provide a good variety of learning opportunities for pupils, often in a good context by linking the activities to the current topic. As part of a topic about themselves, pupils have collected data - for example, on their eye colours, and used simple software to produce charts, which they print out without the help of an adult. Similarly, teachers introduce pupils to other software. In geography, Year 2 pupils have produced street plans of their locality, which enables them to draw roads and drag and drop in images of local buildings such as houses and shops. In science, they have labelled parts of the human body with specifically designed software. Teachers give insufficient regular attention to such areas as control technology to ensure that pupils build up their skills in small steps of learning. In the computer suite pupils often work in pairs at the computers and are enthusiastic about their work but sometimes one pupil will dominate the keyboard. In these situations, there is the need to establish better working practices.
133. Junior pupils receive too narrow a curriculum and this causes standards in teaching to be unsatisfactory. This is partly due to the lack of a sufficient range of resources and the unreliability of some computers in the classrooms. However, too little use is made of what is already available and the provision between classes is inconsistent. Consequently, pupils do not receive adequate time to develop their skills. Beyond word processing, there is little continuity in pupils' learning year on year. Nevertheless, there are pockets of effective teaching in all the classes. For example, in Year 3, pupils have used graphic software to create a cover for their topic books and Year 4 pupils have worked through a problem-solving program linked to science and design. In Year 5 pupils have drawn graphs and Years 5 and 6 have experienced the uses of an adventure program. Recent training has improved teacher expertise, but there is some way to go before there is enough confidence to teach the full breadth of the curriculum.
134. Across the school, very little is being done to assess pupils' skills, apart from Year 2 where the teacher has kept individual records of pupils' word-processing skills. This lack of knowledge of what the pupils can or cannot do also contributes to the fragmentation in learning of pupils, many of whom bring in a range of expertise from experiences gained outside school. These experiences are not being built on successfully.
135. The new computer suite has provided the opportunity for pupils to access the Internet. Pupils in the juniors have been receiving their first few experiences of logging on and accessing, for example, information about Greek gods. Teachers are beginning to gain confidence in leading this kind of work. The most confident teaching provides worthwhile activities that build on knowledge gained in previous lessons.
136. Overall, pupils have too few opportunities to discuss the use to which ICT is put, both inside and outside school, although individual pupils bring in a wealth of knowledge gained outside school.
137. The school has rightly identified within its school improvement plan the need to give a high priority to the subject's development. Already the new computers are having a significant impact on the quality of pupils' learning. There are satisfactory planning arrangements in place for the subject's development and the recently appointed subject co-ordinator has begun to modify these plans in the light of progress.

MUSIC

138. Standards achieved by pupils are generally typical for their age at seven and eleven. Pupils have a positive approach to the subject, particularly in singing, which is of a high standard in Year 6. This high standard in singing is the result of general class work coupled with the high quality teaching that all pupils in the juniors receive in their weekly singing practice. This highlight of the week, for many pupils aged seven to eleven,

made an excellent contribution to the school's provision for spiritual, social and cultural development as well as augmenting the music curriculum in a rich way. It bore no comparison with a traditional hymn practice. Pupils progressed from beating out the rhythm of a Beatles' CD track to singing well-chosen songs about Jonah and Joseph with great energy and dynamics. The entire session, which included singing in two parts, was characterised by good humour and expert teaching of breathing and listening to the sounds being made.

139. Despite this excellent teaching of singing, standards are only as expected for eleven year olds because this type of teaching has only just begun. Prior to this, pupils in the juniors have experienced patchy provision. The degree of confidence held by teachers has varied from year to year making learning uneven. There is a general weakness in composition. Pupils have not had enough experience in using their voices and instruments to compose their own pieces of music.
140. Pupils' attainment by the age of seven is as would be expected across the range of activities. The pattern of teaching and learning is similar to that found in the juniors. Pupils have the weekly opportunity to sing together with the music co-ordinator. Consequently, the standard of singing is good. Most pupils can clap and tap rhythms well and sing in tune. Enthusiasm for learning is good, with pupils enjoying music in their dance lessons as well. For example, seven year old pupils spoke very enthusiastically about composing a dance to the Snowman music.
141. Teaching overall is satisfactory throughout the school although some teaching in the infants is very good. There is some excellent teaching in the lower juniors. This lively and very knowledgeable work exists alongside generally satisfactory teaching. As a result, pupils' learning ranges from lessons in which, for example, knowledge is imparted and skills of rhythm and pitch are mastered in a suitable fashion, to ones in which pupils surpass even their own expectations of success in a way that leaves them buzzing with excitement. The arrangement to employ a music specialist from the local educational authority to teach several classes in the juniors, while their teacher observes to build up their own confidence, is working satisfactorily. The strength of this method is the way in which a specialist demonstrates singing and musical appreciation. However, the method of seating all pupils, in these large classes, on chairs throughout the lesson leaves little scope for active participation in group composing, for example. This limits pupils' learning. In the best lessons pupils are all actively involved from the moment the lesson begins. In one lower junior lesson, pupils walked silently into the hall in a rhythmic way in time to the metronome. They then proceeded to learn the difference between pulse and rhythm by listening to a well-chosen Robbie Williams CD track and developing their group rap compositions that involved learning about dynamics, pulse, rhythm and texture, all in one activity. Superb teaching ensured that learning was well discussed by the class in groups and between the teacher and the whole class. By the end pupils were disappointed to have to go home. Attainment for these nine year olds was much higher than is expected for their age. Similarly, in the infants, achievement goes beyond expectations in the class with reception and Year 1 pupils. The sheer enthusiasm of the teaching is passed on to the pupils who thoroughly enjoy being conducted to play percussion instruments while following picture symbols that guided their music making.
142. Pupils enjoy a wide range of extra-curricular music activities. Many instruments are taught by visiting teachers and pupils demonstrate their singing and playing well in school productions and special events – for example, the Harvest Festival.

143. The co-ordinator is beginning to play a leading role in ensuring that the curriculum is organised and resources are ready. The main challenge in managing the subject is the general lack of confidence shown by many teachers in the juniors. As a result skills learnt are not developed well year by year. A great deal has been achieved since September 2000 in providing a coherent curriculum and some specialist teaching, but as yet there is not enough observation of teaching and discussion about what works well and what needs to be improved.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

144. Pupils attain standards that are broadly typical of those found in other schools by the time pupils reach the age of seven and eleven. Pupils receive a well-balanced programme of work with a major focus on gymnastics, games and dance. Additional activities include swimming, outdoor and adventurous activities. For example, older pupils undertake a residential visit in the summer term where they enjoy outdoor pursuits and develop their skills in ICT. Standards in swimming are higher at the age of eleven than those found in most schools.
145. Teaching is generally good throughout the school. Teachers pay close attention to health and safety issues and pupils have a good understanding of the need to gently exercise their muscles before and after activities. Teachers manage their pupils well and any uncooperative attitudes are tackled quickly, but the majority of pupils have very good attitudes to their work and the learning is good. Lessons generally build well on the previous week's learning. However, one unsatisfactory lesson was observed. This was a dance lesson that lacked the necessary focus on skill development to raise satisfactorily the levels of pupils' performance.
146. The pupils in Year 6 compose their own dance routines based on music in the style of the American West. They are able to follow the beat and in groups develop effective narratives to the music. They dance in lines, in circles and linked together. The more polished performers give greater expression to their dance through such actions as exaggerated arm movements to give emphasis. In Year 2 the teacher uses well-chosen instruments as the stimulus to dance which enables pupils to display a satisfactory range of contrast in their movements. Whilst teachers make every effort to talk about the pupils' work, most staff make too little use of evaluation either by themselves or by pupils to raise standards sufficiently. In gymnastics, some particularly effective teaching was seen in the infants. In this lesson, the teacher made better use of demonstration. Consequently, these young pupils pointed their toes to improve levels of performance and used a variety of finishing shapes in their movements. Older pupils in Year 6 have learned how to connect skills, techniques and ideas into controlled flowing movements of a satisfactory standard.
147. In the one games lesson observed at Year 4 the standards were good. The teacher's enthusiasm rubbed off on the children who, on a cold wet afternoon, gave their all throughout the lesson. General skills such as throwing, catching and knowledge of simple attack and defence techniques were good and pupils made good progress. They quickly organised themselves into the correct groupings and knew exactly what was required of them in each activity.
148. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is good. Sometimes they have the additional support of an adult helper or the extra attention of the teacher and this has a beneficial effect on their progress. Pupils for whom English is an additional language achieve standards very much in line with the rest of the class because teaching is well adjusted to their needs.

149. The accommodation is good and used well. A great deal of effort has been put in to ensure resources are good and effectively support the teaching of the subject. For example, new fixed equipment has recently been installed for gymnastics. A good programme of extra-curricular activities is provided for pupils, which includes football, netball, rounders, swimming and ball skills. In addition, the school takes part in a variety of inter-school team games. These activities extend the curriculum well and make a strong contribution to pupils' social development.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

150. The standards for seven and eleven year old pupils are in line with the expectations set out in the locally agreed syllabus and supported by the national guidelines. Sound progress is made as pupils acquire a more detailed knowledge of religious beliefs and practices. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal, social, spiritual and cultural life as pupils consider their membership of various communities and increase their awareness of the diversity of world religions.
151. Pupils in Year 2 clearly recollect previous learning on the significance of the Christian festivals of Christmas, Easter and Harvest due to the good questioning by their teacher. They know that there are festivals, which are celebrated by other religious groups. These pupils have a good understanding of the Passover and can explain clearly the symbolism of the components of the Seder meal. Pupils in Year 5 are helped to develop a good understanding of the symbolism which is significant in Christianity. They understand well the significance of Holy Communion and can relate it appropriately to the Last Supper of Christ and his disciples. They know the significance and importance of baptism to Christians. Pupils in Year 6 study sacred texts. When questioned they can identify the principle religions of the world and recollect significant aspects of Islam, Judaism, Christianity, Hinduism and Buddhism.
152. The teaching is good throughout the school. There are high expectations of behaviour, which result in pupils being attentive and concentrating well. Teachers have good relations with pupils, which is helpful in developing pupils' confidence to share their views. Lessons take account of pupils' prior experiences and skilful questioning allows pupils to show what they know. Teachers plan work which matches the needs of pupils, which ensures that those with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their abilities. When pupils record their work, activities are chosen appropriately to cover the range of ability. Teachers question well, provide clear explanations and encourage pupils to use appropriate language specific to the subject. Pupils' written work shows that they are developing a good understanding of the richness and diversity inherent in various religions.
153. The subject is well managed by a committed and confident co-ordinator who is clear about what needs to be achieved. There are good resources, which are well used, although little or no use is made of ICT to support the subject.