

INSPECTION REPORT

WHITWELL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Worksop

LEA area: Derbyshire

Unique reference number: 112649

Headteacher: Mr T Ray

Reporting inspector: Mr J D Eadie
20191

Dates of inspection: 10th - 13th June 2002

Inspection number: 245195

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Southfield Lane
Whitwell
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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr K Stevenson

Date of previous inspection: March 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
20191	J D Eadie	Registered inspector	Science Information and communication technology	Information about the school The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
19430	E T Hall	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 parents?
11528	M Wainwright	Team inspector	Equality of opportunity Mathematics Design and technology Physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
28686	E Walker	Team inspector	Provision for pupils with special educational needs English Geography History	
2818	G Warner	Team inspector	Areas of learning for children in the foundation stage Art and design Music Religious education	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Whitwell Primary school is situated in the village of Whitwell, an old mining village on the borders of Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire. The school takes children from the ages of three to eleven. There are 257 pupils in the school, of whom 26 are in the reception class and a further eight are of reception age in a mixed-age class with pupils in Year 1. A further 47 children attend the nursery part-time. The school has rather fewer pupils than it did five years ago as the number of children in the area is dropping, though this decline now appears to have stopped. The village is composed of very mixed housing, although there are some areas of deprivation. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is broadly in line with the national average. A significant number of pupils leave and join the school at times other than the usual time. Almost all the pupils are of white British heritage and all speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is below average and the number of pupils with statements of special need is about what one would expect to find in a school of this size. There is a range of special needs represented, but the largest proportion have severe learning difficulties. On entry to the school most children have levels of attainment below those expected nationally.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Whitwell Primary School provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. Although standards are below average by the end of Year 6, the pupils make sound progress through the school and achieve satisfactorily. The quality of teaching is good, though the overall quality of leadership and management is unsatisfactory. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The quality of teaching and learning is good overall.
- Children in the nursery and those of reception age are given a good start to their education and make good progress.
- Good procedures and policies have been put in place to address the needs of those pupils with special educational needs.
- A good start has been made to assessing the pupils' attainment in English and mathematics and tracking their progress.
- There are good procedures for promoting good behaviour and for ensuring that bullying is dealt with effectively. They are largely successful.

What could be improved

- The effectiveness of the management of the school.
- Standards in English throughout the school and in mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT) by the end of Year 6.
- The quality of the curriculum in other subjects, particularly in Years 3 to 6.
- The quality of marking and recording the assessments that are currently being made.
- The programme of monitoring the effectiveness of the curriculum.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in March 1998 and has made satisfactory progress since then. Four of the five key issues from that report have been addressed effectively. For example, the general weaknesses noted in teaching have been eliminated. However, there is still insufficiently clear direction for the school, typified by inconsistencies in a number of areas, for example in the quality of teaching and curriculum planning. Standards have been

variable since the last inspection for a number of reasons, but they have improved significantly at the end of Year 2 this year. There is work to be done in restructuring management, but the school has satisfactory capacity to move forward.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			Similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
English	D	C	E	D	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	E	D	E	D	
Science	E	E	E	E	

The well below average results for 2001 in the table above were largely due to the relative abilities of the pupils taking the tests. Statistics show that the pupils who had completed the entire course from the tests at the end of Year 2 in 1997 made sound progress, though it was unsatisfactory in science. There is no trend upwards in standards at this age over the years, although it must be remembered that a significant number of pupils leave and join the school at times other than the usual time. Targets above the expected levels of achievement for these pupils were set in English and mathematics and they were just missed in 2001. By the end of Year 2, standards have also been variable over the years, although the unconfirmed results for this year show a significant improvement. The findings of the inspection confirmed this, as the inspectors' judgement is that standards are below average in English, mathematics and science in Year 6, and in English in Year 2. Standards are better in other classes in Years 3 to 6. Standards in mathematics and science in Year 2 are average. Standards in religious education are average and in ICT, design and technology and geography are below the expected levels by the end of Year 6. The children enter the nursery with levels of attainment below those expected and they make good progress in the nursery and reception classes, to reach average levels of attainment by the time they reach compulsory school age. Overall, the pupils achieve satisfactorily throughout the school.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	The majority of pupils have good attitudes to their work. Although most pupils have positive attitudes to their school, a significant minority of older pupils do not.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in class is generally good. It is not as good in other areas of the school and is satisfactory overall. There has been an unusual number of justified exclusions in recent years, limited to very few pupils.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships in the school and the pupils' personal development are satisfactory.

Attendance	Levels of attendance are broadly average, although there is a higher than usual rate of unauthorised absence.
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TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. The teaching of English and mathematics is satisfactory overall and the pupils learn the skills of literacy and numeracy appropriately. The teaching of the children in the nursery and of reception age is good and often very good. The teachers of these children plan to provide a variety of activities that promote good learning, resulting in these children making good progress. A particular strength of the teaching throughout the school is the way that the teachers involve the pupils in their own learning by sharing what they expect the pupils to learn at the start of almost every lesson. In most lessons the teachers also return to this objective at the end of the lesson so that the pupils can see how successful their learning has been. Another strong feature is the way that the Education Care Officers are involved in the pupils' learning. They are given good guidance in what they are expected to do and support the pupils well, particularly those with special educational needs. The teachers do not always have sufficiently high expectations of what the pupils can achieve, and this sometimes affects the learning of the more able pupils, who do not always achieve as well as they could.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Some literacy and numeracy sessions are too long and insufficient time is spent teaching some other subjects. The school does not provide a sufficiently broad, balanced and relevant curriculum for the pupils in Years 3 to 6. The curriculum is satisfactory for the pupils in Years 1 and 2 and very good for the children in the nursery and those of reception age.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The school makes satisfactory provision for the pupils with special educational needs and these pupils make satisfactory progress relative to their abilities.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school makes satisfactory provision for the pupils' personal development. The provision for their cultural development is unsatisfactory as the pupils are not given sufficient awareness of the range of cultures represented in society today.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares well for its pupils. Although there are satisfactory procedures in place for the assessment of the pupils' attainment, these assessments are not used satisfactorily to plan for the pupils' future learning.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	Although the school tries hard to involve parents and there is a satisfactory partnership with parents, there are a number of areas that could be improved. For example, there is very good information in the governors' annual report to parents and the school prospectus. However, parents receive only limited information on the curriculum and homework is not used consistently by teachers. The Friends of Whitwell Primary

	School Association is an asset to the school.
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HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff is unsatisfactory overall. The headteacher knows and cares pastorally for the pupils and supports the families and community well. However, there are too many inconsistencies in the way that procedures are carried out and a number of co-ordinators do not have a clear understanding of their responsibilities.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil their responsibilities well. They are knowledgeable, well-informed and supportive of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school does not evaluate its performance effectively. Although monitoring and evaluation groups have been set up within the school, they have been ineffective in ensuring consistency in implementing the curriculum, for example.
The strategic use of resources	There are sufficient staff. Resources for learning are satisfactory. There are shortcomings in the accommodation as some classrooms are cramped and two have to be used as thoroughfares to get to other rooms. There is a very attractive outdoor environment. All resources are used effectively and the school applies the principles of best value satisfactorily.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • The school expects their children to work hard. • The school is approachable. • Their children are making good progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Levels of homework. • The school working more closely with parents. • The range of activities outside lessons. • The information they receive about their children's progress.

The inspection team agrees with all positive parental views. However, the judgements of the inspection are that there is a satisfactory range of activities outside lessons and that parents receive satisfactory information about their children's progress. The school tries hard to involve parents, but with limited success. The inspectors agree that levels of homework are not satisfactory.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Standards of work seen in the inspection in English, mathematics and science are below average by the end of Year 6. The pupils of all ability levels achieve satisfactorily during their time in the school. Standards have been very variable since the last inspection.

Strengths in standards achieved are:

- provisional results show improvement in the national test results at the end of Year 2 this year;
- the progress that children make in the Foundation Stage¹;
- standards in experimental and investigative science.

Areas for development are:

- standards in English;
- standards in mathematics, science, ICT, design and technology and geography at the end of Year 6;
- the pupils' progress is inconsistent through the school.

2. Evidence from the inspection shows that standards in English, mathematics and science are below average for the current Year 6. However, standards are better in Years 4 and 5. The current Year 6 is a cohort that has taken in a number of pupils during their course from Year 3 to Year 6. The school has started to collect data to track the progress of pupils from Years 3 to 6. These figures show that this progress is variable between year groups, although satisfactory overall. The school has taken measures to address this variation, though some differences were found during the inspection, for example the pupils' progress is better in Years 4 and 5 than in Year 6.

3. The results in the National Curriculum tests for pupils in Year 6 in 2001 were well below average in English, mathematics and science. When compared with schools with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, they were below average in English and mathematics and well below average in science. The school regarded this cohort as being less able than usual. Statistics show that the pupils who had completed the course through from Year 2 to Year 6 made satisfactory progress overall, although this progress was unsatisfactory in science. Standards have been very variable in recent years, with no discernible overall trend. Children join the school with below average attainment, so the pupils of all ability levels make satisfactory progress through the school to attain below average standards by the time they leave. However, this progress is very variable, being better in some years than in others and sometimes better for pupils of average and lower ability than for those who are more able.

4. Inspection evidence shows standards to be below average in English and average in mathematics and science by the end of Year 2. In the National Curriculum tests in 2001, standards in reading and mathematics were well below average when compared with all schools nationally. In writing they were average. When compared with schools with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, standards were above average in writing, below average in reading, and well below average in mathematics. Standards in the tests in Year 2 have been variable in recent years, but are now rising in reading and writing. Preliminary indications are that standards have improved in the tests in Year 2 this year. In particular there has been a significant increase in the proportion of pupils attaining at the higher level, which was a weakness in the test results in 2001.

¹ The Foundation Stage contains the children in the nursery and reception classes.

5. From a below average starting point, the children in the Foundation Stage make good progress and attainment is in line with expectations in all areas of learning by the time they start the subjects of the National Curriculum in Year 1. They make particularly good progress in their personal, social and emotional development and in many aspects of their communication, language and literacy and mathematical development to reach average standards in these areas of learning.

6. Standards in English and in literacy are below average in all aspects of the subject by the end of Year 2. In speaking and listening the pupils' listening and speaking skills are developed satisfactorily, as teachers place an emphasis on this aspect of the pupils' learning. In reading, progress is satisfactory and trends are upwards. Standards in writing are also improving because of structures that the school has put in place to improve the pupils' progress, but attainment is still below average. The pupils make satisfactory progress overall in English in Years 1 and 2.

7. The standards that the pupils achieve in English and literacy are below average by the end of Year 6. The pupils make satisfactory progress from Year 3 to Year 6. The pupils generally listen well, but speaking skills are below average. Although they show that they have understood questions by their answers and comments, the pupils do not answer in depth sufficiently often. Standards in reading are variable but pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their skills. Their technical skills of writing are unsatisfactory, though they are making satisfactory progress.

8. Standards in mathematics and numeracy are average by the end of Year 2 and the pupils make good progress in this subject in Years 1 and 2. Standards in using and applying mathematics are sound, which is an improvement since the last inspection. The pupils of this age have satisfactorily developed skills in number work and satisfactory understanding of the properties of shapes. The pupils achieve below average standards in mathematics and numeracy by Year 6. However, standards are better in Years 4 and 5. Standards in mathematics are below average in all aspects of the subject in Year 6.

9. Standards in science are average by the end of Year 2 and below average at the end of Year 6. The pupils make satisfactory progress in science through the school. This progress is variable in Years 3 to 6. The teachers provide opportunities for a good range of experiences in experimental and investigative science and standards in this aspect are better than in other areas of the subject.

10. Standards of work seen during the inspection are in line with expectations in Year 2 in all other subjects. By Year 6 standards are in line with expectations in art and design, history, music, physical education and religious education. In ICT, design and technology and geography they are below expectations for this age. This reflects the relative abilities of the pupils in this year group. The pupils of all ability levels make satisfactory progress through the school in the range of subjects.

11. The pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all class lessons and make satisfactory progress overall. In Years 1 and 2 they make good progress when working with an educational care officer and the task is specifically matched to their needs. In Years 3 to 6, the pupils with special educational needs work well when they are supported in class. In literacy and numeracy they make good progress relative to their ability because they are encouraged to make a contribution to the lesson and have sufficient confidence to complete their specific task. Progress is unsatisfactory in other lessons when the tasks they are asked to complete do not match closely enough to the targets on their individual education plans.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. The pupils' attitudes, values, personal development and relationships are satisfactory overall. This compares unfavourably with the last inspection.

Strengths in this aspect are:

- the great majority of pupils' enthusiasm for lessons is good. Their overall interest in activities is good;
- behaviour is generally good in lessons.

Areas for improvement are:

- the pupils' self-discipline when they are not in lessons;
- the personal development and relationships of a small minority of pupils.

13. The majority of the pupils have good attitudes to school overall. The parents feel strongly that their children enjoy school and believe that they make good progress. The pupils are willing to talk about what they are doing and many can explain how they arrive at their answers. They collaborate well in groups or pairs when encouraged to do so. However, there are a few in most year groups who are generally disinterested in school and what is provided for them. This is particularly evident in Year 6. Nevertheless, where lessons are interesting and challenging, many of the pupils maintain concentration well and contribute positively. They enjoy the opportunity to assess achievements against learning objectives, as was evident in a Year 5 literacy lesson. The majority of pupils listen well and there are some good comments to follow up one another's suggestions. This was well exemplified in the question and answer session of a Year 3 science lesson on the variety and use of rocks and soil in commerce and industry.

14. Behaviour is satisfactory overall. A small number of parents expressed concerns about behaviour. The inspection team found that some pupils lacked self-discipline. Much behaviour is good, but a number of pupils have personal behavioural problems. A few are easily distracted in lessons and this can hold up the progress of others. The behaviour of a significant minority about the school, and particularly at play, is too boisterous. Despite this, all the pupils know very well what is expected of them, including those who are regular offenders. They can quote the rules, posted in each class. They are familiar with the systems of rewards and sanctions, for example the 'traffic light system', and think they are fair. The pupils appreciate the House Points system for improved self-discipline, trying hard in lessons and for special achievements. Where there are occasional instances of aggression, name calling and bullying, all know how very seriously this is viewed. There were a number of exclusions last year, but none this year. These instances were confined to a very few pupils, where the influence on others' behaviour and the constant interruption of progress in lessons became unacceptable.

15. The pupils' personal development is satisfactory. The pupils are generally tidy, respectful of property and even the youngest children in the Foundation Stage know where things belong. They are willing to accept responsibility when it is offered. The pupils enjoy the daily routines, preparing for lessons or assisting in assemblies. Some play instruments and all enjoy taking part in class assemblies. The School Council is new and, along with class councils, is developing a caring attitude and responsibility to practical matters and social behaviour. The staff welcome their suggestions, putting them into effect promptly where appropriate. Already matters like personal water bottles, attitudes to bullying, a 'buddy bench', air fresheners and a tuck shop have been successfully introduced. The pupils set personal, social and class targets, but there is no regular system of personal curricular targets. They enjoy applauding one another's achievements, such as for good behaviour, high standards of work and endeavour, exemplified at the ends of lessons or at celebration assemblies. These successes contribute well to the House Points system, with purposeful intent and friendly competition. The older pupils enjoy the 'buddying' schemes and listening to

younger pupils read. Most of the pupils engage in happy conversation over lunch. They respond well to the lunchtime supervisors, who are caring and stimulate some good interactive play, particularly with the younger pupils. Play by the majority is largely good-natured, with a broad mix of small and large groups absorbed in lively activities. Classes, in turn, enjoy the resources provided. Overall, this is spoilt by too many 'bumps' and daily incidents.

16. Relationships are satisfactory overall. The pupils can confidently share their thoughts and concerns with more than one member of staff. The great majority of the pupils have good relationships with staff and with one another. However, this is marred by a significant minority who have insufficient social awareness. This involves the regular attention of staff, and too often, the headteacher. These situations are reviewed in an atmosphere of disappointment and all staff display much patience with often sullen pupils. Nevertheless, for the majority, a good rapport is evident between the pupils and between the pupils and the adults in school.

17. The pupils with special educational needs co-operate well with others and respond positively when working individually with a teacher or educational care officer. They share in the sense of achievement when they contribute to the lesson. Their ideas, for example, about how to improve the school grounds, are received enthusiastically and added to the class list.

18. Attendance is consistently in line with the national average. The school strongly promotes regular attendance and punctuality as good habits to be fostered for the future, during registration, through assemblies and by comment on individual reports. The school takes a firm stand on the criteria for authorised and unauthorised absence. Consequently, attendance for the majority of the pupils is above average, but there are too many occasional days off and holidays during term time by some. Registration is prompt and effective, with some admirable social interaction with the younger pupils. Punctuality is very good.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

19. The quality of teaching is good and the consequent quality of learning is therefore good. This represents an improvement since the last inspection. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is satisfactory.

Strengths in teaching and learning are:

- good use is made of educational care officers;
- the teachers usually share learning objectives for lessons with their pupils and give them good knowledge of their own learning by reviewing them at the end of lessons;
- the teaching in the Foundation Stage plans to provide a variety of activities that promote positive learning.

Areas for development are:

- to improve the consistency of teaching through the school;
- to raise the teachers' expectations and the pace of lessons;
- to cater for the needs of the more able pupils more consistently.

20. Nearly two out of three lessons observed during the inspection were good or better and only a small minority were unsatisfactory. This represents an improvement since the last inspection, when there was a significant amount of unsatisfactory teaching. The teaching is particularly good in the Nursery, where it is very good overall. It is satisfactory in Years 1 and 6 and good in all other year groups. This results in the overall teaching in the Foundation Stage and for Years 3 to 6 being good, though in Years 1 and 2 it is satisfactory. This overall good teaching is having an impact on the learning of the pupils, which is also good. However, there are inconsistencies which the monitoring and evaluation groups that exist within the school have not eliminated.

21. The teaching in the Foundation Stage is particularly good. The teachers in these classes provide a very rich variety of experiences to enable the children to learn well. They work very well with the educational care officers in their classes and this extra help is contributing significantly to the children's learning. For example, in the Nursery the teacher carefully plans specific tasks for small groups of pupils with whom she is going to work. During this time the educational care officer is carrying out other tasks with other groups of children, developing their language and other skills. The children are very well organised and make very good use of the other activities available, often choosing for themselves. For example, during the time of the inspection, the role-play area was set up as a 'vet's' surgery and children used this area very sensibly, one being denoted as the vet by wearing an overall.

22. The teachers plan well when extra help is available in their lessons. All educational care officers know exactly what is required of them and which pupils they are expected to be working with. The clear instructions provided for them lead not only to the pupils with whom they are working learning well, but also allow teachers to focus their attention more effectively on the remaining group, who also learn well. The educational care officers are well guided in how to help while the teacher is presenting the lesson and engaging in a question and answer session. They ensure that individuals or small groups are involved and are participating fully in the session, often by rephrasing questions so that the less able pupils can understand at their own level. The educational care officers enhance this good practice by writing notes after each lesson on how well the pupils they have been working with have mastered the learning objective.

23. The teachers almost always share the learning objective for the lesson with their pupils. This is usually displayed at the front of the class. In most lessons, the teachers ask a question such as: "What do you think you have achieved?" at the end of the lesson. When this happens, the pupils' knowledge of what they are to learn or have learnt is significantly enhanced. In a number of lessons observed, the teacher involved the pupils in very good discussions on the effectiveness of their learning. For example, in an English lesson in Year 5, the pupils freely discussed whether their targets had been met and there were elements of self-assessment taking place.

24. The teachers have good knowledge of most of the subjects that they are expected to teach. This ensures that they deliver lessons confidently and particularly teach basic skills very well. The pupils therefore acquire these basic skills very well. For example, in many science lessons seen, the teacher's use of correct scientific language ensured that the pupils' knowledge was enhanced. The teachers also generally manage their classes well. This creates a good working environment in which the pupils find it easy to learn. However, there are occasions when the teachers do not consistently apply the positive discipline system in use in the school. In these lessons, the teachers spend too much time reprimanding the pupils and many of the pupils lose interest in the objective of the lesson. This was a feature of one of the unsatisfactory lessons observed.

25. The teaching of English is only satisfactory, as the teachers are not teaching all the necessary skills effectively. One of the main reasons for the teaching of mathematics being only satisfactory is that a number of lessons in this subject lack pace. The time allowed for these sessions is often too long and the teachers extend the material to fill the time available, rather than moving at a brisker pace and fitting more into the lesson. This results in the pupils' learning lacking pace and productivity. There are lessons in a number of subjects where the teachers do not have sufficiently high expectations of what their pupils can achieve. The pupils, particularly the more able, are insufficiently challenged in these lessons and are not encouraged to put in the necessary effort to progress at the optimum rate.

26. The quality of the teachers' marking is variable through the school. Sometimes it

gives the pupils clear guidance on what they need to do to improve the quality of their work, but this happens too rarely. Too often marking is restricted to ticks and general encouragement without being focused on helping the pupils to progress. Most teachers carry out useful assessments of what the pupils have achieved in each lesson and modify their planning for subsequent lessons on the basis of these assessments. However, they do not record these assessments in a way that can then be used when returning to a topic at a future date. Homework is used erratically through the school. Some work, such as reading and spelling, is set regularly, but there is insufficient work being set to support learning in class.

27. The teachers go to great lengths to include pupils' with special educational needs in most classroom activities. When the work matches their needs they are successful, particularly in literacy and numeracy. The teachers' planning in other subjects does not always include provision for pupils with special educational needs. In these lessons, little account is taken of the pupils' individual education plans to ensure the task assists the progress toward the targets on the plan.

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

28. All subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education are taught and comply with statutory requirements and the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. There is, however, an imbalance in the curriculum, particularly in Years 3 to 6, in respect of the length of lessons and the effective delivery of the curriculum in the foundation subjects². Progress since the last inspection has been satisfactory.

Strengths in the curriculum are:

- topic planning in Years 1 and 2;
- provision for the pupils' personal development;
- links with the community and other schools.

Areas for improvement are:

- effective time allocations for all subjects;
- monitoring the pupils' learning in the foundation subjects;
- ensuring equal opportunities for all pupils;
- planning so that resources are fully available where required.

29. The last inspection report required the school to complete the development of schemes of work. This has been done satisfactorily in Years 1 and 2. The way in which they have been implemented in Years 3 to 6 is unsatisfactory. The school was also required to provide a long-term curriculum framework showing content and time allocations. This has also been done. However, there is insufficient effective monitoring of, for example, the length of lessons and of what pupils achieve in foundation subjects. This is unsatisfactory.

30. When thoughtful planning takes place, some good links are made between subjects. The pupils in Years 1 and 2 shared the story of The Lighthouse Keeper's Lunch. This provided a stimulus for a design and technology lesson on structures and mechanisms. The pupils in Year 5 link the history of the Aztecs with work on textiles related to that culture. However, insufficient links of this nature are made in Years 3 to 6. The timetable of lessons is planned inadequately. Literacy and numeracy lessons often last for as long as 75 minutes and the pupils' interest and enthusiasm wanes. A science-based design and technology lesson lacked resources, as they were needed elsewhere. Samples of the pupils' work in other subjects shows that insufficient time has been given to permit any study in depth. The

² Foundation subjects are those subjects other than English, mathematics, science and religious education.

pupils have varying experiences. This is not satisfactory.

31. Strategies for the teaching of both literacy and numeracy have been implemented satisfactorily. The teachers have a clear view of the structure of these lessons. The grouping of pupils for teaching in these subjects is based on their literacy skills. This is not helpful in the numeracy lessons. Provision for the pupils' personal, social and health education is good. There is a suitable policy for sex education and an awareness of harmful substances. The school benefits from the generosity of a local company with the provision of the Life Education caravan. Each class is allocated time for class discussions when they share thoughts on, for example, emotions and other tasks which help to develop self-esteem. The teachers handle these lessons sensitively. The impact is seen when pupils collaborate effectively and learning is fully inclusive and shared well.

32. The provision for extra-curricular activities is satisfactory. There are a number of musical opportunities and some sporting ones. This is supplemented well as part of the good community links. Coaching staff from the local leisure services run sports clubs and there is a good link with the local brass band and the library. These provide additional opportunities for the pupils to participate in activities and help to promote further the pupils' interest in literature and music. Good links with partner schools also enhance the pupils' education. Pupils from all the classes from Years 3 to 6 visit the local secondary school. Older pupils benefit from specialist expertise in dance, music and ICT.

33. The provision for the pupils with special educational needs is good. The pupils with learning or behavioural needs are supported by a number of educational care officers who work hard to ensure pupils are actively involved in the learning. All pupils with special educational needs make good progress when they are supported individually and the task is related to an individual education plan. Where the lesson plans are too generalised they do not reflect the needs of pupils who find reading and writing difficult. Pupils do not make sufficient progress in these lessons because tasks are too difficult and seem irrelevant to them.

34. The overall provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is satisfactory. The school continues to provide a caring and supportive atmosphere in which pupils can learn, reflect and develop a limited understanding of the world around them, especially in the infant phase of the school. The school meets daily for an act of collective worship. These times provide a good range of experience and variety. The pupils are attentive and listen carefully to the messages. They use the opportunities for reflection they are given well.

35. The provision for the pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. The use of 'circle time' and role-play so that pupils can put themselves into situations and resolve the difficulties they may face is a positive feature in some classes. There are too few opportunities in the school day for pupils to think about the 'how' and 'why' of experiences in their learning. They do not recognise how different subjects can contribute to their own lives and the needs of others. Some opportunities to consider the needs of others are met through fund-raising for various charities. The good use of reflective time in worship and the use of the Buddhist prayer bowl to indicate the time adds to the spirituality of the occasion.

36. The provision for moral and social development is satisfactory. The school provides opportunities for the pupils to consider how they interact with each other. A system of reading 'buddies' provides opportunities for older pupils to support younger pupils with their reading. A 'buddy bench' in the playground gives pupils the space to reflect and befriend those who are feeling unhappy. Pupils are anxious to support each other and ensure they can enjoy the playground times. The recently formed school council has made proposals and given ideas on how to improve conditions in school and in the playground. These have made a difference and pupils are aware that their ideas are being heard and acted upon. Pupils understand the difference between right and wrong, and most have a strong sense of justice. They quickly recognise the codes of behaviour in the classroom and, on most occasions, respect each other's needs when they work together or in small groups. Most pupils get on well with each other, and understand the need for class and school rules. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have the opportunity to spend time on a residential visit and enjoy sharing the experience of living and working together in fair, and sometimes difficult, weather conditions. They are responsible and want to assist where possible, so that class and school routines run smoothly. Relationships between adults and pupils are good because they are based on mutual respect for each other.

37. Provision for the pupils' cultural development is unsatisfactory. The development of their own cultural heritage is satisfactory, through links with the local community and the study of Western art and music. Opportunities to share in other cultures are limited in the locality. However, the school does not actively seek to extend the pupils' experience by inviting people from other faiths or beliefs on a regular basis to share their experiences and traditions. There are artefacts from all the major beliefs which the school uses to support the teaching of religious education, but these are not sufficiently different to provide pupils with material to appreciate different lifestyles in various parts of the world or within the local area. The use of the Internet to explore other beliefs is underdeveloped and the range of books does not provide sufficient resources to extend pupils' knowledge and language. The school does not have a partnership with a different school, for example, to promote further understanding of another culture or heritage.

38. There are good opportunities to share in the local community. Some pupils are members of the local brass band and play a large part in the local community gala. Pupils visit the local church on an annual basis. Every pupil is involved in a visit to a local place of interest, which may be connected to an aspect of the curriculum. There are at present few visitors to school who could raise a further awareness of how people used to live, the local area, or the arts and music.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

39. The school cares well for its pupils. This is a strength of the school, maintained since the last inspection.

Strengths in this aspect are:

- the procedures for child protection and for ensuring the pupils' welfare overall;
- the rigorous procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance;
- the procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and eliminating oppressive behaviour;
- the good start made to assessing the pupils' attainment in English and mathematics;
- the procedures for supporting the pupils' personal development.

Areas for improvement are:

- the recording of the assessments made to enable the teachers to plan for the pupils' future learning;
- the consistency with which the assessments are made.

40. The pupils are made welcome to a clean, warm and secure environment. The staff know the pupils well and encourage a happy working atmosphere. They endeavour to promote self-awareness and health through the personal, social and health education schemes. All staff are aware of the strict criteria to be observed in child protection. The school has good access to educational, medical and social agencies when required. There are no health and safety issues.

41. The school rigorously promotes regular attendance and punctuality as good habits to be fostered for the future. This is demonstrated by a firm stance on the criteria for absence, supported by clear guidelines and comment in the School Prospectus, the Governors' Annual Report, by letters to parents and on the pupils' individual reports. Monitoring is thorough. The occasional unexplained absence is followed up promptly. The Education Welfare Officer works hard to support the school with a very few families.

42. Procedures for monitoring and promoting self-discipline are good. The comprehensive behaviour policy is implemented conscientiously, but not always consistently in some classes. Where lessons are interesting and challenging, there is a good response. All staff are aware of any emerging problems during the school day. The headteacher has to spend a disproportionate amount of time in sorting out problems, particularly with the older pupils. The parents are involved at an early stage, but not all are fully supportive. Notwithstanding, in extreme cases, some good partnership with parents, through home Personal Progress Diaries, successfully builds up self-discipline. Tendencies towards bad behaviour and occasional name-calling are dealt with swiftly and effectively. Isolated tendencies towards bullying are dealt with firmly, involving all concerned.

43. The assessment co-ordinator has done a great deal of hard work in order to produce a good system to assess the academic progress of the pupils. The school has begun to use a wide range of national tests in each year group. The results of these tests are beginning to be analysed thoroughly by the co-ordinator and her colleagues. Targets are being carefully set in order to develop the progress of the pupils in English and mathematics. They are not applied to other subjects. The procedures are satisfactorily addressing the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs. The use that is made of these procedures is unsatisfactory. There is still a lack of consistency in the way that the procedures are used in order to support the pupils in improving their work. Their work is marked inconsistently, with some helpful marking being contrasted with some that tells the pupils nothing about either their successes or what needs to be done to make their work reach a better standard. In the early years, assessment and monitoring of the children is good and recorded regularly. This means that results can be used to plan for the next stage of learning and for future teaching. The inconsistent nature of further recording and monitoring in later years is not as supportive to the older pupils' next stages of learning. In consequence, the use of all of the good information that has been gathered by the co-ordinator is unsatisfactory overall.

44. Procedures for monitoring and supporting the pupils' personal development are good. The headteacher and staff work hard together to build up the pupils' self-esteem. They support the pupils well according to their individual needs. The parents feel this is a caring school. They are confident that the school helps their children to mature. They feel that teachers expect their children to work hard and do their best. The great majority of parents express confidence in approaching the school over any problems. There is an open door policy. The staff are available to share any brief parental concerns at the beginning or end of the day. The headteacher and parent/governors are about the playground daily and always willing to discuss immediate problems or make appointments for more formal matters. Lunchtime supervisors are caring and encourage a good atmosphere. Daily opportunities are created for the pupils to take initiative and responsibility. However, as yet, these roles have

not been integrated into the personal, social and educational schemes to consciously enlarge and deepen the pupils' experience as they move up the school. Assemblies are very well used to promote responsible attitudes to behaviour and relationships, work and decision making.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

45. Links with the parents are satisfactory overall. The majority of parents view the school in a positive light. A significant number of parents, however, have a range of concerns. This compares unfavourably with the last report, when links with parents were viewed as a major strength of the school.

Strengths in links with parents are:

- most of the parents have confidence in what the school provides and sets out to achieve for their children;
- the activities of the Friends of Whitwell Primary School.

Areas for development are:

- information on current events;
- information on the curriculum;
- evaluation of the pupil's progress provided for parents;
- interaction with the parents to build up the contribution to their children's learning;
- levels of homework.

46. Information on all the activities of the school is satisfactory overall. Letters are sent out with detail of activities as they occur. Some parents feel there is insufficient notice. There are no newsletters. The Parents' Notice Board, in the school foyer, informs parents very well on all aspects of the school. The School Prospectus and Governors' Annual Report are full of detail and of a high standard. There is a very helpful Nursery Brochure to assist the thorough and sensitive induction procedures. The Governors' Annual Report, particularly, gives a good indication of matters dealt with in the past year and how decisions made have affected what goes on in the school.

47. A number of the parents indicated, through the questionnaires, that information about their children's progress was insufficient. The inspection team found the quality of information to parents about their children's progress to be satisfactory. There are ample opportunities for parents to speak to staff. The teachers are available at the beginning and end of the day. Appointments can readily be made for more formal matters. Consultation evenings are well attended. There is no tradition of providing parents with curricular information for each year group, although topic work for the nursery is always posted at the nursery door. Attendance at the occasional curriculum-related meeting is low. Written reports are individual to the pupil and detailed, but evaluation is limited. Opportunities are offered for parents to discuss reports at the end of the year. Parents are invited to comment on reports but few take up the opportunity.

48. Parental contribution to their children's learning is satisfactory overall but with imbalances in many areas. A number of parents feel that the school does not work closely with them. The inspection team found the school tries hard to involve parents in their children's learning. However, the Home/School Agreement has had only a limited response. Home/School Reading Records are inconsistently used throughout the classes and there is no active dialogue as a result. Nevertheless, the school appreciates many parents' encouragement of their children's work at home, particularly in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2. A small number of parents come in regularly to help in lessons. Their service is valued. A Language Workshop has recently been introduced for parents of the youngest pupils, with an encouraging response. The inspectors agree with the number of parents who expressed concerns about levels of homework. The school accepts there have been

inconsistencies and is dealing with them. Parents enjoy the many opportunities to come into school and large numbers of parents attend class assemblies and the major festivals.

49. The parents of pupils with special educational needs are always consulted about the plans for their children and the school goes to great lengths to inform parents about their progress. The school will always arrange additional meetings and use any opportunity for informal discussions when they are necessary or if there are any concerns.

50. All the parents are automatically members of the Friends of Whitwell Primary School. The steering committee is hard-working and very well supported by teachers. A wide range of events is organised enthusiastically, such as the school's presence at the Whitwell Gala and running a highly successful Santa's Grotto in school. Significant funds are raised and donated for additional school resources. In the past year, these have included new computers, additional classroom resources and refurbishment of furniture and fittings in the older part of the school. The Association also strongly supports the school by assisting at occasions such as Sports Days, concerts and Christmas activities. These efforts are greatly appreciated.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

51. The quality of leadership and management is unsatisfactory overall. Insufficient progress has been made in this aspect since the previous inspection.

Strengths in leadership and management are:

- the care and concern of the headteacher for pupils, staff and community;
- the involvement of the governors.

Areas for development are:

- rigorous monitoring and evaluation to improve consistency of practice in the school;
- develop a school improvement plan that takes a longer-term view;
- ensure that co-ordinators are given guidance and clear responsibility for raising standards in their subjects;
- the deployment of educational care officers;
- the use of curriculum time.

52. The governors provide a good level of support as they did at the time of the last inspection. They have an improving strategic view of the direction of the school. They work effectively with the headteacher and staff and play a good role in shaping the future direction and work of the school. The governors are very supportive of the school, but their more formal role in the evaluation and analysis of data is less developed. They receive regular reports from the headteacher, which give good information. Governors have begun to question and discuss appropriately aspects of the provision that the school makes. They meet their statutory responsibilities well and many governors spend considerable time in school, which is enabling them to form a clearer view of strengths and weaknesses.

53. The educational direction provided by the headteacher has improved since the last inspection. He has put in place some good procedures in recent terms, such as the monitoring and evaluation groups in which all staff are involved. These have been given a remit to monitor the curriculum in a range of subjects. The inconsistencies and weaknesses found in the curriculum are an indication that these groups are not yet effective. The headteacher is more aware of the strengths and weaknesses in standards and some initiatives have been put in place to address these. For example, preliminary indications are that standards in the national tests in Year 2 have risen this year, particularly in the proportion of pupils gaining the higher levels, a weakness identified by the school. The headteacher provides caring leadership for the school, and works hard to ensure the school is a key element in the community. Some staff with management responsibilities have an

insufficiently clear understanding of their role. For example, some do not have a complete overview of what happens in their area of responsibility throughout the school. They do not have sufficient time to monitor the effectiveness of the curriculum by, for example, regular first-hand observations or analysis of pupils' work. The monitoring that is carried out is insufficiently rigorous.

54. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The co-ordinator has only been in post for a relatively short time. She has consulted with staff, governors and other agencies about changes to the policy to bring it in line with the new national Code of Practice. The policy has been implemented very well. The special educational needs governor takes an active interest in the implementation and practice of the policy and is developing the role so that she is aware of the needs and resources required and monitoring how they are used. Class teachers are responsible for writing individual education plans for their pupils. The individual education plans are well written and include appropriate targets, which are regularly reviewed and new targets set when it is appropriate, after discussions with the special educational needs co-ordinator. At present, the teachers direct the educational care officer in order to provide the good support which pupils receive. Guidance is available from the special educational needs co-ordinator and the good use of a computer program gives detail to the individual education plans, which are focused mainly on developing the pupils' literacy skills. The specific needs of the eight pupils with statements are met appropriately.

55. The school's monitoring and evaluation of its performance is unsatisfactory. Monitoring and evaluation groups have been set up in which all staff are involved, but there remain some inconsistencies from teacher to teacher in the way the curriculum is delivered. Insufficient use has been made of the good analysis that has been carried out of results in the national tests in order to plan for improvements. This analysis is based on the results of the national tests and optional tests and provides a clear vehicle for monitoring the pupils' progress from year to year. However, as yet the school has not created any systems for checking the pupils' progress in the shorter term. There is insufficient monitoring of the quality of learning to identify subject areas for further development. This is particularly noticeable in science and a number of the foundation subjects, where the curriculum is not being delivered effectively. A major reason for this is that a number of curriculum co-ordinators are insufficiently clear about their role in raising standards in their subjects.

56. The school development plan is not a useful document in planning for future developments. It is comprehensive, containing appropriate areas for development in almost all aspects of school life. It also contains useful evaluation of the present situation in each aspect and evaluation of the success of items within it. However, it only covers the current year and gives no indication of the relative priorities of the items within it.

57. Specific funds available to the school are used appropriately. The school has also benefited from grants from a local business, which have been used to fund a healthy living caravan display. The business has also agreed to fund a substantial part of the setting up of a computer suite.

58. The school has a satisfactory number of teachers with a relevant range of subject interests and experience. Procedures for the induction and mentoring of newly qualified staff and opportunities for further professional development are good. The school has sufficient educational care officers to work with pupils with special educational needs and they make a valuable contribution to the quality of provision made by the school. However, they are not always deployed to best advantage, changing from class to class, when many of the pupils with whom they work need more consistency in their relationships. The school office is very efficient and the school day runs smoothly.

59. Many classrooms are rather cramped and two have to be used as thoroughfares for access to other areas of the school. This is disruptive to the pupils' learning. The school is well maintained and there are some good displays in communal areas. However, the displays in classrooms are not often used to celebrate pupils' work or to create a stimulating learning environment. Effective use is made of the school grounds, which are large with extensive grassed areas. Learning resources are adequate in most subjects, though in many subjects they are sparse and old.

60. The school has established satisfactory financial procedures that are based upon the principle of best value. Taking into account all relevant factors, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

61. In order to continue to raise standards, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- (1) ensure there is a clear and effective management structure to enable the following issues to be addressed effectively.
(Paragraphs: 53, 55, 92, 103, 105, 109, 115, 124)
- (2) raise standards in English throughout the school and in mathematics, science and ICT at the age of eleven by:
 - developing the role of the subject co-ordinators;
(Paragraphs: 20, 29, 53, 55)
 - increasing the quality and range of writing and monitoring the pupils' progress in reading;
(Paragraphs: 6, 7, 25, 84-88)
 - ensuring that work set challenges all pupils consistently;
(Paragraphs: 3, 25, 89, 96, 97, 101)
 - in science and ICT, ensuring that all pupils cover all aspects of the curriculum;
(Paragraphs: 9, 102, 124)
 - in ICT, ensuring that more use is made of the computers.
(Paragraphs: 98, 124, 125)
- (3) raise standards in foundation subjects, particularly in Years 3 to 6 by improving the balance of the curriculum, particularly in respect of the length of lessons.
(Paragraphs: 25, 29, 30, 80, 96, 104, 105, 107, 111, 113, 117, 126, 128)
- (4) enable the teachers to plan for the future learning of the pupils more effectively by:
 - improving the quality of marking;
(Paragraphs: 26, 43, 89, 98, 136)
 - recording assessments more accurately.
(Paragraphs: 26, 43, 92, 97, 103, 109, 115, 124)
- (5) rigorously monitor the effectiveness of the curriculum by:
 - first-hand observation of the delivery of the curriculum;
(Paragraphs: 20, 29, 53, 55, 80, 92, 103, 109, 124)
 - the regular analysis of pupils' work.
(Paragraphs: 29, 53, 55, 92, 103, 109)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	68
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	67

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	12	33	21	2	0	0
Percentage	0	17.6	48.5	30.9	2.9	0	0

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

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)	24	257
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	68

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	8
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	3	39

English as an additional language

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	26
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	20

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.3

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.6

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	19	21	40

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	15	18
	Girls	19	19	18
	Total	36	34	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (85)	85 (82)	90 (91)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	17	18
	Girls	19	19	19
	Total	37	36	37
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (82)	90 (91)	93 (94)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in Year 6 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	27	21	48

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	17	18
	Girls	16	13	16
	Total	31	30	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	65 (72)	63 (72)	71 (81)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	18	14
	Girls	17	15	13
	Total	31	33	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	65 (84)	70 (81)	56 (88)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	1
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	256
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.7
Average class size	28.6

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	13
Total aggregate hours worked per week	200

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	47
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	27
Number of pupils per FTE adult	24

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

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	12	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.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
	£
Total income	531 910
Total expenditure	544 554
Expenditure per pupil	1 828
Balance brought forward from previous year	17 930
Balance carried forward to next year	5 286

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	304
Number of questionnaires returned	60

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	55	38	3	3	0
My child is making good progress in school.	52	37	10	2	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	34	53	10	3	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	14	38	36	11	2
The teaching is good.	50	32	10	2	7
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	28	48	22	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	65	27	8	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	53	36	9	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	31	41	25	2	2
The school is well led and managed.	40	38	7	3	12
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	41	41	12	2	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	27	34	19	7	14

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

62. The school has sustained the provision for the youngest children since the previous inspection. Progress was reported to be good in all areas of learning and this remains the case. The children with special educational needs continue to receive good support and consequently make the good progress that was found in the previous inspection. Teachers and educational care officers pay good levels of initial attention to the children's personal, social and emotional development and to their communication, language and literacy skills.

Strengths in the provision for the Foundation Stage are:

- the thorough planning by Foundation Stage teachers that involves support staff effectively;
- the variety of activities to support learning;
- the range of resources provided;
- the good use made of the indoor and outdoor environment;
- the good deployment of support for all pupils;
- the purposefulness of the learning.

Areas for development are:

- joint planning by nursery and reception staff;
- interchange of outdoor activities between nursery and reception classes.

63. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is made in the school's nursery class, one class of under fives and one mixed-age class of five- and six-year-olds. Most children transfer from the nursery class to the reception classes, whilst a few children come into reception classes from other pre-school provision. There are 47 children attending the nursery class on a part-time basis, while 26 children are in the reception class and eight children are in the mixed-age five- and six-year-old class. The nursery teacher leads the work of Foundation Stage classes. She has worked extremely hard to plan appropriately with reception class colleagues who are new to the school or are newly qualified teachers. The detailed planning ensures that all pupils receive effective levels of support in all of their wide range of activities. The children in the nursery class benefit from the regular support of a very effective educational care officer. The children in the reception classes receive equally effective support but, because it is given by different members of support staff, there is a less seamless level of support being given to these children.

64. The school's assessment of the children's attainment on entry to nursery is based on an internally agreed system. In the reception class, the children are more formally assessed on the local authority's system. The trends in assessment on entry over the years show that children's attainment varies between below expectations and well below expectations. The current group of children were below expectations on entry to the nursery but have made good progress over time in nursery and reception classes, so that they have expected levels of attainment in all areas of learning by the time they leave the reception classes to move into Year 1. By the time that the children move out of the Foundation Stage and become Year 1 pupils, most achieve the Early Learning Goals³ in all areas of learning.

65. Teaching in all areas of learning in the Foundation Stage is good, and often very good in the nursery class. The teachers and educational care officers in both nursery and reception classes plan carefully, paying thoughtful attention to activities that will support development effectively. The Foundation Stage 'stepping stones' are comprehensively used,

³ The Early Learning Goals are the expected levels of attainment for pupils as they start the subjects of the National Curriculum in Year 1. Progress towards these goals is divided into a series of stepping stones.

because their intended outcomes are fully understood by all staff. However, the staff in the nursery and reception classes do not plan jointly to assure continuity of provision in the Foundation Stage. Nevertheless, the children receive a very sound start to their learning.

Personal, social and emotional development

66. Provision for the children's personal, social and emotional development is good in both nursery and reception classes. In the nursery, parents are very much welcomed by staff. The children make good use of a wide range of resources that help to settle them into the routine of the day. They share well with one another. They talk animatedly in the nursery as they eat snacks together. They have a mature, personal attitude to helping one another to their snacks. They make sensible choices when they are offered alternatives. They are anxious to contribute to the discussions initiated by the nursery teacher, whilst the educational care officer offers them the choices of snack. They politely offer "Thank you" to one another as a further indication of their good levels of socialisation with both adults and other children.

67. In the reception class the progress in their personal development is continued as the children come into school at the start of the day. The parents come into the school on a regular basis to work alongside the children in developing their language skills. They do this through the use of a good range of word-building games and tabletop activities. Their understanding of how they can support their children more meaningfully is much enhanced. The children work co-operatively with adults as they discover different ways of learning about words when they place letters and words into a sensible order. The class teacher and educational care officers work successfully with both children and parents. The children in the mixed-age class have opportunities to develop their personal, social and emotional skills as they move about in their groups. They share thoughts about the difference in the journeys that they make after listening to a Bible story about a journey. The activities confirm for the staff that the children are achieving the Early Learning Goals by the time they become Year 1 pupils because they have moved steadily and purposefully along the stepping stones of the Foundation Stage curriculum.

Communication, language and literacy

68. Nursery staff pay a great deal of attention to developing the communication, language and literacy skills of the children. They provide ample opportunities in a number of different settings. In the home corner that has become a 'vet's' centre they take on roles very capably in their structured play. The 'vet' has the support of a receptionist, who makes appointments for the people who bring different pets for suitable treatment. The children are constantly being supported and having their language extended appropriately as adults urge them to use accurate words as they describe why they need an appointment. One-word answers are built up into phrases and then sentences because the children are listening intently to what adults have to say. The children show good levels of concentration as they build up their language skills accurately. More formally, the children work carefully with the teacher as they form letters holding pencils correctly. They are able to do this because their teacher works with them in small groups and is able to give them focused support. They listen carefully to stories because they are told with very good levels of expression that makes them exciting for the children. Both teacher and educational care officer are particularly skilled at story telling, which is extremely helpful in developing a love of books and reading for the children. The children make very good progress because of the very good, imaginative teaching. The very positive attitudes of the children move them well along the pathway of the 'stepping stones' of the Early Learning Goals before they move into the reception classes.

69. When they move into the reception classes, the early experiences of the children are built on very carefully so that the Early Learning Goals are attained before they move into Year 1 classes. The teachers have planned with care and matched the requirements of the literacy strategy with the continuation of moving along the Early Learning Goal 'stepping stones'. The children identify letters and words rapidly and accurately. They work independently on the computer, using a word-structured program that supports their language skills usefully. The continually good teaching ensures that good progress is being made.

Mathematical development

70. Much of the learning in mathematical development in the nursery is done through giving the children opportunities to explore in a practical sense. The imaginative planning by the class teacher takes the children through a sequence of adding numbers logically as they discover hidden pine cones in the sand tray. The teacher capitalises on the speed with which the children confirm their understanding by reversing the process, taking numbers of cones away from the total established. The children become absorbed as they discover the cones together.

71. In the reception classes, staff build upon the very good progress made in the nursery as they move the children into working more formally with numbers. The children are able to order numbers with good levels of accuracy. They work co-operatively in groups as they order birthday cards according to the ages on the front of them. The group shows the other children how they have agreed to arrive at these correct solutions. The children are well prepared for their move into Year 1 classes. They have reached the Early Learning Goals because they have moved so carefully along the 'stepping stones' of the goals.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

72. The children make good progress in this area of learning as they move along the 'stepping stones' of the Early Learning Goals. They have reached the level expected of them by the time they move into the Year 1 classes. Many bring a number of useful experiences with them when they enter the nursery. However, the experiences are often unstructured. As a result of thoughtful planning by the teacher and the joint work of the teacher and educational care officer, these become well channelled. Some build convincing aeroplanes out of a construction kit, whilst others use other plastic shapes to build imaginatively and then talk equally convincingly about what their shapes represent. All construct purposefully. They focus on understanding positional language as they use different sized animals to discover the meaning of 'behind', 'under', 'on top of' and 'in front of'. The teacher supports them effectively, as she works with small groups of children at different times. The children use the computer effortlessly, showing good levels of mouse control and the beginnings of understanding about the information that can be gathered.

73. Their construction skills are further developed at the same time as their understanding of different times when they build boats out of wooden blocks in the reception class. In the mixed-age class, the children find out about earlier times as they use stories from the Bible when thinking about different types of journeys. These stories also help them to form an understanding of different directions that journeys could take them in. The computer continues to be well used as the children in the reception class learn about the different forms of animal figures. The children in the reception class are introduced to the idea of identifying features of living things through the teacher's use of a vividly illustrated book that captures the children's attention. They are over-eager to make their contributions to the discussions and so some of their learning from one another is lost. However, the teacher carefully ensures that the learning is quickly re-focused without the children losing the thread

of their learning. The children are prepared well to become investigative scientists in the Year 1 classes.

Physical development

74. The finer physical skills needed by the children are gradually enhanced through cutting and gluing opportunities that grow in complexity from the nursery to reception classes. The children in the nursery make good use of the secure outdoor area when they are riding wheeled toys. They pay careful attention to safety because they are being well supported by adults who have stressed the need to do this. The children's knowledge of direction grows at the same time. The children are moving along the 'stepping stones' pathway of the Early Learning Goals successfully. The children use the large space in the school hall with good measures of confidence. Their weekly times in the hall are purposefully used by the teacher and support assistant to encourage the children to move around carefully with thought for one another's safety. The children move in different ways, such as giraffes when walking tall, elephants when being slow and heavy, or as crocodiles when being quick and snappy. The adults act as good role models for the children as they join in the movements. The class teacher's high expectations are met as the children change their roles and move in different ways.

75. In the reception classes, this work is built upon very successfully. The children use their outdoor area that has recently been created for the five-year-olds class to move around groups of activities that give them a chance to show a range of skills, such as balancers on wooden blocks. In the hall they move in a range of ways as they walk, hop and jog with good levels of skill and safety. They meet their teacher's high expectations as they observe and evaluate one another's efforts thoughtfully. They move on to balancing with hoops, using different parts of the body, as they begin their body awareness programme successfully. The carefully structured teaching ensures that good progress made in the nursery is built upon to become very good progress in the reception class as the children's physical skills mature. There is not enough opportunity, however, for all children in the Foundation Stage classes to share their outdoor environments in order to ensure that all of their physical skills are given appropriate opportunities to develop. The classes do not share their outdoor environments with one another. Nevertheless the children are reaching the Early Learning Goals by the time that they transfer into the Year 1 classes. Consequently, the children have positive attitudes to participating in the physical activities that they enjoy.

Creative development

76. The children in the Foundation Stage have different opportunities to develop their musical skills. In the nursery, the children join as a whole group to sing together familiar songs connected to the theme of animals. They join in with enthusiasm as they are given the chance to choose the songs that they sing. The choice of 'Old McDonald' is sung with gusto and the beginnings of the appropriate levels of pitch. The teacher chooses songs such as 'Peter Rabbit' and 'A little mouse' which contrast the dynamics and rhythms in the songs successfully. In the nursery, the children learn about colour and texture in their artwork. They use different sized brushes that also have different shapes as they work thoughtfully with the educational care officer to create imaginative patterns. The educational care officer is constantly encouraging the children to make the right choice of colour and tools to give good effects without constraining their creativity.

77. In the reception classes, the children join in with Key Stage 1 classes in making music. This matures their singing as they make considerable efforts to join in at the same sort of level as the older children. In their artwork, they join in with one another in groups to make pictures of favourite animals with paints. The children listen carefully as they are given

advice by the teacher and they think sensibly about the use of colour and the skill of forming lines carefully to represent a recognisable shape of a dog or a cat. They cut paper to make pictures of people who are important to them. The children create very imaginative pictures, which are often of their mothers. The children are moving along the 'stepping stones' of the Early Learning Goals throughout the Foundation Stage. As a result of the very good teaching in the nursery class and the good teaching in the reception classes, the children make similar levels of progress. They are well prepared for their work in the Year 1 classes as they have reached the Early learning Goals in this area of development by the time they leave reception classes.

ENGLISH

78. Pupils make unsatisfactory progress through the school and currently, the pupils' standards at the end of Year 6 are below the national average in English. The number of pupils achieving the higher level 5 is well below the national average. Overall, standards are now at the same level as they were in 1997 at the time of the last inspection.

Strengths in the subject are:

- the implementation of the literacy strategy has enabled teachers to plan effectively;
- the pupils' good attitudes to their work;
- the teachers use good questioning techniques.

Areas for development are:

- the quality and range of pupils' writing skills;
- the monitoring of pupils' reading progress throughout the school;
- the marking of pupils' work;
- the consistent use of assessment of pupils' work so that pupils' expectations are raised to make better progress.

79. Boys and girls demonstrate an equal interest in the subject and show positive attitudes to it. Girls outperform boys in the national tests, but no significant difference in attitudes or performance was observed during the inspection.

80. Inspection evidence shows that by the end of Year 2 the pupils listen carefully to staff and their peers in class and small group lessons. However, the teachers are not always mindful of the spans of concentration. At the end of the longer sessions, the pupils are restless and not listening or participating in the lesson. In good lessons, the teachers use a variety of strategies, using individual questions, to ensure all pupils are focused. They change the direction of the activity, which enables pupils to renew their listening span. Pupils then make an appropriate response to the comments and questions. However, the use of a story session separate from the literacy session does not develop the pupils' listening and comprehension skills. The connection between them is not apparent and pupils are not focused in developing their listening skills. When the pupils have not listened, this delays the pace of the lesson and some pupils do not make sufficient progress.

81. By the end of Year 6, standards in speaking are in line with those expected for pupils of this age. Their listening skills have developed and pupils listen attentively to the teacher. They respond well to direct questions and elaborate their points by suggesting alternative and different answers. In a Year 6 lesson, the pupils were debating facets of the different characters in a story. They described in detail the feelings and emotions of the characters and suggested positive reasons why the main character behaved as he did.

82. In the majority of lessons the pupils respond very well to questions when challenged individually. In a Year 4 lesson, an educational care officer supported a pupil with special educational needs very well by developing the point the teacher was making and engaging her in detailed conversation so that she could contribute to the lesson. The pupils in Year 4

were astute in developing their humorous recipe poems, listening carefully to each other so that they could extend the ingredients into their own poems. They discussed carefully the merits of particular verbs and adjectives before inserting them into their recipe. In a religious education lesson, pupils worked in pairs to discuss variations between different religions and beliefs about creation. They helped each other very well in learning about and from other religions.

83. Opportunities are missed to extend pupils' speaking and listening skills. When teachers use role-play and paired discussions in literacy and other lessons, the quality of learning is good. The teacher guides pupils to think and articulate alternative ways of asking the appropriate question. The conversations between pupils indicate that their speaking and listening skills make good progress in these lessons, so that by Year 6, pupils' speaking and listening skills are satisfactory.

84. By the end of Year 2, the pupils' reading standards are below the national average. Higher attaining pupils do not make the same progress as they do in writing. Pupils are able to decode words and read story books they choose with varying degrees of success. They enjoy reading and recognise the concept of an author and the illustrator. However, their choice of books is limited. They are not confident about using the library to find information and using non-fiction books to extend their research skills.

85. The average and lower ability pupils can read simple story books aloud. They use a variety of strategies to decode words and use the pictures to help them with the storyline. They read as a group on a regular basis and choose story books to read at home. Their reading diaries are not always maintained as a dialogue between home and school, so progress is not as good for some pupils who need additional support and regular practice. Pupils in Year 1 are regularly practising sight vocabulary but, whilst using the phonic skills they are learning, are not yet word-building with confidence. They are making satisfactory progress, but are still reading without expression or understanding as they read aloud.

86. By the end of Year 6, standards in reading are below the national average. The pupils are eager to consolidate and use their skills to read a variety of books and use the class library books to assist their research skills. However, middle and lower attaining pupils are not confident in expressing reasons for their choice of books and do not read a range of books which is appropriate. They share in the group reading activities but do not use reading diaries on a regular basis to express preferences or record what they read. Higher attaining pupils are confident in their reading and use a range of skills to predict the plot and discuss the story. The use of the library is not sufficiently developed. The pupils do not have the skills to locate information using the Dewey system to find particular reference material. There is additional reading time, but this is not used to develop pupils' individual reading skills. Limited opportunities to read within a group give some direction within the literacy lesson, but are not always used to develop pupils' reading skills.

87. Standards in writing at the end of Year 2 are satisfactory. The pupils use a limited range of vocabulary to develop individual stories. They have developed various styles through using a writing frame to give them ideas and settings for a story. Higher attaining pupils achieve good results, but other pupils do not develop their ideas sufficiently to complete their writing. The use of a writing board encourages pupils in Year 2 to develop their writing styles. This gives good support to pupils when it is used as a teaching aid. However, variations in marking do not give sufficient guidance, so that progress is limited. The pupils use simple punctuation to improve their writing. All pupils use capital letters and full stops effectively. However, the use of question and exclamation marks is limited. The pupils' handwriting skills are unsatisfactory. The skills are not taught effectively and insufficient time and teaching is given to the early development of letter formation. Handwriting skills are not transferred to

writing tasks and erratic styles are visible throughout the school. Pupils do not select the appropriate tools and there is little cohesion between the styles in the school. The poor handwriting impedes both the quality of the pupils' written work and the presentation and spelling within the writing tasks.

88. At the end of Year 6, standards in writing are satisfactory. The pupils use a limited range of writing styles to compile a journal to take with them when they transfer to their next school, which indicates that pupils can use various forms and develop ideas in their writing. The pupils in Year 5 used their writing to persuade the local council to consider the use of a local building. They used a good range of vocabulary and wrote their letters using punctuation, style, and spelling to good effect and persuaded a local councillor to discuss the issue with them. Key vocabulary is a feature in some lessons and, where this is used, the standards in writing are improved. However, higher attaining pupils are not extended sufficiently to use punctuation effectively. The quality of their writing is satisfactory but they are not challenged often enough to improve their writing by using the correct form for writing direct speech and using other punctuation to improve the quality and range of their writing.

89. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with some good lessons. All pupils react positively to their work in literacy lessons. Their behaviour is good and most sustain interest and concentration throughout the lessons. In most lessons the interest and enthusiasm of the pupils was sustained because the pupils understood what they were expected to learn, and how they were going to achieve it. The good use of teacher's questions and the challenge they directed towards individual pupils indicates that they know their pupils' abilities well. In good lessons, the well-differentiated tasks enable all pupils to make progress and recognise their achievements. In other lessons, all pupils were given a very similar task, so the higher attaining pupils were not challenged sufficiently. A feature of good lessons is the use of the plenary session, where both pupils and teachers review the progress made in the lesson and use the information to develop the next stage of the learning objective. Planning for the literacy lessons is good. In other related sessions, for example, story time or handwriting, planning is not as detailed and lesson objectives are not clear. The marking of pupils' work is not consistent across the school. The pupils are not always aware of the comments which are made and they are unsure about how to respond. The day-to-day assessments used by some teachers are not sufficiently focused to develop the attainment of individual pupils, particularly the more able.

90. The pupils with special educational needs make good progress in literacy. They are well supported and encouraged by educational care officers who work hard so that pupils can achieve and contribute to lessons and complete the task. All staff are aware of the specific targets pupils have to make progress and usually make good provision for these pupils within the lesson.

91. The range of reading resources is satisfactory and easily accessible for pupils and staff. The fiction and non-fiction books which are available in class collections are appropriate. However, within the library the number of non-fiction books is limited in range in some subjects for the number of pupils within the school.

92. The co-ordinator has a number of other responsibilities in the school which impact on the way the subject is managed across the whole school. She monitors planning on regular basis but is not available to give guidance, especially to the teachers in Years 3 to 6. A portfolio of a sample of pupils' work is assessed and discussed. This is assisting in monitoring standards but is not yet sufficiently developed to raise standards across the school. Assessments of pupils' work are not yet focused so that detailed plans to improve pupils' progress on an individual basis can be identified.

93. The policy for English is good and addresses all elements of the subject. There is a shared commitment to raise standards in the subject. However, recent staffing changes have had a negative impact and further developments to attempt to raise standards are now at an embryonic stage.

MATHEMATICS

94. Standards by the end of Year 2 are close to the national average. By the end of Year 6 they are below average, based on the current Year 6. However standards in other junior classes are noticeably higher, with pupils achieving well. Overall, progress through the school is satisfactory, so that standards have been maintained since the last inspection, having risen in Key Stage 1.

Strengths in the subject are:

- improved attainment in Years 1 and 2;
- the teachers' understanding of the numeracy strategy;
- assessment data is being used and is beginning to have an effect;
- good use of resources, including educational care officers;
- the teachers' awareness and use of key vocabulary.

Areas for improvement are:

- the basis for arranging teaching groups;
- the length of lessons;
- matching of work to challenge all pupils consistently;
- the pace of learning in some lessons;
- the computation of number, particularly multiplication tables.

95. By the end of Year 2, the pupils recognise odd and even numbers and use simple inverse operations. They order numbers with confidence, higher attainers up to 1000. The pupils use mathematical names for 2- and 3-dimensional shapes, describing their properties. They measure in centimetres and solve problems involving money up to £1. Higher attaining pupils interpret the data recorded on Venn diagrams, using the information to answer questions. Good progress is made. By the end of Year 6, pupils use basic methods of addition and subtraction of number. They are insecure on multiplication and division tasks. Higher-attaining pupils multiply and divide whole numbers by 10, 100 and 1000. Sometimes they multiply 3-digit numbers by 2-digit numbers but not confidently. There is insufficient evidence of pupils working with decimal numbers and of any data handling. The pupils use strategies to solve problems of number. They show, for example, how they calculate correctly $\frac{6}{9}$ of 54 but they do not write down any explanation of their strategies. From the limited amount of work provided, progress in Year 6 is unsatisfactory.

96. Teaching is satisfactory overall. In Years 1 and 2 it is good, but there is more variance in Years 3 to 6 and one unsatisfactory lesson was seen. The teacher's delivery in this lesson was pedestrian and the pace of the lesson was very laboured, with the oral session lasting for 40 minutes. When some low-level tasks were presented, many pupils were bored and insufficiently challenged. Consequently, the behaviour and application of some was unsatisfactory. Many lessons are too long, some lasting 75 minutes, so that even in some better lessons the pupils' enthusiasm begins to wane. Only those teachers who drive the lesson along and provide stimulating and challenging tasks for all are fully effective. In a lesson with pupils in Years 4 and 5, the teacher made her expectations very clear and motivated the pupils extremely well. Questioning was sharp and posed at different levels, so that all were challenged to think, but also given the opportunity to be successful. The pupils worked hard, presented recorded work neatly and enjoyed it. By the end of the lesson, higher attaining Year 4 pupils used formulae to calculate areas and solved problems involving perimeter and area. Lower attaining pupils calculated areas using grids to check their answers. When learning was reviewed, the pupils were quick to spot the teacher's 'error'.

The educational care officers gave strong support, so that many pupils used the computer and all, including those with special educational needs, learned very well. The pupils generally know what they have learned. At the start of each lesson the teacher tells them what the objectives are, usually written for all to see. In the best lessons, pupils not only hear and use the key vocabulary, but it is also displayed for them to refer to. This helps pupils to refer to 'octagons' and not 'oxygons'. At the end of a lesson with Year 2 pupils, the teacher discussed the learning objectives with them. The pupils said what they understood fully and what they would like to revisit.

97. Good use is made of resources. The pupils in Years 4 and 5 had access to acetate grid sheets to support their learning of area. Year 3 pupils used number flash cards so that all were involved in answering all the questions. The teacher also used a range of coins and the overhead projector effectively to support the pupils' learning about money. Many pupils in this group had difficulty in converting notation from pounds and pence to pence only. The teacher assessed them well as the lesson progressed and sought to move them on. The wide range of ability in her class made her task more difficult. The pupils are in teaching groups based on their attainment in literacy, which is not always compatible with attainment in numeracy. A good range of assessment is now in place and is beginning to impact on planning. It is not yet sufficiently sharp, so that on occasions the tasks set for pupils are not challenging all of them, particularly the higher attaining pupils. When Year 5 pupils plotted the co-ordinates to translate shapes into another quadrant, it was too easy for some of them. A good feature of this lesson was how the pupils paired up as 'teacher' and 'pupil'. This gave the less assured some close attention and the 'teachers' the opportunity to explain and clarify their own understanding. The pupils found this approach very beneficial and collaborated very well. Throughout the lesson the class teacher was very active, ensuring a good pace to the pupils' learning. However, they began to flag towards the end of an overlong lesson. Few of the teachers have this lively approach. The opening mental activities in lessons sometimes lack sharpness.

98. The subject co-ordinator has a clear view of her subject, with good support from the local education authority numeracy consultant. More emphasis has been given to the investigative aspect of the subject. The pupils are challenged to solve problems. For example, in Year 4 the pupils were given six single-digit numbers, which they then had to combine by addition or subtraction to arrive at a target answer. All round improvement has taken place in Years 1 and 2, with a number of pupils now working at the higher Level 3. The pupils' facility in computation of number is not strong. Insufficient emphasis is given to pupils learning multiplication tables consistently and thoroughly. Consequently a pupil in the Years 4 and 5 class thought that $2 \times 8 = 17$ and then had to count on her fingers to arrive at 24. Little evidence is seen of homework being set consistently and regularly. Year 5 pupils used computers for data representation, but in most lessons seen the computers are unused. On occasions pupils use their mathematical skills in other subjects. Year 2 pupils used data handling in geography. In science they measured and worked out the length of stretch in a material, recording the information on a graph. Presentation of work varies widely with teachers' expectations. Some pupils make good progress in this through the year, as noted in Year 4. Presentation is poor in Year 6, where marking does not encourage improvement and is sometimes incorrect. In some classes, as in Year 5, marking is helpful to pupils' progress, but too often is not. Nor does it help if, having made a point, it is not followed up.

SCIENCE

99. Standards in science are average in Year 2 and below average by the end of Year 6. Pupils are now making satisfactory progress through the school. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

Strengths in the subjects are:

- standards in investigational and experimental science;
- the pupils' attitudes to the subject;
- the quality of teaching and learning.

Areas for development are:

- planning to ensure that all pupils enjoy all aspects of the curriculum;
- the recording of assessment.

100. The quality of teaching and learning in science is good overall. Much of the reason for this is that most lessons focus on the investigational and experimental aspects of the subject. The teachers are using a commercial scheme of work, which gives them the confidence to deliver their lessons in an interesting way. This investigative approach ensures that the interest and involvement of the pupils is retained and their learning is consequently good. For example, in a lesson seen in Year 2, the pupils were provided with materials to test which would stretch the most. The teacher ensured, by her questioning, that the pupils fully understood how to conduct a fair test and then left the pupils to devise their own experiment and the recording of their own results. The pupils were fully involved in their experiments, discussing sensibly and carrying out good investigations and learning well. The teachers use educational care officers well to support the learning of the less able pupils. This ensures that the rate of learning and progress of those pupils with special educational needs is as good as that of the rest of their class.

101. The emphasis on the investigative nature of the subject arouses the interest and enthusiasm of the pupils and they consequently have good attitudes to the subject. A number of those Year 6 pupils questioned said that their favourite subject was science. Further evidence of the relationship between the pupils' interest and enthusiasm was seen during a Year 6 lesson when, during a rather lengthy introduction lasting about half an hour, a number of the pupils lost interest. However, as soon as they started on their experiment, the pace of learning increased dramatically as they set their own problems and found solutions to creating circuits with different numbers of bulbs at varying levels of brightness.

102. The major reason for the good teaching not resulting in better standards and only satisfactory progress is the inequality of opportunity in the planned curriculum for the subject. Although the school has recently set up an annual planning meeting at which all staff plan for the next academic year, there are still significant inconsistencies between year groups. For example, although there is meant to be a two-year rolling programme, the three classes in Years 1 and 2 are each doing separate topics during this year. This means that some topics will not be covered by a significant number of children during their time in Years 1 and 2. This also happens in some older classes.

103. A further reason for the progress not being better is that there is presently no suitable form of recording the assessments made at the end of each teaching unit. Although the teachers know the abilities of their pupils well and are good at establishing their strengths and weaknesses, there is no record of exactly what they have achieved in any topic that can be referred to when a future teacher comes to teach a related topic. This means that work is often repeated and skills taught again unnecessarily. Management of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator, who has recently taken over responsibility for the subject, is aware of the shortcomings and is planning to address them. He has limited opportunities to monitor the effectiveness of the delivery of the curriculum and the analysis of pupils' work.

ART AND DESIGN

104. It was only possible to observe one lesson during the course of the inspection. There was only a small amount of evidence around the school in the displays to confirm that the techniques and skills of art and design are being taught and learnt effectively. There was also only a small sample of work provided. In consequence, it is not possible to make a secure judgement upon the quality of teaching or on the attitudes of pupils to their learning. However, as a result of discussions with pupils, it is clear that they are able to recall using a wide range of media and having a limited range of experiences in art and design. The experiences have been gained over their time in the school, indicating some satisfactory progress including that made by pupils with special educational needs, but standards that are below average. In the one lesson observed in Year 3, the pupils' standards were satisfactory, whilst good progress was being made. The good progress arose from the good level of imaginative teaching. The teaching was drawing out the skills of pattern-making and perspective. The pupils were enjoying their work as they worked well in pairs, using map contours to support them in making effective patterns. Improvement since the school was last inspected is unsatisfactory.

Strengths in the subject are:

- the range of media used;
- the sound start given in the Foundation Stage.

Areas for improvement are:

- the provision of a scheme of work identifying the skills and techniques of art and design;
- the development of the skills in a systematic way through the school;
- more study of work by famous artists to support knowledge of art and design effectively;
- an audit of resources to match a well-developed scheme of work;
- ensuring coverage of all strands of art and design including 2- and 3-dimensional work;
- rigorous monitoring of the continuity and progression being achieved in the specific skills of art and design.

105. There is a sound start given to children in the Foundation Stage classes in learning the creative aspects of art and design. The pupils in Years 1 to 6 can recount opportunities being given to continue investigating the use of a range of media. However, the small amount of evidence produced in the school to support the systematic development of knowledge and understanding indicates that art and design currently lacks direction as a specific skills-based subject. The co-ordination is currently in a holding position with a newly qualified teacher beginning to prepare to take over responsibility for the subject's development in the next academic year. In discussion with the teacher, it is clear that there is a recognition of the need to give attention to the subject. An appropriate action plan has been drawn up that is not yet confirmed within the school's overall development plan.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

106. Standards by the end of Year 2 are similar to those expected of pupils of this age. By the end of Year 6 they are below expectations. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Overall, there has been insufficient improvement since the last inspection.

Strengths in the subject are:

- improvement in Years 1 and 2 since the last inspection;
- planning and provision in Years 1 and 2;
- quality of teaching seen in lessons.

Areas for improvement are:

- time allocation and its use, particularly in Years 3 to 6;
- structure of the design and planning element;
- developing and assessing progression in skills.

107. The planned curriculum is satisfactory. The pupils experience different materials involving a variety of skills. However, a scrutiny of the pupils' work and discussions with them shows that there is insufficient depth to the coverage. The pupils are disappointed that they do not have enough time to investigate more fully. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 think about materials, linked to the story of the 'Three Pigs'. They read together the story of the 'Lighthouse-keeper's Lunch' and consider foods suitable for packed meals. They also think about and discuss mechanisms. The pupils study the 1940's and vehicles of that era. They draw a vehicle from different aspects and label their drawings. When they make puppets they comment on how well their designs and finished articles are matched, with points for improvement. This good approach is not developed with any progression through Years 3 to 6. Pockets of good practice are seen. The pupils in Year 3 explain their understanding of pneumatics. They list materials, draw a first design and then an improved one. The pupils record their order of working and evaluate their products. Similar practice takes place with some Year 5 work, in bread-making and controllable vehicles. However their designs give no indication of dimensions. The few products seen are constructed with satisfactory accuracy and finish. Photographs of twist loaves appear to have been well made and look mouth-watering. Work in Year 6 does not match this quality, with a very cursory investigation of slippers being the only evidence.

108. Some good lessons were seen. The pupils in a Years 4 and 5 class looked at alarm systems. The teacher made her expectations very clear from the outset. Good open questioning encouraged all pupils to participate and explain their understanding. Good use of praise resulted in pupils remaining on task, with enthusiasm. A link was made with geography. The pupils used plans of the school on which they marked accurately any items that fitted the criteria. In a Year 6 lesson the teacher related the pupils' learning to familiar items. They examined the working of the classroom blinds when investigating mechanisms. The teacher successfully enthused all, including pupils with special educational needs who participated fully. Their admiration for the teacher's home-made carousel was very audible. One pupil was motivated to return two days later with his own well-constructed working model.

109. Management of the subject is currently unsatisfactory. There is a lack of monitoring of standards in the subject. Assessment does not provide for tracking of progression in skills. Resources are adequate, including tools for use with wood, although older pupils do not recall using them. Insufficient use is made of construction kits both for design purposes and as working models.

GEOGRAPHY

110. Standards are below those expected of pupils in Year 6. This means there has been a decline in standards since the time of the last inspection, when they were reported as satisfactory.

Strengths of the subject are:

- the use of a themed approach to geography in Years 1 and 2;
- the teacher's use of questions to extend pupils' language skills.

Areas for development are:

- to improve resources for the subject;
- there are weaknesses in planning the geography curriculum. Not enough time is given to the subject, particularly in Years 3 to 6.

111. The priority in raising standards in English and mathematics and changes in staff has meant that the subject has not been taught consistently or in the depth that is required. The pupils have limited opportunities to develop their geographical skills. The subject is taught in

blocks, usually alternating with history. The time given to geography is not sufficient. The pupils develop skills during the lessons, but they are not using the skills on a consistent basis. They do not develop and consolidate their learning, particularly in Years 3 to 6.

112. The subject is taught in Years 1 and 2 through using a theme or topic. These combine a variety of subjects and look at aspects of geography through using a story they are using in literacy lessons. The pupils developed their mapping skills by looking how far 'The Jolly Postman' travelled. Their teacher enthused the pupils in Year 2 with the story of 'The Lighthouse-keeper's Lunch'. She promoted good discussion and the pupils used the pictures from the book to extract and use information about different landscapes and localities. They used the information they collected about favourite places and where they like to go in a graph on the computer. They made good comparisons about why people prefer different locations. The pupils used their own experience to extend their learning and they made good progress in the lesson.

113. It is not the same in Years 3 to 6 where pupils are taught geography as a distinct and separate subject. An examination of pupils' work since the beginning of the year indicates a patchy picture. The geographical themes are not in sufficient depth to enable pupils to build up the skills so that they can extend their knowledge. However, in lessons observed during the inspection, teaching was satisfactory and often good or very good because teachers involved pupils in using maps so making tasks interesting and relevant. In a Year 5 lesson the teacher used a range of different maps so that pupils were able to recognise key places quickly and easily. The lesson moved along at a good pace; the teacher extended the pupils' learning by involving them in locating key places by using co-ordinates, which they have learnt in mathematics. The pupils respond well to the task because they are familiar with the journey to Skegness and are confident they can use the skills the teacher is promoting. By the end of the lesson they are able to plan both rail and road routes to Skegness using the correct geographical terms. 'Where have we got to', questions and discussions ensured pupils made good progress.

114. The pupils in Year 6 recall little of the geography they have done over the years and are not enthusiastic about the subject. They do not link geography to any other subject or area of school life and do not appreciate that geography is a useful skill to develop.

115. The absence of a co-ordinator in recent times has not allowed the subject to develop in line with other subjects. The present co-ordinator has reviewed the subject and developed a programme which is to be taught on a rolling plan, so that pupils in mixed-age classes will not retrace earlier themes. The plan, based on national guidelines, is adequate but is not always relevant to the needs and the development of pupils' geographical skills. The current level of resources is inadequate if pupils are to develop their geographical understanding and enquiry skills. There is no formal assessment system, so that teachers, pupils and parents can see how much progress pupils are making.

HISTORY

116. Current standards are broadly typical for pupils by the end of Year 2. Evidence from pupils' work, teachers' planning and discussions with staff indicates that attainment is satisfactory by the end of Year 6. These are similar to the standards reported at the time of the last inspection. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress.

Strengths in the subject are:

- the links and themes with other subjects in Years 1 and 2;
- the emphasis placed on using information to develop an understanding of the past.

Areas for development are:

- to review the medium-term planning of the subject so that topics are relevant to the pupils' needs and abilities;
- to develop a sense of chronology by the time pupils are eleven;
- to develop the use of artefacts, materials and visits so that pupils can interpret and understand the past;
- to increase the use of differentiated tasks so that all pupils can make progress at their level.

117. Progress is limited by the lack of detailed planning which sets out what pupils are to learn in topics. The planning lacks sufficient depth to ensure that the pupils' historical skills and knowledge are developed consistently over the time they spend in Years 1 and 2. It is a similar picture in Years 3 to 6 where history is taught as a separate subject. The school-based scheme reflects national guidance. A wide range of topics is covered but the detail is insufficient to ensure the skills and knowledge develop consistently across each topic. Each unit is planned separately, and there is no chronological progression. Discussion with Year 6 pupils reflects an understanding and knowledge about periods in history. They confused periods of time and suggested the 'Victorians were before Elizabeth the First' but then recognised the events in the Victorian era were influenced by both the events and discoveries of the past.

118. The pupils in Years 1 and 2 develop their historical awareness and knowledge through teachers using a themed approach and linking the subject to a story. The pupils are able to discuss how flight began and who the key figures in its development were. They develop a sense of time by using pictures to make comparisons about types of aircraft and the clothes people are wearing to indicate different periods of time. The pupils' writing skills are extended by using a range of historical vocabulary and they show their understanding through discussing important people of the times.

119. In the one lesson observed during the period of the inspection, the teacher told a story very well, so that pupils were able to appreciate that Vikings were warriors who ransacked and destroyed the settlers who lived in Northern Britain. They used clues and ideas to record their thoughts and reasons clearly. The teacher provided a range of similar tasks so that all pupils including those with special educational needs made progress in the lesson but the task did not challenge the higher attaining pupils sufficiently. The pupils used the wall displays and reference posters to search for information. They discussed their ideas with each other to good effect. The pace of the lesson in discussions was good; however pupils were reluctant to record their ideas in writing.

120. Teaching is satisfactory. This judgement is based on the displays around the school and on evidence in pupils' books and discussions with pupils. The pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress; however, the range of tasks are not sufficiently different for these pupils and do not support the targets on their individual education plans.

121. The pupils are using the skills they have learnt in their English lessons to write about the feelings of children who were evacuees, similarly they use ICT to search for information to supplement their knowledge about the Aztecs. They discuss recent topics in some detail and recall significant events and happenings. They find it difficult even when a time line is available for them to use, to put in order historical events and people who were important at the time. The limited amount of work seen in pupils' books, often unfinished, suggests that some pupils only make limited progress in using their writing skills. The leadership of the subject is satisfactory.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

122. Standards in ICT are in line with expectations in Year 2, but below expectations in Year 6. The pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress through the school. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Satisfactory progress has been made since the last inspection.

Strengths in the subject are:

- the new curriculum planning now in place for the pupils in Years 1 to 4;
- the pupils' attitudes to the subject.

Areas for development are:

- to ensure that the curriculum is extended to all pupils in the school;
- to make more use of the computers, particularly in re-enforcing learning in other subjects;
- to put in place a system of assessment to record the skills learnt.

123. The school has recently started using a commercial scheme of work with the pupils in Years 1 to 4. This scheme has had an impact on raising standards in these year groups and most pupils of this age are now working at the expected levels. For example, the pupils in Year 3 are creating a poster, using a variety of fonts, styles and colours. The teacher led into this project well by linking it with the work being done in literacy and asking the question "What sort of writing might this be?" when a particular font was shown. The pupils were quickly involved and made good suggestions, such as 'Scary'. This involvement ensures that the pupils have good attitudes to the subject. They enjoy their time on the computers and work productively and co-operatively when it is their turn. Their computer time is generally well planned in Years 1 to 4, as the teacher teaches skills to the whole class and then the pupils work in pairs, often with the support of an educational care officer or the technician that the school has recently employed. The best practice observed was when a lesson was stopped when a group returned from their turn on the computers to enable a pupil to explain briefly the task that the rest of the class was doing. This not only enabled the pupils returning from the computers to start the task, but also re-focused the remainder of the class on the task in hand.

124. The standards being achieved in Year 6 are below expectations because the new scheme of work has not yet reached this year group. There are also problems with the planned curriculum as there are a number of mixed-age classes in the school. The co-ordinator has not yet planned how the curriculum might be delivered to ensure that all pupils have equal access to all aspects of the curriculum. She does not have any time to monitor the delivery of the curriculum, so cannot gauge its effectiveness except through the hearsay evidence of her colleagues. There are no systems to record what skills the pupils have mastered to enable the teachers to plan effectively for the next stage in learning.

125. The computers are presently underused. There were significant periods when computers in classrooms were not being used during the inspection. The school is planning to partially address this by setting up a computer suite, aided by funding from a local business. Some use was observed of computers in other subjects, but not sufficient. For example, some pupils were using a computer in a literacy lesson, but on a mathematical task. There was some good use seen in a reception class where some less able children were using a computer to re-enforce their learning on initial sounds.

MUSIC

126. It was only possible to observe one lesson in Year 2 during the course of the inspection. This is because the school is pairing music lessons with personal, health and social education lessons this term. The emphasis in most classes during the inspection week was on personal, health and social education lessons. This does not give a balanced

amount of time to specific music lessons. However, there is a good range of musical activities taking place in the school. There are a number of opportunities to develop singing skills and with these, the skills of performance. The pupils in both key stages sing in weekly singing assemblies when appropriate emphasis is given to improving skills in rhythm and tempo. There is a school choir which meets as an extra curricular activity on a weekly basis. They are currently practising for a public performance and paying good levels of attention to improving performance. Tuition in playing recorders, violins and brass instruments supports the developing skills of a number of pupils with specific musical talents. Many of the brass players also play in the village brass band and the benefit of their playing together regularly was amply demonstrated by the prowess shown when some of them played in one of the school's assemblies during the inspection week.

127. Together with the one lesson observed these activities confirm that in performance skills pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and obtain satisfactory standards by Year 2. All pupils are given effective opportunities to become involved in the school's music-making activities. Good teaching results in the pupils developing good attitudes to their music making at the end of Year 2. It is not possible to make a secure judgement on standards by the end of Year 6 because of lack of evidence.

Strengths in the subject are:

- the pupils' good attitudes as performers;
- good use being made of instrumental tuition;
- the opportunities given to pupils to join together in their music making.

Areas for improvement are:

- ensuring, through rigorous observational monitoring, that all strands of music are being delivered;
- retaining more evidence of progress being made;
- making use of music books to record some aspects of learning so that continuity and progression are assured.

128. The fairly recently appointed deputy headteacher is the co-ordinator for the subject. She is aware of the needs of the subject. A clear plan of action is to be drawn up to redress the balance being given to music together with the unsatisfactory nature of the improvement since the last inspection. Not all strands of music-making skills are being given enough emphasis currently. The process of redressing the balance has been started as the co-ordinator has already provided staff with a useful scheme of work. She has also carried out an appropriate audit of resources and consequently has an awareness of resource needs.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

129. Standards overall are average throughout the school. This is in line with the findings of the last inspection.

Strengths in the subject are:

- provision and standards in swimming;
- some good teaching;
- gymnastics in Year 5.

Areas for improvement are:

- subject ethos – pupils' dress/attitude in games lessons;
- opportunities for pupils to comment on others' performances;
- gymnastics apparatus.

130. Standards in swimming are above average. The school provides well for pupils to learn to swim, commencing in Year 3. By the time they leave the school all pupils achieve the basic standard set down in the National Curriculum and many swim well in excess of this.

131. Teaching of gymnastics is good. The teachers organise lessons well and manage the pupils very effectively so that time is used purposefully. High standards of behaviour and performance are expected. The pupils understand this and work with enthusiasm and a desire to improve. The teachers dress appropriately and take an active lead, on occasions performing good demonstrations. A prime example of this was with Year 5. The teacher 'led from the front' and pupils responded exuberantly as they warmed up to the beat of a Kylie Minogue pop song. Very good subject knowledge was most apparent when the teacher talked about how pupils could achieve quality movement. Consequently, the pupils worked exceedingly hard, showing above average ability. When performing balances they had good control and showed imaginative shapes, later combining them into well-planned and executed sequences. A less confident pupil with special educational needs was drawn into the lesson well as the teacher made an opportunity for others to praise his work. An injured spectator observed and sketched some of the balances so that all pupils were included. In both gymnastics lessons seen, the pupils observed others perform. However they were rarely asked to analyse and comment on the work of others.

132. An indoor games lesson with pupils in Years 1 and 2 was planned well so that they tried very hard and enjoyed their work. The pupils concentrated hard to control the large balls with their feet, with satisfactory results. Insufficient guidance was given on the key points involved in the skill. The pupils in Years 5 and 6 appear to think that outdoor games and athletics are an extension of playtime. Despite the strenuous efforts of the teacher, many pupils showed great disregard and a lack of self-control, so that some of the teacher's good planning did not come to fruition.

133. Standards of performance are at least satisfactory and often better. Progress in pupils' attitudes is not always complementing this. The subject makes an insufficient contribution to their personal development. There is a lack of smartness with some aspects of dress being totally unsuitable. Footwear in gymnastics lessons ranges from bare feet to heavy trainers. Pupils wear jogging trousers indoors, large watches and loose cardigans or jumpers tied round their waists during athletics activities. There are some opportunities for extra-curricular sporting activities, for example a weekly football club and a sports club run by the local leisure services. The residential visit made by older juniors provides a good opportunity for water sports and other outdoor activities. This provides well for pupils' personal and social development. Resources are satisfactory overall but the large gymnastics equipment is unsuitable for younger pupils. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

134. Standards are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus in Year 2 and Year 6. Progress is good throughout the school, including that made by pupils with special educational needs, who are fully included in the discussions and work in religious education. There is also good teaching throughout the school, which ensures the pupils' good attitudes to learning from religious education. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory, as standards and progress have been effectively sustained.

Strengths in the subject are:

- beginning the process of learning from religious education effectively;
- opportunities being increasingly created for pupils to record in their own way;
- creating opportunities for interactive discussion;
- positive attitudes supported by good teaching.

Areas for improvement are:

- giving more opportunities for individual styles of recording;
- improving presentation of the pupils' written work;
- more rigorous, but helpful, marking being applied more consistently.

135. Teaching throughout the school is good. The teachers plan work thoughtfully, ensuring that pupils have opportunities to study a range of religions. The teachers pay careful attention to the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. In giving focus to a diversity of religions, the pupils begin to learn from, as well as about, religion. In Year 1, journeys in the Bible are the beginning of the pupils' recording their own special journeys effectively. The Sikh religion is the focus in Year 2, but it is a religion that is compared with previous work on the Hindu religion. The similarities are determined as well as the differences, so that pupils are beginning to understand how both of these factors need to be given consideration if their knowledge is to be increased. The teachers initiate discussions to support the pupils' effective understanding of the similarities and differences. This good foundation of knowledge and understanding is built upon successfully in Years 3 to 6 as part of a seamless progression of learning. In Year 3 the pupils pay a useful visit to the local church as a starting point to a comparative study of places of worship. The success of this visit is generated through the good liaison between the teacher and vicar, who introduces pupils to the key features of the church thoroughly but thoughtfully. In Years 4, 5 and 6, the pupils consider maturely the more abstract considerations of signs and symbols, beginnings and endings in beliefs and empathy for special places. The pupils' understanding is enhanced by the teachers' regular use of good quality artefacts. As pupils move through the school they increasingly record their findings in their own way. However, they do not always pay enough careful attention to the presentation of their written work.

136. The teachers' subject knowledge is good. They work with confidence because they are well supported by a good scheme of work. The co-ordinator leads the subject satisfactorily and has worked hard to ensure that the scheme is well supported by a good range of artefacts. The overall satisfactory range of resources supplements the artefacts with a small number of relevant books. No regular use is made of ICT to extend the knowledge and understanding of the pupils. The pupils respond positively in discussions as teachers use open-ended questions thoughtfully. There is not enough consistently rigorous, but helpful, marking of the pupils' work to indicate clearly to them what they need to do in order to improve their work further. This lack of consistent rigour is not helpful to raising standards further.