

INSPECTION REPORT

HOLCOMBE BROOK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Holcombe Brook, Bury

LEA area: Bury

Unique reference number: 105311

Headteacher: Mr Graham Howarth

Reporting inspector: Anna Dawson
11608

Dates of inspection: 9 – 12 December 2002

Inspection number: 246471

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Longsight Road Holcombe Brook Bury
Postcode:	BLO 9TA
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr David Ganz
Date of previous inspection:	January 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
11608	Anna Dawson	Registered inspector	Educational inclusion Science; art and design, design and technology	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
19365	Gordon Stockley	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development; How good are curricular and other opportunities? How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
31175	Arthur Allison	Team inspector	English; information and communication technology; history.	
21094	Pat Thorpe	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage; music; physical education.	
21094	John Brennan	Team inspector	Special educational needs; mathematics; geography; religious education.	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Holcombe Brook Primary School is an average-sized school for children from 4 – 11 years of age in the village of Holcombe Brook, north of Bury. It draws its pupils from the area that surrounds the school. Most pupils have attended a nursery or a playgroup before they start in one of the two reception classes in the year they become five. Pupils enter the school with a broad range of attainments: in general, their language and mathematical attainment are average and their social skills and speech above average. There are 268 pupils on roll in full time education, of these 126 are boys and 142 are girls. They are grouped in 9 classes. Twelve per cent of pupils have special educational needs. Most of these pupils have language and learning difficulties. This is below the national average of 22.2 per cent. The percentage of pupils who have a statement of special educational need at one per cent is below average. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals at eight per cent is below the national average of 18.6 per cent. Most pupils are of white European origin. About two per cent are of mixed race and include pupils from Indian, African and Caribbean heritages. There are no pupils learning English as an additional language. Ten per cent of pupils leave or join the school other than at the normal times, which is average. The characteristics of the school are broadly similar to those reported at the time of the last inspection in 1998. The school has identified a small number of very able pupils.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very effective school which provides a very good education for its pupils by the time they leave school. Pupils have very good attitudes to work and work happily together. The school is very well thought of by the parents and the community. The headteacher provides very good leadership. He is fully supported by the commitment and hard work of his deputy, staff and the governing body. In response, particularly to the high quality teaching at the end of Key Stage 2, pupils achieve well to attain well above average standards in English, mathematics, science and music by the end of Year 6. The school gives very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards are high in English, mathematics, science and music.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning and the quality of the relationships within the school are very good.
- The leadership of the school is very effective. There is a clear and shared vision for the future with a commitment to raise standards.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. The best teaching is in Years 5 and 6, where pupils make rapid progress.
- The school makes very good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- There is very good provision for pupils' moral and social development.

What could be improved

- The management and coordination of the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1.
- Some teaching, so that all teaching is brought up to the standard of the best.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made very good progress since it was last inspected in 1998. The curriculum is planned more effectively than before. Standards in most subjects have improved because the quality of the teaching is better than it was. The procedures and assessments made of pupils' work have improved and are used more effectively by the staff in lesson planning. Almost every other aspect of the work of the school has also improved. The school makes more efficient use of limited resources thanks to carefully considered financial management

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	A	A	A	B
mathematics	A	A	A	A
science	B	B	B	C

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

In 2002, standards were well above average in English and mathematics and above average in science compared with standards of all pupils nationally. In comparison with results in schools in a similar context, standards were above average in English, well above average in mathematics and average in science. There has been an overall steady rise in standards in English, mathematics and science since the last inspection, which reflects the national trend.

Inspection findings show that standards in the current Year 6 are well above average in English, mathematics and science and pupils are on course to attain or exceed the targets set for them in English and mathematics. The standards are also well above average in music and above average in art and design, design and technology, information and communication technology and physical education. Standards are average in geography and history. In religious education, pupils are exceeding the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well because of the very good provision made for them and the skilled help they receive from the teaching assistants. Pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds achieve as well as other pupils. The most able are challenged to achieve well by Year 6. In the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, pupils' achievement is satisfactory in relation to their starting points. Most pupils in the reception classes are on course to attain the expected Early Learning Goals by the end of the year. The current pupils in Year 2 are attaining above average standards in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology and music. In all the other subjects they are reaching the standards appropriate for their age.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Most pupils concentrate very well during lessons because they enjoy school and are keen to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Most pupils behave well in lessons and in and around the school. Pupils are welcoming and polite to visitors.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils respect the views of others and play and work happily together.
Attendance	Very good. Most pupils have very good attendance. They are punctual and arrive on time.

The positive approach by the school towards encouraging pupils' very good behaviour, their positive attitudes to work and respect for self and others, is central to its aims and values. The majority of pupils are mature and use their initiative well in their learning.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

Overall the quality of teaching is good and ranges from satisfactory to excellent. English, mathematics, literacy and numeracy and the basic skills are taught well. The very effective teaching assistants work alongside the teachers and make a significant contribution to the standards attained, particularly by those pupils who have special educational needs. These pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1 and very good progress towards their set targets in Key Stage 2. In other subjects teaching and learning was good in art and design, information and communication technology, music and religious education. There was too little teaching observed in design and technology and geography to make a secure judgement.

The best teaching was observed in Years 5 and 6. The teaching is skilful in placing demands on pupils to develop their problem-solving skills and to answer questions and solve problems using different methods. As a result, pupils learn rapidly towards the end of Key Stage 2. Throughout the key stage, best use is made of curricular time to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding in a range of subjects under topic headings. In the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, the pace of learning is slower. Sometimes opportunities are missed to challenge the higher attainers further in their learning. Pupils' overall achievement and learning are, nevertheless, satisfactory. Teachers' marking of pupils' work does not consistently inform them of their next learning steps. Consistency in marking is recognised as a current priority. The teaching of pupils' personal and social development is a strength. The school is working towards improving pupils' understanding of living in a diverse society.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. Provision is satisfactory for pupils in the reception and Key Stage 1 classes. In other classes the school provides a good range of experiences. There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities which extend pupils' skills and interests.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. The teachers identify learning difficulties early. The pupils make very good progress because of the skilled help they receive, particularly from the teaching assistants.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. The provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good. It is good for pupils' spiritual and cultural development. The school is working towards developing further pupils' awareness of diversity in UK society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The welfare and care provided for pupils are very good. Teachers and teaching assistants know the pupils very well and provide very good personal support and guidance. The procedures for monitoring behaviour, personal development and academic performance are very good. Procedures for monitoring and improving pupils' attendance are good.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher has a very clear vision for the school and provides very good leadership. He is very well supported by the deputy headteacher and the staff. The management of the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 need to be strengthened further in order to take action to further raise standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very well. The very experienced and knowledgeable governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and fully support its direction for the future. Statutory requirements are met.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. There are rigorous procedures for improving the quality of teaching, learning and curricular provision. The extensive information on pupils' attainments and progress is used very well with increasing efficiency to set targets for further success.
The strategic use of resources	Excellent. The governors and headteacher work closely together to ensure that the school makes the best use of available resources. Spending is very closely monitored to get the best value for money.

The accommodation is satisfactory. The staff use the available resources very well to help pupils learn but the lack of space in the mobile classrooms prevents pupils from working on a large scale. There are sufficient well-qualified teachers who are assisted by the very experienced teaching assistants to cover the curriculum. The learning resources are good overall. The school works very well with the parents to help their children learn.

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, behave well and make good progress. • They feel comfortable about approaching the school with queries or problems and the school works closely with them. • The school is well led and managed. • Their children are well taught and expected to work hard and do their best. • Their children are developing maturity and responsibility. • The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A few parents felt that their children did not get the right amount of homework. • A few parents felt that they were not sufficiently well informed about their children's progress.

The inspectors agree with the very positive views expressed by the parents. They feel that although homework varies in quantity between classes, it falls within the expected range for children of this age and it effectively supports learning in lessons. Parents receive very good information about their children's progress.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Pupils enter the reception classes with a wide range of attainments which vary from year to year according to the percentage of pupils with special educational needs. The attainments of the present reception classes on entry to school were broadly average in their language and mathematical skills. Their speaking and listening and social skills were generally above average. Most pupils achieve satisfactorily in the Foundation Stage and are in line to attain the expected Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning; in their personal, social and emotional development they are likely to exceed these goals. In Key Stage 1, relative to their starting points, pupils continue to make steady progress. They achieve satisfactorily and by the end of Year 2 attain standards that are above average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils' progress accelerates in Key Stage 2, and pupils achieve well and very well in Years 5 and 6 respectively to attain well above average standards in English, mathematics and science. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in Key Stage 1 and very good progress in Key Stage 2. There are particular strengths in music, in which standards are well above average by Year 6.
2. Results in English, mathematics and science, attained by Year 6 pupils in the national tests in 2002, were well above average in English and mathematics and almost as high in science for pupils attaining the expected level 4. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher level 5 was well above average in English and science and very high in mathematics. When compared with those of similar schools, these results were well above average in mathematics, above average in English and average in science. This represents steady, good improvement in English, mathematics and science since the last inspection in 1998. The rate of improvement follows the national trend overall in English and science. The improvement in mathematics is above the national trend. The targets set for the school in 2002 in English and mathematics were exceeded. Over 50 per cent of pupils attained level 5 in English and science and nearly 60 per cent in mathematics.
3. In the current Year 6, standards are well above average in English, mathematics and science. The targets set are challenging and pupils are in line to attain and possibly exceed them. The rise in standards since the last inspection is largely the result of :
 - a. improved teaching of very good quality in Years 5 and 6, where teachers have high expectations of pupils' achievements;
 - b. successful implementation of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy;
 - c. the very good provision for pupils with special educational needs;
 - d. improvements made to the curriculum;
 - e. improvements made in the procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress.
4. Results in English, mathematics and science, attained by pupils in Year 2 in the national tests in 2002, were below average in reading, average in writing and above average in mathematics for pupils attaining the expected level 2. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher level 3 was below average in reading and writing and above average in mathematics. When compared with those of similar schools, these results were well below average in reading and writing and average in mathematics. This year group, now the present Year 3, has a higher percentage of pupils with special

educational needs than most other classes. This had an adverse effect of the overall results in the 2002 national tests. Apart from 2002, the rate of improvement since the last inspection has followed the national trend in reading and writing. In mathematics, it is slightly above the national trend.

5. In the current Year 2, improvements have been made in the teaching and learning of reading, writing and mathematics since the last inspection. This is mainly because the teachers are following well the guidance of the national strategies. However, teachers' expectations of the pace of pupils' work are not as high as they could be. For example, some higher attaining pupils could be challenged further to use and apply what they know and understand to solve mathematical problems. Standards are above average in information and communication technology and music. In other subjects, standards are average.
6. In both key stages, literacy and numeracy are well represented in pupils' work across the curriculum and the basic skills are taught well. The provision for information and communication technology has improved considerably since the last inspection. The newly established computer suite, where basic skills are taught to whole classes is having a significant impact on raising standards. Because teachers make good use of information and communication technology in other subjects, pupils successfully practise and apply the skills they have learned.
7. Standards are higher in Key Stage 2 than Key Stage 1 and the Foundation Stage because the quality of teaching is better. The staff in Key Stage 2 are more experienced and have higher expectations of pupils' work and behaviour. The staff are skilled in making very good use of time to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding across a range of subjects in lessons. They use assessments in a more focused manner to ensure that all pupils are challenged well in learning. This impacts very successfully on the noticeably rising standards.
8. By Year 6, standards in art and design, design and technology and physical education are above average. In music, they are well above average. In religious education pupils attain standards above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. In history and geography standards are average. This is good improvement since the last inspection when standards were average in art and design, design and technology, music and religious education.
9. In Key Stage 1, pupils who have special educational needs make good progress and very good progress in Key Stage 2. A good proportion of pupils with special educational needs who take the national tests at the end of Years 2 and 6 attain standards in line national averages. This is a major achievement. Pupils receive very good support for English and mathematics which helps them join in with the work of the rest of the class. They are highly valued members of the school community and are keen to learn. The staff meet the needs of all pupils. The very good quality of support given to those pupils with special educational needs have a major impact on pupils' good achievements. The most able pupils are challenged well in Key Stage 2 and make good progress but opportunities are missed in Key Stage 1 to consistently stretch the most able. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds learn well alongside their peers. There are no significant differences between the attainments of boys and girls.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Pupils have very good attitudes to school and this has a very positive impact on their learning. They are keen to come to school and they enjoy their lessons. This view is strongly represented in the parents' questionnaire response. In Key Stage 2 particularly, teachers have very high expectations and plan interesting lessons with enjoyable learning activities. Pupils respond by working very hard with sustained interest and enthusiasm, as in a very good literacy lesson in the Year 5/6 class where the teacher had motivated the pupils very well by the choice of material and task. Pupils who have special educational needs have very good attitudes to school and this is a major reason why they do well. Many are confident and self-assured class members and they are keen to answer questions and to give their opinions. This is characterised by a *can do* attitude. Pupils come to school ready to learn. They apply themselves well and get on well with other pupils. Pupils also demonstrate a very high level of interest and enthusiasm by taking part in the very good range of extra-curricular activities offered by the school.
11. Behaviour is good in classrooms and around the school. Pupils know the school rules on behaviour and are polite and kind to each other and to adults. They show great respect for other people's feelings, values and beliefs. No examples of unacceptable behaviour were seen during the inspection and pupils do not regard bullying as a significant issue, any offenders being dealt with very effectively by their teacher. Conversely, there were examples of very good and occasionally excellent behaviour, both in lessons and elsewhere. One example was during the dress rehearsal for the Christmas performance, in which the younger pupils behaved extremely well whilst waiting for their turn to perform.
12. Pupils are expected to behave well and are trusted to do so. Pupils repay this trust by playing well together and acting responsibly, for example, at lunchtime while looking after the office and dealing with visitors and telephone calls. Lunchtime in the dining area is a pleasant social occasion when pupils chat happily together and in the playground behaviour is good despite the lack of playground games. Although the vast majority of pupils behave well, a small minority do not find it easy to maintain the high standards expected by the school. These pupils are generally well managed by teachers and they are helped to improve their behaviour. However, at times, this slows learning when pupils do not respond to their teachers' instructions straight away. There have been no exclusions during the past year.
13. Pupils' personal development is very good. The school's very good provision ensures that pupils develop into mature and sensible young people as they progress through the school. Staff show respect for the children and the children respond well, showing respect for the adults who teach them. Pupils make the most of the many opportunities provided for them to accept responsibility and develop their independence. They willingly carry out duties such as taking registers to the office, switching on and setting up the computers at the start of the school day, and carrying out a range of tasks to help individual teachers. Pupils are also prepared to show initiative in their learning when given the opportunity. They use reference material in the library, reference software on computers and the resources of the Internet confidently in their search for information in connection with their studies. The annual weekend residential visit to an outdoor pursuits centre also makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development, as does the school council, on which pupils are able to put forward suggestions about ways in which the school might be improved, although its value is limited somewhat by the fact that it meets only once a year. Relationships between pupils and staff are very good throughout the school.

14. Pupils' attendance rate is very good. Attendance in the most recent year was 95.8 per cent, which is well above the national average for primary schools. Pupils arrive punctually and registers are completed quickly and accurately, so that the day gets off to a prompt start. In some classes pupils make good use of registration time by reading quietly to themselves or finishing off some earlier work. A current concern is that the number of parents taking their children out of school for family holidays is increasing.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall but varies between the key stages. In the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, it is satisfactory. In Key Stage 2 it is very good overall; in Years 3 and 4, teaching and learning are good and in Years 5 and 6 very good. This results in pupils achieving well overall by the time they reach Year 6 with, most progress being made in Years 5 and 6. During the inspection, 55 lessons or parts of lessons were observed. Of these, 12 in Key Stage 2 were very good or excellent. This is good improvement from the last inspection when the quality of teaching was generally no more than satisfactory. The improved quality of the teaching is mainly due to:
- improvements made to the planning of lessons;
 - the development of teamwork among the staff and their willingness to share expertise;
 - the very effective support from the teaching assistants in helping the pupils with special educational needs;
 - the emphasis given to teaching and learning in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science and also information and communication technology;
 - the teachers' good subject knowledge, especially in Key Stage 2;
 - the effective monitoring of subjects;
 - the very good relationships between the staff and the pupils.
16. All teachers consistently praise and reward pupils for their efforts and encourage them to take responsibility for their actions and learning. This builds their confidence and self-esteem and contributes successfully to pupils' personal development.
17. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in the Foundation Stage. Teachers and classroom support staff work well together. The staff assess and record children's achievements and plan work to meet the needs of all the children. Much teaching takes place in small groups and this, coupled with a good range of planned activities, enables young children to develop the skills necessary for their future work. The support staff play a full and effective role in teaching the children. In Key Stage 1, teaching and learning continue to be satisfactory. When lessons are less successful it is because teachers do not manage the pupils and their time as effectively and a larger proportion of time is spent in initial introductions. When pupils spend a long time listening they become restless and tend to lose concentration. When teachers spend time in checking pupils' behaviour this slows the pace of learning for these and others in the class. Work is often well planned overall but not as well matched as it could be to the individual attainments of the pupils. Expectations of pupils' achievements are lower than in Key Stage 2, and the most able do not always achieve as well as they should.
18. The basic skills are taught well. The teaching of literacy, numeracy, science, art and design, music, religious education and information and communication technology is good overall. This is because the teachers have successfully implemented the national

strategies. Teaching in these subjects successfully supports other areas of the curriculum. There was insufficient teaching seen to make a judgement for design and technology and geography.

19. The best teaching is in Years 5 and 6. For example, in a history lesson, pupils debated the pros and cons for the building of the Crystal Palace in Victorian times, successfully taking on the roles of significant Victorians. In design and technology, pupils solved their design problems when building space stations using information and communication technology and their measuring skills. Teachers promote well cross-curricular links between subjects and as a result pupils begin to see the similarities and parameters of subjects and the relevance and transference of skills such as problem-solving. They are taught very well to apply a range of thinking skills to seek answers and solutions to their investigations and problems. In this respect time is used very well by the staff as several subjects are combined in lessons under broad topic headings. For instance, history, English, art and design and personal, social and health education were combined in a Year 6 lesson as pupils reflected on the social and moral values of the Victorian period as they studied a painting by Ford Maddox Brown. At Key Stage 2, teachers place a significant level of demand on pupils to ensure they are all fully involved. They challenge the most able with extension work, particularly in mathematics. Those that need additional help benefit from the additional classes provided by the headteacher and other key staff. Pupils understand exactly what is expected of them and rise to the challenges presented. The backgrounds of all pupils are taken into account during lessons and their expertise is used when it is appropriate to further pupils' cultural development. They work hard and consistently achieve well by Year 6.
20. Pupils who have special educational needs are taught very well. Teachers and learning support assistants form effective partnerships which ensure that the extra help pupils get makes a big difference to their learning. One of the most striking aspects of the teaching is the quality of relationships that exist between adults and pupils. Teachers and learning support assistants are keenly aware of the need to ensure that pupils keep positive attitudes to school and use praise and encouragement well to motivate pupils. Every opportunity is taken to keep pupils involved. During the early part of lessons teachers habitually make sure that pupils make an early contribution to class talk. This gets pupils involved from the start. This involvement is built on by teaching assistants, who provide subtle support when the teacher is talking to the whole class. They rephrase questions so that pupils better understand them and ask pupils questions directly. Pupils are, therefore, ready for the work that follows and are able to work within the class. Teachers and teaching assistants are well aware of pupils' individual targets. The teaching assistants are skilled at adapting tasks so that they match the abilities of pupils.
21. The overall quality of teachers' planning is good. Lessons are planned closely to the national frameworks in literacy and numeracy and the work is generally tailored to meet the needs of all pupils in the class. There has been good improvement in planning in other areas of the curriculum as well since the last inspection. The overhaul of curricular policies and schemes of work has resulted in pupils systematically acquiring subject knowledge understanding and skills.
22. Teachers generally have good knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach and are willing to share their expertise. They use the correct technical terms and vocabulary for each subject which promotes pupils' understanding. This is particularly evident in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology. The work of the subject leaders to support their colleagues makes a good

contribution to the rising standards. The quality of day-to-day assessment is good and has considerably improved since the last inspection. It is used well overall to adjust planning for the next lesson. Marking of work is satisfactory, but there are some inconsistencies. The school recognises this and is taking steps to improve marking. The best marking not only commends the efforts of the pupils, but also comments on learning related to the subject. Homework is used well to supplement and support work done in class.

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

23. The school has a broadly balanced and relevant curriculum which is satisfactory in the Foundation Stage and at Key Stage 1 and very good at Key Stage 2. The curriculum meets all statutory requirements including those of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Strengths in the curriculum include the provision for music and for personal, social and health education, which both make a significant contribution to pupils' education and to the life of the school generally. Another area of strength in the curriculum is the number of opportunities that are taken to combine subjects to make the best use of available time. In addition to the use of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology in other subjects, good examples occur of other cross-curricular work. In one example combining literacy, art and design technology pupils had written their instructions for making a colourful mask and these were attractively displayed alongside their finished masks.
24. The school has very effective strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy and these make a significant contribution to the progress that the children make, especially in Key Stage 2. There is also a good balance of time for the other subjects. The school provides opportunities for pupils to learn to swim and aims to ensure that all pupils can swim at least 25 metres by the time they leave.
25. The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities. Around a dozen clubs meet regularly before and after school. The well led chess club is very popular and attracts pupils from the reception year through to Year 6. Over thirty pupils attended the session held during the inspection. Some pupils go on to compete at county level in chess and in badminton. The school operates a Before and After School Care Club. Both clubs are well supported and there is a waiting list to join.
26. The curriculum is enhanced by the very good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. The regular personal, social and health education lessons have a very positive effect on many aspects of school life and successfully develop pupils' self-confidence and self-esteem. Pupils receive age-appropriate education about the beneficial and harmful effects of drugs; sex education is provided through the science curriculum and with the help of the school nurse who talks to pupils in Year 6.
27. The school has good links with the community which enrich pupils' personal and social development. Pupils take part in a range of sporting events in the local area including inter-school competitions and the annual sporting event organised by the local secondary school. Coaches from the local football club and the ladies' football club provide training for pupils. The choir sings at the local elderly people's home and pupils' art work is displayed in the local shopping centre. Pupils learn to think of others less fortunate than themselves when they raise money for local charities, including a local children's hospice. There is a good relationship with the local secondary school, to which the majority of pupils transfer. The pupils are well prepared for transfer to the high school and they have the opportunity to visit for a day in their final term at Holcombe Brook. The headteachers of the secondary school and the feeder primary

schools meet regularly to discuss curricular continuity, transfer issues and other relevant matters.

28. The school's provision for personal, social and health education, the contribution of the community and the school's relationship with partner schools have all improved since the last inspection.
29. Pupils who have special educational needs are taught alongside the class and on occasions in small groups for separate work. They benefit from the same curriculum as the rest of the school. This curriculum is added to by well planned catch-up lessons. These are very well taught by teaching assistants
30. The overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has improved since the last inspection and is now very good.
31. The school's provision for spiritual development is good and very good for pupils in Years 5 and 6. Most pupils show respect and courtesy to teachers and other adults by their positive attitudes and their willingness to listen and concentrate well. History lessons in particular, provide opportunities for pupils to reflect on the courage and dedication of famous people such as *Florence Nightingale* and on the plight of poor children in the past. Pupils in Year 5 reflect on the terrible conditions endured by children working in the coal mines or cleaning chimneys and try to imagine the suffering. Listening to poetry and music allows pupils to experience particular moods and to learn to appreciate beauty in its many forms. The school gives high priority to music making and singing in which both performers and audience experience special moments. Teachers create a climate where pupils develop their own values and beliefs and know that their opinions and contributions will be valued. Pupils are encouraged to recognise and celebrate effort and achievement both by themselves and others.
32. There is very good provision for the moral development of pupils. This is closely linked to the school's caring ethos. When disputes occur between pupils they respond well when they are given a chance to ponder on the situation and are encouraged to see it from other points of view. Pupils are expected to behave well at all times, to understand right from wrong, show concern for others and understand the need to work hard at school. Pupils feel able to freely discuss, issues that directly affect them. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 consider the problem of bullying and how to help both the victim and the bully. Pupils are made aware of the need to get rid of bullying however infrequent and prepare an anti-bullying slogan for their homework. Pupils are elected to the school council where they can express their views or exercise their responsibilities to others. The various merit systems in use, including the popular *Pupils of the Week* are highly valued by the pupils and consistently reinforce the values and beliefs of the school.
33. The school develops pupils' social awareness in a variety of ways and this provision is very good. Pupils are treated in a warm and friendly manner by all staff and this has a positive effect on their relationships with others. Pupils take on small jobs around the classroom and older pupils have responsibilities around the school. Pupils are encouraged to co-operate and learn together at appropriate times, to help and support each other and to recognise the achievements of others. Learning to play chess and other competitive sports teaches pupils to play fairly and to live with the consequences of their decisions. During playtimes and the lunch period pupils have ample opportunities to talk and play together. The Before and After School Care Club and other activities taking place out of lesson time provide a more relaxed learning and social climate. Taking part in a residential trip to an outdoor pursuits centre contributes greatly to the personal and social development of pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6.

34. The school's provision for cultural development is good. Visits to the immediate area around school as part of work in geography help pupils to understand their local culture and traditions. Pupils play traditional games, practise the steps to folk dances and learn the words to traditional prayers such as the Lord's Prayer. In their art and design lessons pupils are introduced to the work of famous artists from other countries such as Claude Monet and Wassily Kandinsky. Music plays a very significant part in the cultural development of all pupils as they sing traditional songs and hymns, play a musical instrument and listen to the music of famous composers. Pupils also have opportunities to visit museums where they can see objects from the past and from various cultures.
35. The school is continuing to prepare pupils for living in a diverse society. Different cultures and faiths are studied in other subjects such as geography and religious education and in the celebration of festivals such as the Jewish festival of Hanukkah and the Hindu festival of Diwali. Pupils listen to a range of music and stories from different cultures and the library now has a selection of multicultural books for pupils to read. Contact has been made with a local school with pupils from a minority ethnic group and visitors from different ethnic groups have been welcomed into school. However, the school is aware of the need to develop this area of the curriculum further and plans have already been made to do so.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

36. A feature that stands out strongly is the very good care the school takes of its pupils. The headteacher sets very high standards which staff are eager to follow. All pupils are valued, no matter what qualities or problems they bring with them. The friendliness of everyone is evident throughout the school. This is a school where the pupils come first. The pupils enjoy coming to school.
37. A high priority is given to health and safety. Pupils are safe and secure, any concerns are handled with care, dedication and good humour. All the necessary safety checks are carried out regularly and the governors are involved in carrying out risk assessments and safety checks of the premises. There are several trained first-aiders and parents are informed by letter whenever their child has been ill or injured at school.
38. Child protection is taken seriously. The co-ordinator is trained and staff have guidance about the procedures and signs of possible concern that might result in a child protection issue. Mid-day support staff have had training in child protection so that they are able to respond appropriately to any concerns they may have as a result of what they see and hear in the more relaxed atmosphere of the playground.
39. Good procedures for monitoring and improving attendance ensure that attendance levels remain well above the national average. The school monitors attendance trends regularly and takes action where there is a concern. Weekly awards are made to the classes with 100 per cent attendance and this helps to keep attendance levels high. The school enlists the help of the education welfare officer when letters to parents do not have the desired effect.
40. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very good. A very effective behaviour policy is based on encouraging and rewarding good behaviour with stickers, certificates and badges that are presented in the celebration assembly. Pupils value these awards and strive hard to achieve them. Those who have been chosen as *Pupil of the Week* wear their badges and medals with great pride. The way that pupils'

behaviour is managed is one of the strengths of the teaching. The behaviour policy was modified after a survey carried out amongst pupils. This identified the most effective methods of promoting good behaviour and of dealing with unsatisfactory behaviour.

41. There are also very good procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour. The policy makes it clear that bullying will not be tolerated and pupils have confirmed that the school responds quickly and effectively to any reported bullying incidents. There is a robust system for logging any racist incidents, but none have occurred so far.
42. There are very good procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development. The formal systems include pupil concern sheets, which are reviewed regularly, and records of achievement. These are supplemented by informal monitoring, helped by teachers' very good knowledge of their pupils and in many cases, their families as well. For those pupils who need it, an individual behaviour plan is prepared.
43. Pupils with special educational needs have individual learning plans. These are well maintained and identify a small number of key improvements needed to move learning along. They include detailed methods for achieving these. They are successful in ensuring that all adults know what pupils are working towards. Most pupils, however, are unaware of their targets and are not involved enough in review meetings.
44. The special needs co-ordinator and the assessment co-ordinator form a very effective partnership to ensure that the school keeps a close eye on the progress of individuals. In this way they are able to quickly identify pupils who are slipping behind and who would benefit from some catch up work.
45. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment are very good and have a positive effect on raising standards. The school has successfully addressed the issues relating to assessment identified in the previous inspection. Baseline assessment of each pupil takes place at the beginning and end of the Foundation Stage. Ongoing assessment of pupils in the reception class is good. It is matched to the latest national curriculum guidance. There are very good procedures at the end of each key stage when the results of the national tests are carefully analysed. Analysis of performance in English and mathematics is very good. In addition, the optional national tests for English and mathematics are used towards the end of Years 3-5 and are also carefully analysed. Pupils' achievements following the teacher assessments in science are carefully analysed at the end of Year 2. Subsequently pupils' knowledge and understanding are assessed at the end of each unit of study. In English, mathematics and science the data is used very well to track the progress of individual pupils and the cohort and to consider whether there is any difference in the performances of pupils, for example by gender. The school also uses other nationally standardised tests to help assess whether pupils are achieving as they should be. These strategies have enabled the school to identify pupils who would benefit from different teaching and learning styles, who need more support or who need a greater degree of challenge because they are gifted and talented. The school provides these opportunities and this helps to raise attainment. In several subjects the school has procedures for assessing pupils at the end of each unit of study in line with the latest national guidance. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.
46. The very detailed assessment strategy provides relevant information for governors about the school's performance and for parents about their children. The school uses

assessment very well to inform medium and long-term planning in English, mathematics and science, for example, in identifying writing skills as a priority. All lesson plans make clear what pupils should know or be able to do by the end of the lesson. This is shared with the pupils at the beginning of the lessons and, in most lessons, again when learning is reviewed at the end of the lesson. As a result pupils, particularly the older pupils, have a good understanding of the progress they are making. However, opportunities are missed in Key Stage 1 to challenge some higher attaining pupils further. All teachers evaluate their weekly planning and use these assessments to inform subsequent planning.

47. The school is beginning to implement a system of setting short-term targets for individual pupils, to ensure that both pupils and parents know more clearly what it is that pupils have to do to improve. This will put pupils in a good position to improve their standards of attainment.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

48. There is a very good partnership between the school and home and this has a beneficial impact on pupils' attainment and their attitudes to learning. This very good link with parents has been successfully maintained since the previous inspection. The majority of parents are very supportive of the work of the school and they value the educational opportunities provided for their children and the very good care that the school takes of them. Parents hold the school in high esteem and the inspection team agrees with their very positive views.
49. The school provides parents with information of very good quality. The prospectus and governors' annual report are well presented and informative. Parents of pupils new to the school are given a very good information pack containing documents. These include the behaviour policy, the homework policy and the parental summary of the last inspection. There are also booklets giving detailed guidance on handwriting, how reading is taught, and how parents can help their children at home. Before the children start in the reception class, staff visit them at home and at the independent nursery within the school to ensure a smooth start to school. To begin with, children attend for half a day before staying for the full day.
50. There are two formal opportunities for parents to meet their children's teachers; one in the autumn term when parents can find out how their children are settling in to the new class, and one towards the end of the summer term, after parents have received the written report. These meetings extend from the afternoon through to the evening so that parents who are working can find a suitable time. Teachers and the headteacher are always willing to see parents at other suitable times if they have any concerns. Well over 90 per cent of parents attend the consultation meetings. Pupils' written reports are informative and easy to understand. They give helpful information about what the pupils have learned and what they need to do to improve.
51. The school keeps parents well informed by regular newsletters, supplemented by other letters which are always distributed on the same day each week so that parents know when to expect them. Parents of children having particular learning or behavioural difficulties keep in touch with the teacher by using the home/school record books, which have a special section for stickers, stars and other merit awards for good work and/or improved behaviour at school and at home. Other parents use the reading diaries for passing messages to the teacher.

52. The school benefits considerably from the efforts of a thriving and successful parent-teacher association. It organises social events throughout the year and raises a considerable amount of extra money for the benefit of the children. A number of parents help regularly in classes and this helps teachers to teach more effectively. Parents are regularly consulted about what the school provides and there is a positive response, from which the school is able to feed issues into the school development plan. All parents receive a summary of the parental responses to the questionnaires. The school's response to parents is evident in that this was the first school in the Local Education Authority to gain a government Charter Mark awarded for excellence in public service.
53. The contribution of parents to their children's learning at home and at school is very good. In addition to those parents who help regularly in school, the vast majority take a keen interest in their children's education by monitoring homework and listening to reading. The school's partnership with parents is a significant factor in its success.
54. The school establishes effective partnership with the parents of pupils who have special educational needs. Every effort is made to involve them in regular meetings to discuss progress and future goals. In most instances parents attend these. In some classes, most notably Years 5 and 6, the school maintains a dialogue with parents through a diary that goes home every day. These provide invaluable opportunities for parents and the school to discuss how well things are going. In some instances pupils also add their point of view and so become more involved in their own education.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

55. The school is very well led. The headteacher has a very clear understanding of what needs to be done to improve the school further. He is very well supported by a very able deputy, who provides a very good role model to the pupils and the staff and shares the headteacher's commitment to high achievement. Together they lead the school effectively and ensure that the stated aims are reflected in the daily work of the school. Consequently good progress has been made in raising standards, especially in Key Stage 2, since the last inspection.
56. The management of the school is good. The school focus for development on literacy, numeracy, science and information and communication technology has been particularly successful in drawing on the expertise of all staff and the development of teamwork in order to move forwards towards this goal. Time is given for staff to develop their subject expertise and to monitor the teaching and learning across the school. This is an improvement from the last inspection and has resulted in staff sharing their expertise with one another and contributing effectively to set challenging targets for further development through their well-thought-out action plans. As a result of continuous focus for improvement, pupils' attainment has risen at Key Stage 2. While all members of the staff recognise the progress that has been made, in Key Stage 1 it has not been as great as in Key Stage 2. The headteacher has recognised the need to strengthen the management of the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 through full involvement of the staff in senior management decisions in order to raise standards further. In the Foundation Stage, the co-ordinator has satisfactorily implemented the Foundation Stage of learning. She is aware of the need to continue to build good practice.
57. The governing body is very effective. The governors are very knowledgeable and together they are a confident team, having benefited from training and advice in the recent past. There is an effective committee structure. Individual governors take

responsibility for aspects of the school's work such as literacy, numeracy, and special educational needs. A good pattern of meetings and contact with the school has been established. This has resulted in governors meeting with the staff and pupils, and monitoring the work of the school on a regular basis. The chairman has regular and frequent meetings with the headteacher. This enables the governors to build up a good understanding of the work of the school. They are informed very well by the headteacher about progress towards the targets in the school development plan. Through regular and informative reports they help move the school forward. The governing body is fully involved in making key policy and planning decisions. For example, they have carefully managed the budget to accommodate a new and very well stocked library and information and communication technology suite.

58. There are very good systems in place to prioritise spending linked to the school improvement plan. The school administrative officer is skilled in providing valuable support for the finance committee, governing body and headteacher. The school has excellent systems for obtaining best value for money and considers all its options before committing to expenditure. This is very good improvement from the last inspection. The finance governors are kept informed of spending on a monthly basis. All recommendations from the last financial audit in 2001 have been fulfilled. The governors work hard to balance the budget where the income per pupil is considerably below the national average. Grants, and the result of bids for additional funds to help pupils learn, are used for their intended purposes. The budget is at present balanced and expenditure is very well thought out but there is no leeway for a contingency fund this year. The school provides so well for its pupils because it generates income through the nursery attached to the school. The contributions donated from fundraising activities from the Parent-Teacher Association contribute towards learning resources. Additional income is generated by the Before and After School Care Club. The school is pro-active not only in generating income but also in seeking to meet the needs of the parents and the community. For instance, parents told the assessor of the Charter Mark Award for public service that they are attracted to the school by *'the academic performance, range of after-school activities and the Before and After School Care Club'*.
59. The systems in place for performance management are very good. The management structure is very clear. The school has gained the Investors in People Award, and has successful systems in place for staff development and training. All members of staff with responsibilities work together very well to carry out their roles. This results in a very good direction that is set to implement the school's aims of providing a high quality of education to meet the needs of all pupils. There are rigorous assessment procedures to find out if the standards are high enough and where improvements in standards can be made in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. The school identifies strengths and weaknesses from the results of national tests, which are compared with national results and those achieved in similar schools. Pupils' achievements are tracked through school year by year and help is placed where it is needed most. The planned revision of a marking policy that is understood and shared by all the staff is intended to enhance the target setting process. The predicted targets set for pupils' progress quickly enable staff to identify those who are falling behind and need additional support.
60. The drive for improvement is linked to supporting the professional development of all staff. The priorities of the school and individual staff expertise and needs are linked to training opportunities. The headteacher is keen to find out about new initiatives and to train his staff in the most up-to-date methods. For example, the school is presently evaluating new methods used to accelerate pupils' learning and meet the needs of the

very able pupils. Along with the headteacher, the coordinator for special educational needs ensures that teaching assistants are well deployed and fully trained. They are fully involved in all aspects of school life and have developed into a highly trained and invaluable team. The teaching assistants assist individuals and small groups of pupils needing most help. Most attend in-service training to increase their expertise in particular aspects of education appropriate to pupils' learning or take advantage of higher education degree courses. There is no doubt of the success of this strategy and the quality of the work of the assistants as the pupils they support are achieving well.

61. Provision for pupils who have special education needs is very well managed. The co-ordinator is organised and very committed. She ensures that procedures are followed and that records are kept up to date. She forms a very effective partnership with the special needs governor, who, because of her work in school, is very well informed. The co-ordinator will often try new ideas out in her own class before taking them to the rest of the school. In this way she ensures that new ideas have been tested and that time and energy are not wasted. She has a clear idea of how to further improve provision.
62. There are sufficient teachers to allow class sizes to be of reasonable size. They are very well supported by well qualified learning support assistants, who are regarded as very much part of the team. These positive features make a significant contribution to the quality of teaching and learning in the school. The accommodation overall is satisfactory. There is a good sized library and computer room well stocked with books and providing plenty of space for pupils to work in groups and individually. The classrooms in the main building are of reasonable size for the number of pupils; those in the detached temporary accommodation are rather cramped, which restricts large-scale work in art and design, for example. There is no running water in two mobile classrooms, which means that water has to be carried in buckets for some activities. The design of the main building requires the hall to be used as a route between different parts of the school and this disturbs lessons that take place there, such as physical education and dance. Outside, the grassed areas are extensive and include a football pitch. The wildlife area and grounds are used by pupils for part of some lessons. A hard surface area for football and netball has recently been created and this ensures that the main playground is free from ball games. A necessary improvement, already recognised by the school, is a hard surface path to link it with the main playground. The learning resources are good overall and this enhances the quality of learning.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

63. The governors, headteacher and staff should continue to raise standards further by:
 - (1) strengthening the management of Key Stage 1 and the Foundation Stage by involving the key staff in the senior management team to ensure a high priority for the co-ordination and development of teaching and learning.
 - (2) improving aspects of teaching and learning by implementing an agreed marking policy; planning in more detail to meet the needs of the more able pupils; raising teachers' expectations of the pace and the quality of pupils' work.

(Paragraphs 7,9,17,46,56,69,73,85,86,91,100)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	55
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	40

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	4	8	23	20	0	0	0
Percentage	7	15	42	36	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents 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)	N/A	268
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	21

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/A	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/A	31

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	19
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	8

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.8
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.4
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	17	12	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	14	16
	Girls	10	11	12
	Total	23	25	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	79 (96)	86 (96)	97 (100)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	16	13
	Girls	11	12	10
	Total	25	28	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 (96)	97 (100)	79 (96)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	21	22	43

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	17	19
	Girls	21	21	21
	Total	38	38	40
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	88 (93)	88 (88)	93 (93)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	20	17
	Girls	21	21	21
	Total	32	41	38
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	74 (88)	95 (93)	88 (83)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	261	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27
Average class size	29

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	153

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/02
	£
Total income	601657
Total expenditure	594455
Expenditure per pupil	2260
Balance brought forward from previous year	-8414
Balance carried forward to next year	-1212

Recruitment of teachers

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 63 per cent

Number of questionnaires sent out	263
Number of questionnaires returned	167

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	72	25	1	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	65	32	1	1	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	57	40	1	2	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	46	46	8	0	0
The teaching is good.	67	30	0	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	46	43	9	1	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	76	23	1	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	74	24	1	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	57	40	2	0	1
The school is well led and managed.	72	26	1	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	67	31	1	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	55	39	3	0	3

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

64. The Foundation Stage focuses on the children under six years of age who are in their reception year. The children enter into one of two reception classes in the September of the year in which they will become five. The majority have experienced a playgroup or nursery school. Children enter school with a wide range of skills which are generally of the level normally expected in their mathematical and language development. Children's attainments are overall above average in their personal, social and emotional development and in their speaking and listening skills.
65. The curriculum is satisfactory and promotes the steps leading to the Early Learning Goals (nationally expected learning targets for children at the end of their reception year) in all areas of learning and development. As a result, most children achieve satisfactorily and have a sound start to their full-time education. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Their learning difficulties are identified early and they receive good support. By the time children enter Year 1, most have achieved the Early Learning Goals in all the areas of learning. A minority have yet to achieve the learning goals and a minority are working within level 1 of the National Curriculum. The satisfactory provision for children of reception age has been maintained since the last inspection.

Personal, social and emotional development

66. Most children make sound progress and are on course to exceed the Early Learning Goals by the end of the reception year. Children settle well into the structure of school life and quickly become familiar with the daily routine and what is expected of them.
67. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Teachers encourage children to be independent, make decisions and consider the effect of their actions on others. For example, children are expected to attend to their own personal needs as far as they are able and dress and undress for physical education and outdoor play. Children are taught the difference between right and wrong and as a result behaviour is consistently good. The majority are beginning to co-operate with each other well. They negotiated roles in 'Santa's Workshop' and confidently entered into imaginative play.
68. Most children know the importance of one person speaking at a time. They are beginning to use their initiative and make choices in their work. For instance, children making their own Christmas party hats were selecting their own materials and working to their own design. Children clear up after lessons and have little tasks and responsibilities to complete. Teachers plan interesting activities which encourage children to share equipment and resources as well as develop their physical skills. Children commemorate festivals from world religions and cultures and enjoy celebrations of all kinds.

Communication, language and literacy

69. Children achieve satisfactorily and by the end of the reception year most children are likely to attain the standards expected of them. Some children will exceed the expected standards. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. The speaking and listening skills of many children are above average when they enter the reception class and teachers provide satisfactory opportunities for these skills to continue to progress. However, there are missed opportunities to promote pupils' understanding and vocabulary when staff work with small groups of pupils. Children speak confidently at length to each other during shared activities. Teachers expect children to use specific language to help their learning in other areas. For example, when retelling the story of the birth of Jesus with puppets, children used the words gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Children listen and often readily respond to adult questions and are keen to volunteer information. For instance, a group of children making *fairy bread* discussed the shape and decorations they had chosen with their friends. These opportunities enable children to grow in confidence and raise their self-esteem.
70. Teachers encourage children to enjoy books and to read with increasing fluency. Teachers make sure that early reading skills are systematically built on. All children recognise their own name and many can write them. They have a clear understanding of reading from left to right and use the words author and illustrator. The majority of children identify well initial letters and the sounds they make well and some are able to join sounds together to help them read unfamiliar words. Parents are actively involved in the reading progress of their children and are encouraged to share books with them at home. Many write useful comments in their children's reading diary, which informs the school and helps to encourage children to read at home.
71. Children are encouraged to think of themselves as writers and staff provide areas where children can practise their writing. Writing opportunities occur during imaginative play. For example, helpers in Santa's workshop wrote the labels to put on the gifts. Teachers make sure that children understand that people write for many different reasons. The children know that writing a letter or sending a card for whatever occasion is an important way of communicating with others. They are developing sound pencil control and most can write recognisable letters. The more able children can write short sentences with little help.

Mathematical development

72. Most children achieve satisfactorily in their mathematical skills and are on course to attain the expected levels of attainment by the end of the reception year.
73. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The teachers plan activities well through the use of real examples so that the correct mathematical language is related to different concepts such as small/large and long/short. For instance, children were asked to compare the different lengths of the candles in the Christmas candle display. Joining in number rhymes and games gives children a chance to demonstrate their knowledge and skills. Teachers plan opportunities in other areas of the curriculum to reinforce number facts and concepts. For example, during their work on the Jewish festival of Hanukkah children used triangles and hexagons to make the Star of David. Many children can count to 10 and some to 20 with a high degree of accuracy and order numbers on a number line. Teachers introduce practical addition and subtraction problems in the form of number stories. The children find these interesting and respond well. However, when introductions are too long, children lose concentration, which slows the pace of their learning. Children use play dough to make recognisable

two-dimensional shapes and select large three-dimensional shapes to build towers using cylinders, cones and cubes. The staff use these opportunities to teach the children the names of shapes and many children recognise shapes by name. Teachers use classroom displays effectively to constantly reinforce new skills and knowledge. Children practise number games, role-play and counting and matching games on the computer to improve their recognition of number.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

74. Children enter the reception class with varying levels of awareness of the world in which they live. Children achieve satisfactorily and most are expected to attain the Early Learning Goals by the end of the reception year.
75. Teachers often link areas of the curriculum together so that new learning in one often reinforces learning in another. For example, children listening and recording the story of the birth of Jesus were increasing their knowledge and understanding by using their speaking, reading and writing skills. Children are becoming aware of the passage of time as they talk about the first Christmas and compare it with Christmas today. They begin to understand that other world religions also have joyful celebrations around this time of year. For instance, children listened to the stories behind the Jewish festival of Hanukkah and the Hindu festival of Diwali.
76. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers plan interesting activities and use gentle questioning to arouse children's curiosity and develop their investigative skills. For example, through observations guided by the teacher, children explored the properties of corn flour and the change that occurs when water is added. They test the best materials to make a suitable umbrella for *Teddy*. The support assistants are used efficiently to guide and extend children's work. Children developed their confidence and skill on the computer when they designed a gift tag and chose which greeting to add. To increase the children's knowledge of the natural world teachers plan visits to such places of interest as a farm and the bird sanctuary at *Martin Mere*.

Physical development

77. When they enter school, many children are already becoming confident in their larger physical movements and in meeting their own personal needs, but some lack skill in the finer movements of manipulating objects or using pencils. Children make satisfactory progress in all aspects of their physical development and most will achieve the expected level of attainment for their age by the end of the reception year.
78. The teaching in this area of learning is satisfactory and some of it is good. Teachers provide activities to help children develop their manipulative skills, and their ability to use a range of tools steadily improves. Many children handle paintbrushes, scissors and pencils with confidence and use construction kits, building blocks and malleable materials such as clay and dough with increasing control. Children do not have continual access to a secure outside play area and this inevitably means that opportunities for physical and other areas of learning are restricted. However, staff make good use of the hall for physical activities and take groups of children to use the school climbing frame and other areas of the school grounds as much as possible. Children use the space in the hall well, and work safely when using apparatus. Most children listen carefully, although a few find it hard to follow instructions the first time.

Creative development

79. The children's achievement is satisfactory in response to satisfactory teaching. The majority are on course to attain the Early Learning Goals for creative development by the end of the reception year.
80. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Teachers provide a wide range of activities and introduce the children to such techniques as printing, colour mixing, cutting, collage and modelling with dough and recycled materials. Children design and select materials for their Christmas party hats and weave paper and ribbon together to make a colourful collage. As the children concentrate on chosen activities and work and share with others, they also develop very good social skills. Children use their imagination well in role-play. This is further developed by staff as they take part, extending the children's ideas and encouraging them to co-operate. The children refine their observational skills and draw self-portraits with the main features in the correct place. However, children are not always challenged to extend their language and concepts to promote higher standards. Progress in children's musical development is good. Teachers often select songs and rhymes to support children's learning in other areas of learning. For instance, children sang carols to celebrate the birth of Jesus. They experimented with bells and triangles to reproduce the sound of the sleigh bell. As children become familiar with performing for an audience the quality of their speaking and singing improves.

ENGLISH

Subject summary

81. Standards in reading and writing in Year 2 are above national expectations. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, when standards were judged to be typical of pupils of their age. Standards are also higher than those identified in the national tests in 2002. This is because the pupils now in Year 2 were of a higher level of attainment when they first started at the school than were those who took the national tests in 2002. Standards in Year 6 are well above those expected nationally. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection when standards were identified as being average. Standards in Year 6 are similar to those of the national tests in 2002. Overall pupils make good progress and achieve well. Standards have improved since the previous inspection because of :
- very effective implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, supported by good resources, that provides a broader range of experiences than the previous scheme of work;
 - assessment procedures that facilitate target-setting, the tracking of pupils' progress, the identification of pupils with different learning styles and the use of assessment to inform planning;
 - the skills of the teachers and learning support assistants;
 - the opportunities provided for all pupils to consolidate and extend their literacy skills in other subjects;
 - the opportunities provided for pupils to use information and communication technology to support learning;
 - good leadership and management of the subject leader.

Subject commentary

82. The attainment of pupils in Year 2 in speaking and listening is above the national average. The attainment reflects the satisfactory progress made since they were admitted to the school because of the opportunities to talk with teachers and learning support assistants. Pupils extend their vocabulary during discussions with the teacher

and other pupils in the literacy lesson; for example, in a Year 2 lesson, pupils suggested words such as *agreed*, *sighed*, and *shouted* as alternatives to *said*. Pupils listen closely to the teacher during lessons. By Year 6, standards in speaking and listening are very good. All pupils have made good progress. They listen very closely to the teacher and to their peers; for example, when discussing, in Year 6, the effect the poet T. S. Eliot was trying to create in *The Journey of the Magi* by beginning several consecutive lines with the connective *and*. All pupils are very confident about putting forward suggestions and ideas because they know they will be listened to with respect. In a very good design and technology lesson in a Year 5/6 class a pupil with special educational needs very proudly explained to the class his contribution to the design of a space station. The applause from his peers and the praise of the teacher raised his confidence and self-esteem.

83. By Year 2, standards in reading are above those found in most schools. All pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2. All enjoy reading and take books home regularly to practise their reading. Higher-attainers and average-attainers read very confidently and accurately and often with expression. Pupils talk about the main characters, retell the story and make simple comparisons with other books. Lower attaining pupils read less confidently, but are still able to recall events in the story and talk about characters. All pupils have good strategies for using picture clues, the sounds of letters or groups of letters, and the context to help with unfamiliar words. The teachers set a good example by reading fluently and with good expression stories such as *Lucy's Quarrel*. A pupil identified as gifted and talented read very impressively. By Year 6, all pupils make good progress. Higher-attainers and average-attainers read very fluently and with good expression. Lower-attainers also read confidently, but with occasional errors. All read a range of books, including poetry. Their enjoyment of reading comes through when they describe favourite books and authors, for example, Jacqueline Wilson and J. K. Rowling. All have good strategies for choosing books from the school library to read at home. All are able to locate non-fiction books in the library and make good use of the contents and index pages to find the information they are looking for. Pupils extend their reading skills in the literacy lesson, for example, by identifying character clues, using inference and deduction, when studying *Romeo and Juliet*.
84. Pupils in Year 2 attain standards in writing that are above those expected nationally. Progress in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory. Pupils are provided with a good range of writing experiences. They write about themselves and their feelings, for example, *I felt excited about birthday presents*. They learn how to sequence stories and instructions, for example when writing about how to make bread. Higher-attainers and average-attainers know when to use capital letters and where to put a full stop. They also recognise exclamation and question marks. Higher-attainers and particularly a gifted and talented pupil are beginning to use exclamation marks and quotation marks accurately. The spelling of simple words by lower-attainers and more complex words by higher-attainers and average-attainers is usually correct. Lower-attaining pupils' writing is less detailed and less accurate. The handwriting of average and higher attainers is legible and joined, whilst that of the lower-attainers usually has clearly shaped and positioned letters. By Year 6, all pupils make good progress and attain standards in writing that are well above average. All pupils have a wide range of writing opportunities both in the literacy lesson and in other subjects. In addition to imaginative writing they adapt part of a story – *The Secret Garden* – for a radio broadcast, write notes with bullet points, and write about their response to music, for example, when writing about *Scheherazade* as a short story. They draft their writing and then improve on this by re-drafting, for example when writing a poem about the Pegasus constellation. Handwriting is joined, legible and fluent and, for most pupils, is used

effectively for a range of tasks. Higher and average-attainers spell most words, including words such as *campaign*, *foundations* and *susceptible*, correctly because they learn regularly lists of words for homework and are tested on these in school. Lower-attainers make more errors in spelling, for example *coulour*, but overall the spelling of lower-attainers is typical of pupils of their age. Sometimes the lists of words relate to a specific subject such as science or religious education. Pupils are eager to learn. All pupils enjoy using information books and the Internet to research, for example, *The Milky Way*, much of which is done at home.

85. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented very effectively, particularly for the oldest pupils. This has ensured a wider range of experiences for pupils, so successfully addressing an issue identified during the previous inspection. Resources to support the National Literacy Strategy are good. The school has also improved its procedures for analysing test results to identify possible areas of weakness – writing was so identified – and taking steps to rectify any shortcomings. The school has also used specific tests to identify pupils who may be underachieving and has used the information to provide opportunities for them to learn in different ways. Additionally the school checks on the progress of all pupils towards the targets set for them. All of this information is reflected in planning at all levels – long, medium and short-term – with the consequent effect of helping to raise standards. The school recognises that the marking of pupils' work is inconsistent. The best marking challenges pupils and gives them advice on how to improve their work. The school is beginning to identify short-term targets that will be shared with individual pupils and their parents. When marking is inconsistent, chances are missed to raise standards further.
86. Teaching is good overall. It is good overall in Years 1 and 2, ranging from satisfactory to good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. In Year 3-6 teaching is also good overall, but in the best lessons with the oldest pupils the teaching is very good and sometimes excellent. The good teaching in Years 1 and 2 enables all pupils to make good progress in most lessons because teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the National Literacy Strategy, choose and use the good resources well, manage pupils well and use assessment to inform planning. However, sometimes the pace of the lesson fluctuates and this slows down learning. Pupils make good progress in Years 3 to 6, especially in Year 5 and Year 6. This is because these teachers have higher expectations of what all pupils, including those with special educational needs, should be able to do, provide a high degree of challenge in the planned activities and ensure that all pupils receive the support necessary for them to achieve well. This was shown very well in a Year 6 lesson in which pupils discussed a poem by T. S. Eliot. These teachers also set a very good example when talking to pupils by using a wide range of vocabulary. To help widen the vocabulary of pupils teachers also encourage pupils to use a thesaurus. In an excellent lesson in a Year 5-6 class the imaginative and challenging tasks engendered a high level of interest and enthusiasm and all pupils were keen to contribute. During a discussion about bullies and their victims a pupil with the highest level of special educational need drew on previous learning and confidently suggested *empathy* in relation to victims of bullying. This brought praise from the teacher and applause from the pupil's peers. Later in the same lesson, all pupils took on the role of bully or victim responded to challenging questions from their peers. Their body language, tone of voice and choice of vocabulary demonstrated how well they understood the characteristics of both bully and victim. This activity also promoted their personal and social development very well.
87. All teachers, but particularly those in Years 3 to 6, make good use of information and communication technology to foster learning. This includes the use of overhead projectors, digital cameras and computers. All teachers ensure that all pupils have

good opportunities to improve their speaking and listening, reading and writing skills in other subjects, for example, in Year 2 and Year 5 history lessons and a Year 5/6 design and technology lesson.

88. The subject is led and managed well. The subject leader monitors planning and observes teaching. She has arranged in-service training for staff. Resources are audited to ensure that they match the requirements of the National Curriculum. These factors help to promote teaching and learning effectively.

MATHEMATICS

Subject summary

89. By the end of Year 2, pupils attain standards that are above the national average. By the end of Year 6 pupils attain standards that are well above the national average. Standards, especially in the juniors, have risen considerably since the last inspection. The main difference in attainment between the infants and the juniors lies in pupils' ability to find ways to solve problems. Pupils learn at a steady rate through Key Stage 1, where the quality of teaching is never less than satisfactory. In response to more challenging teaching, pupils make good progress in Key Stage 2. Some excellent teaching in Years 5 and 6 and the close attention given to pupils' individual needs result in very good progress. By the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6, pupils who have special educational needs have made very good progress. Many reach standards that are in line with the national average. This is a considerable achievement. Mathematics is very well led by the two co-ordinators. They have created a culture of success in which all in the school are drawn into constantly seeking ways to improve. This drives up standards.

Subject commentary

90. Throughout the school teachers manage pupils well and provide opportunities for them to explain their thinking. They make good use of mathematics to help improve learning in other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 6, accurately measure their patterns and mark out their sewing and cutting lines as they design and make their slippers. Teachers succeed in creating classrooms which are calm and purposeful. Pupils invariably work hard and co-operate well with each other. Relationships are comfortable and pupils' enjoy their learning. They feel free to *have a go* and are unafraid of making mistakes. The use that teachers make of this constructive atmosphere to push on learning varies, however.
91. Teachers in Key Stage 1, pay close attention to developing basic skills in mathematics. Pupils can confidently add and subtract numbers to twenty and can multiply single numbers. They are able to use some of these skills in solving problems using money. In this respect pupils attain high standards. Overall, their ability to solve problems and set out work for themselves is limited and this slows progress, particularly of higher attaining pupils. Teachers make too much use of worksheets and workbooks in which pupils are restricted to putting answers in boxes and to questions which only have one solution. This limits opportunities for pupils to set out work for themselves, to develop their own ways of solving problems and to search for different solutions to questions.
92. In Key Stage 2, teachers use a better balance of worksheets and tasks in which pupils are expected to set out solutions for themselves. As a result pupils are better able to jot down their thinking and to work systematically through problems. This results in an increased rate of progress. Basic skills are well taught so that in Year 6 pupils can multiply and divide using decimals, convert fractions into decimals and percentages

and understand how ratio and proportion work. Teachers make sure that, after being taught a new skill, pupils use it to solve problems. This places greater demands on pupils' thinking than in the infants. For example, in an excellent lesson Year 5, the teacher taught pupils how to sequence decimal numbers. By directing questions at individuals, rather than taking answers from pupils who volunteered answers, all pupils were kept on their toes. Pupils who were not asked a question directly had to say whether or not a given answer was correct. This focused concentration further. As a result, pupils progressed quickly. The teacher put their understanding to the test by setting them a thought provoking problem. The solution was not limited to one right answer, so pupils were challenged to stretch their knowledge as far as they could. This high level of expectation resulted in an impressive rate of learning.

93. Good teaching made the most of opening parts of lessons to develop pupils' mental mathematics, going beyond using this time as a warm up activity to get things going. In a good lesson in Year 3 the teacher fired a series of questions at different groups of pupils. These were made easier or harder depending upon the ability of the group. Whilst one group was working out an answer, another group was set a new question. In this way the teacher kept everybody involved. Good teaching also linked the counting activity to the mathematics in the main part of the lesson. So, for example, in a lesson on decimals, pupils began by having to estimate what number they thought the teacher was pointing to. Such good practice is not always the case and in some lessons in both the infants and the juniors, not enough demands are made of pupils and on occasions all pupils are expected to answer the same questions whatever their ability.
94. The school has high expectations of what pupils with special educational needs can do and provides good support for them in lessons. Pupils have individual targets, which are precise and therefore easy to use and to check success against. Teachers and learning support assistants make good use of these targets in lessons. As is the case for other pupils, the best progress is made through Years 5 and 6. Here, support is very good and pupils benefit from enhanced staffing at Year 5 and 6. The learning support assistant is skilled in adjusting tasks so that they fit the needs of pupils and enhanced staffing ensures that groups for some lessons are smaller and so pupils get more personal attention. The teaching assistants are effective when the teacher is talking to the whole class because they help pupils concentrate and interpret questions for them. This helps pupils understand what to do when they begin work.
95. Procedures for finding out what pupils can and cannot do are very good. Teachers are clear about what pupils need to do to improve and in many classes they make sure pupils also know what to target next. The way in which this is done varies from class to class and not all pupils are aware of their targets. Marking is similarly variable, too little reference being made to targets or to making it clear to pupils how to improve their work. Particularly good use is made of assessment in Years 5 and 6 where extra testing identifies pupils who have ability but are not performing at a high enough level. Extra staffing is used to target this group and this results in an impressively high number of pupils reaching levels of attainment higher than the national average.
96. The two subject leaders provide very good leadership and management. This is an improvement since the last inspection and is one of the major factors why standards have risen. They are determined that pupils will do well and take necessary action to ensure that this is the case. The quality of teaching and the results of tests are closely looked at and action is taken to address weakness and celebrate strengths. The National Numeracy Strategy has been carefully implemented and they have a good idea of what needs to be done to further improve mathematics. They have created a strong sense of teamwork, where people are willing to learn from each other. The school is

well placed to use the examples of the very good and excellent teaching in the school to lift the satisfactory teaching.

SCIENCE

Subject summary

97. By Year 2, pupils' achievement is satisfactory and they attain above the expected standards. By Year 6, pupils have achieved well to attain well above average standards. For example, in the 2002 national tests, all pupils gained the expected level 4 and over 50 per cent gained the higher level 5. Pupils with special educational needs in particular achieved very well to attain the expected national level. Pupils do better in Key Stage 2 because the teachers have higher expectations of pupils' achievement and there is teaching and learning of high quality. By Years 5 and 6 pupils are taught very well to create and solve investigational problems. The subject is managed very well and has considerably improved since the last inspection, when standards were average at both key stages and few pupils attained the higher level 5 by the end of Year 6.

Subject commentary

98. Throughout Key Stage 2, teachers' expectations of pupils' achievement are higher than in Key Stage 1. Teachers have consistently good subject knowledge and teach scientific vocabulary well. In Years 5 and 6 in particular, teachers have very good questioning skills to extend pupils' thinking. Challenging questions, often posed during initial discussions, motivate pupils to seek answers through their investigative work. For example, during an excellent lesson in Year 6, pupils were asked to investigate different ways in which scientific enquiry is carried out and to recognise the risks associated with a range of practical work. Pupils investigated the importance of repeated readings and the size of the sample. At each point, pupils' were questioned and gave explanations for their hypotheses. Any misconceptions were quickly dealt with and clear explanations given. This resulted in rapid learning. Time was used very effectively to link pupils' learning with similar problem-solving, investigational work in mathematics. Philosophical questions are posed in English about the poetry of TS Eliot, for example, or the analysis of a painting by Ford Maddox Brown. In the Year 5/6 class, through very effective teaching and demonstration, pupils learned accurately about the movement of the earth and moon and the associated vocabulary such as *rotation* and *orbit*. They understood that we only ever see one side of the moon. They know that the moon was *lit up* by the reflected light from the sun. Most, in small groups, devised a way of showing accurately how we always see the same side of the moon and could explain how it has different appearances at different times of the month. As they work, pupils enjoy listening to *The Planet Suite* by Holst. This makes a good contribution to their personal development and their knowledge and understanding of music.
99. By Year 2, pupils understand the differences between healthy and unhealthy foods. Effective links are made with the design and technology curriculum as pupils design and make a fruit salad. Most know the differences between various materials and sort them by their properties. The majority are beginning to understand the need for fair testing. For example, pupils made and tested an umbrella for *Teddy* from a range of materials which they tested to find out which one was the most waterproof. In their investigation of sound, pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 know that sound is caused by vibration and can describe different ways in which sound can be made. In Year 2, pupils study electricity and know the difference between mains electricity and electricity generated from a battery. Pupils understand that there are positive and negative poles

and know that the letters on a battery describe its size. There is satisfactory teaching and coverage of the science curriculum during the key stage. The majority of pupils are enthusiastic about investigating and experimenting. However, the lack of attention to matching work to the needs of the higher-attaining pupils in the class and to the management of pupils' responses limits learning at a higher level. Time is often wasted when the class teachers spend time waiting for pupils to be ready and to stop chattering. Opportunities for pupils to record their work in Key Stage 1 are sometimes limited through the use of worksheets. This slows the pace of learning. As a result pupils make satisfactory overall progress in relation to their starting points to achieve above average standards.

100. The older pupils in Key Stage 2 respond very well to their teachers and work enthusiastically to meet the challenges that are set for them. Staff know the individual attainments of all pupils well and use assessment very well in Key Stage 2 in their daily lessons to ensure that all pupils make the progress they should. If work is not always completed on time then pupils often finish this in their own time but do not sacrifice the quality of their work in order to complete their set tasks. Most talk articulately and at length about their work and by Year 6, they devise and record their own investigations. Pupils are well motivated. They concentrate on their work, often for long periods, and persevere until they have completed their work to their satisfaction. Many extend their knowledge by seeking further information at home from books or the Internet or from a CD-ROM. For example, pupils complete tasks such as their space projects in their own time. The follow-up from a visit to Jodrell Bank and the input from a visiting speaker, fired pupils' imaginations and they produced work of a high quality. In Year 6, marking with specific informative comment helps pupils to improve their work. However, this is not a consistent practice throughout the school.
101. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in Key Stage 1 and very good progress in Key Stage 2. Their needs are well known to the staff. The teaching assistants are particularly skilled in giving very good support to these pupils. Pupils are supported very well in discussion and in their written work to enable them to work effectively alongside their peers. Vocabulary is clearly explained and pupils are encouraged to take full part in discussion. Careful and sensitive questioning by staff and clear explanations given when necessary ensures that these and other pupils understand the concepts and skills that are taught.
102. The curriculum is broad and balanced and offers many opportunities for the pupils to be involved in investigative work. The subject is very well managed and staff have worked hard together to ensure progression in the teaching of scientific skills and vocabulary throughout the school. Literacy and numeracy are represented well in the curriculum especially in Key Stage 2. The curriculum is enriched through visits to Jodrell Bank and museums where pupils experience specialist teaching or hands-on activities in which they are invited to experiment with resources and artefacts. The wildlife pond area in the school grounds is used well in the study of plants and mini-beasts. The school learning resources are good and are often supplemented by book loans and the resources that the teachers themselves provide.

ART AND DESIGN

Subject summary

103. By Year 2, pupils' achievement is satisfactory and they attain the nationally expected standards. By Year 6, pupils achieve well and attain above average standards. The subject is well led and managed. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall but better in Key Stage 2. The curriculum provides a systematic development of pupils'

knowledge, skills and understanding. The subject is enriched by the visits made to art galleries and museums and the links made with other subjects and topics that are studied by the pupils.

Subject commentary

104. By Year 2, pupils have experienced using a wide range of materials. When using paint, they learn successfully to mix their own colours. Pupils enjoy painting and work confidently from their imagination as they produce well-proportioned paintings such as self-portraits. Their work is often linked to other subjects. For example, as part of their study of a healthy diet, pupils develop their drawing skills satisfactorily as they study and draw cross-sections of fruit such as apples, oranges and bananas.
105. By Year 6, pupils have built on their previous knowledge and have been introduced to new skills and knowledge through purposefully structured activities. They acquire skills of working with materials and tools systematically throughout the school, and are encouraged to express their ideas and feelings. They work well collaboratively, learning from one another and making improvements as they work. Pupils learn about different styles and techniques of famous artists such as *Seurat* in Year 3, experimenting with painting techniques to develop their own style of drawing and painting winter landscapes. By Year 4, pupils use a range of materials to draw, paint, model, print or work in pastels, charcoal and pencil. They mix two colours well to produce a range of darker and lighter shades of paint. Their understanding of a range of artists' work makes a positive contribution to their cultural development. For example, in Year 4, pupils study pattern in Matisse's painting of *L'Escargot* and use their drawing skills to successfully graphically model their own representations of snail patterns using the computer. Often two or more subjects are combined together. For instance, pupils in Year 3 use information and communication technology to create their own *Word Art* pictures. In Years 5 and 6, pupils study the Victorians and, taking their inspiration from the book *A Candle in the Dark* by *Robert Swindells*, they draw detailed representations of the climbing boys, using light and shade use to good effect. By Year 6, pupils learn to distinguish between different styles and traditions of artists' work and interpret their meaning. They critically analyse the painting *Work* by Ford Maddox Brown, discussing and reflecting on the hidden messages of social inequality that existed in Victorian times. This makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, cultural and social development.
106. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. It is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. In Years 1 and 2, pupils' activities and choices of materials are largely directed by the teachers, which inhibit pupils from making decisions about the qualities and textures of materials to express their work. Pupils concentrate well on their lessons. They are enthusiastic and enjoy their work. Pupils set high standards for themselves, working carefully, ensuring they do their best work. This was particularly evident in Key Stage 2, where pupils were creating patterns. Pupils worked very well together. They shared resources and helped one another without being asked. The lessons are planned to build up consistently pupils' knowledge and skills. By Year 6, pupils understand the various techniques used by some of the famous artists and incorporate those techniques into their work. Pupils make good progress when their teachers make good use of resources such as prints of famous artists. Pupils with special educational needs and the most able pupils are supported well in lessons and make good progress. The curriculum is planned very well to link to other subjects such as English, history and science. Music is often played to accompany pupils as they work in Key Stage 2. This develops pupils' understanding of different types of music and allows them to express the mood of the music and their associated feelings through their paintings. When music is played it also provides a calm working

atmosphere and helps pupils to develop their understanding of music from a range of periods, genres and cultures.

107. Art and design is led and managed well throughout the school. The work on display around the school creates an attractive learning environment. Good improvement has been made since the previous inspection. Standards were then average at the end of both key stages. Since then there has been good improvement in the quality of the curriculum and the teaching and learning. This is because the co-ordinator has revised the scheme of work with the staff and monitored the quality of teaching and learning. She has attended training courses to improve her own expertise and has given demonstrations of good teaching to other staff. Visiting artists have worked well alongside pupils to make ceramics and murals. Planned visits to local museums and art galleries, linked to pupils' topic work, enhance learning, making a positive contribution to their spiritual and cultural development. Resources for learning are good in quality and quantity and are supplemented by the subject leader. The pupils make good use of the school kiln. Resources are stored appropriately and are accessible to staff and pupils. However, the cramped accommodation in the four mobile classrooms in Key Stage 2 limits the scale of pupils' work. Practical activities are limited where there is no water supply in two of the classes. This was also the case at the time of the last inspection.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Subject summary

108. Evidence from pupils' work and discussions with pupils and staff indicate that by Year 2 they pupils attain average standards and they have achieved satisfactorily. By the time they are in Year 6, they have achieved well to attain above average standards. Only one lesson was observed and there was insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement on the quality of teaching. The subject is well managed by an enthusiastic subject leader.

Subject commentary

109. By Year 2, pupils are given a worthwhile range of experiences that enable them to design, make and evaluate a variety of objects. The youngest pupils explore a range of materials as they make models from construction materials, clay and recycled materials. They apply their knowledge and understanding as they work on their topic on healthy eating. For example, they investigate a healthy diet and design a fruit salad, classifying fruits according to their qualities. Information and communication technology is used well to record a graph of their favourite fruits. Evidence from displays also shows that pupils work on projects such as designing a simple model car with wheels and axles that allow it to move freely. They learn about joining techniques when they make hinges for a model spider. They use textiles and patterns to make a glove puppet.
110. By Year 6, pupils have built on their previous knowledge and understanding. In Year 4, pupils make a range of purses from a variety of fabrics. They draw and measure accurately their initial designs considering the purpose, size and a range of fastenings. Pupils have practised a range of stitches to enable them to assemble their designs. In Year 5, pupils are challenged very well to design a space station with a moving arm, using information and communication technology. Their models are of an above average standard and pupils show a good application of the skills of designing, making and evaluation. Pupils are encouraged to use the digital camera to record the making of their models and to aid their evaluations. In Year 6, pupils continue to build on their skills as they design slippers for themselves. They develop further their design skills by making a paper pattern and cutting out their design allowing for a stitching line to join their materials.
111. Pupils say they enjoy the practical work and are good at sharing, taking turns and listening to the opinions of others. These aspects of the work make a useful contribution to their social and moral education. In a lesson on making their space stations, for instance, the nature of the work made it accessible to pupils of all abilities, because of the support they received. Pupils with special educational needs were applauded by the staff and pupils for their efforts. As all pupils were all fully included in the lesson, they learned very well.
112. The subject leader manages the subject well. She has produced a new policy and scheme for the subject based on the most up-to-date guidance. She has built a useful portfolio of pupils' work and regularly evaluates teachers' planning and evaluations. The ongoing assessment of pupils' work ensures that they acquire systematically the skills and knowledge required.
113. The school has resources of good quality that are appropriately organised and accessible to all. Good consideration is given to safety issues and pupils are trained to use equipment safely. The finding of the school's previous report was that the status of design and technology should be raised in the school to raise standards, as pupils' work was limited. The present report finds good improvement in curriculum, resources and standards, which are above average by Year 6.

GEOGRAPHY

Subject summary

114. It is clear, from looking at pupils' work and talking to pupils, that by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 pupils attain standards which are in line with national expectations. Standards are the same as they were at the time of the last inspection. Overall, pupils' achievement is satisfactory in both key stages and pupils who have special educational needs also progress satisfactorily and show good attitudes towards geography. In Key Stage 2, the way the curriculum is organised means that there are times when there are long gaps between units of work. There was little teaching taking place during the inspection and so it is not possible to make a judgement about the quality of teaching. The subject is well led. The subject leader has been able to keep a check on teaching and on what pupils learn. Since the last inspection he has introduced a scheme of work which ensures that pupils' knowledge and skills build sequentially as pupils go through the school. This represents an improvement since the last inspection.

Subject commentary

115. In Key Stage 2, pupils show a mature consideration of environmental concerns. They know how man damages the environment and ways in which we set about protecting it. They know how to use an atlas and understand the main purposes and conventions of maps. They describe different climates but are less sure about how climate affects the way people live. Throughout the school, pupils have good attitudes to work. In Key Stage 2, pupils show sensitivity to the need to look after the environment and are aware of their own responsibilities to the local environment.
116. On the whole, the curriculum is well organised. It successfully develops skills and knowledge. This term, pupils in the juniors studied geography by keeping an eye out for geographical issues which crop up in the news. These form the basis for weekly geography lessons in which pupils raise issues which they think are important. The theme succeeds in providing good opportunities for pupils to carry out personal research using the Internet, newspapers and the television and leads to pupils discussing the rights and wrongs of current issues. A number of problems do, however, exist. Skills are not taught systematically enough during this topic and it is not always possible to follow up important geographical issues in enough detail. For example, in one class a pupil talked about a recent oil spillage off the coast of Spain. But in the time available it was not possible to explore the important environmental issues this raised. Some of the suggestions pupils bring to these lessons have little to do with geography and pupils are not clear about the difference between geographical and other newsworthy items.
117. Leadership and management of geography are good. Since the last inspection the subject leader has introduced a scheme of work and has developed assessment procedures which ensure that what pupils can and cannot do is compared against national criteria. He keeps an eye on what happens in classrooms. He has observed teaching, recognising strengths and highlighting areas for development. The subject leader has an appropriate plan for developing the subject and has the expertise and will to ensure that the subject continues to develop.

HISTORY

Subject summary

118. Standards of attainment in Year 2 and Year 6 are typical of those expected nationally for pupils of their ages. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve satisfactorily. They make steady progress in Years 1-2 and maintain this progress in Years 3-6. Standards are typical for their age because:
- the scheme of work meets the requirements of the National Curriculum;
 - assessment is used to inform planning;
 - the teaching is satisfactory;
 - learning is supported by the use of good resources, information and communication technology, skills learned in the literacy hour and visits to places of historical interest;
 - the subject is led and managed well.

Subject commentary

119. The scheme of work is based on the latest national guidance. The scheme ensures that there is continuity and progression in learning and that the requirements of the National Curriculum are met. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Planning documents show that each topic is covered in sufficient depth to enable pupils to acquire both historical skills, such as how to use secondary sources of information, and knowledge and understanding of the topic. This was illustrated in a Year 6 art lesson where pupils looked closely at a painting by an artist from the Victorian period to learn more about the differences between richer and poorer people.
120. The school has successfully addressed the shortcomings in assessment identified in the previous inspection. Learning is assessed at the end of each unit of study. At the end of the year attainment is recorded in relation to the levels expected of pupils nationally. Teachers evaluate each lesson and use this information when planning for subsequent lessons. This enables teachers to match work better to the prior attainment of pupils and so foster learning.
121. The teaching is satisfactory overall and leads to satisfactory learning. Teaching is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and in Years 3 to 6. Some teaching of older pupils is good. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. In Years 1 and 2, the teaching enables all pupils to learn about *then* and *now*. Pupils begin to understand about chronology through consideration of families and the different generations within the family. This helps pupils to understand the terms *younger* and *older*. They do this by talking about their own families and looking at photographs that they and the teacher have brought to school. Pupils in Key Stage 2 extend their understanding of chronology when they learn about the Ancient Egyptians, the Romans, the Vikings, the Tudors and the Victorians. All teachers use effective methods to enable pupils to gain the skills of historical enquiry as well as knowledge and understanding. Good teaching is marked by the teachers' higher expectations of what pupils should be able to do and tasks are more challenging. In a good lesson in Year 5 the comprehension tasks extended pupils' reading skills by requiring them to use inference and deduction to complete the challenging task. The teacher provided good support for lower-attaining pupils to enable them to complete the task successfully. Where teaching was satisfactory, in Key Stage 1, the pace of learning is slower. The expectations of achievement for the higher attaining pupils and pupils' overall response to learning are lower than in Key Stage 2. Pupils tend to lose concentration because teachers' introductions are too

long. A few pupils, when not fully involved in their learning, tend to misbehave. In most lessons pupils are interested. Most are keen to participate in the effective question and answer activities. These help to encourage speaking and listening skills as well as enabling pupils to take their learning in history forward.

122. Resources to support teaching and learning are good overall. In addition to books there are videos such as *Magic Grandad* to support learning. Information and communication technology resources to promote learning in this subject are very good. In a good lesson in Year 5 pupils consolidated their knowledge and understanding through a computer software program that required pupils to read on the screen a Victorian newspaper and find the answers to questions. This information detective task caught the imagination of the pupils. Other pupils, equally interested, added photographs, for example, of Charles Dickens and scenes from *Oliver Twist*, to a scrapbook on the screen by clicking on the object and dragging it to the scrapbook area for later printing.
123. In a good literacy lesson in Year 4 the teacher enhanced learning in history by linking this with the Roman topic. In addition to learning about nouns, verbs and adverbs, all pupils consolidated their knowledge and understanding of the Romans by closely observing photographs of frescoes depicting Roman scenes. This activity also fostered their ability to use sources of information to find things out.
124. The curriculum is enriched by visits to places of interest such as the Viking museum in York, Ordsall Hall when studying the Tudors, and the Egyptology section of a local museum. Homework, particularly for older pupils who enjoy researching topics, supports learning well.
125. The subject is led and managed well. The subject leader has a good understanding of the strengths of the subject. She looks at samples of work and teachers' assessments to check on standards. She is aware of the need to develop marking so that it will help to take learning forward. She monitors planning effectively. She has the opportunity during the year to observe teaching and provide constructive advice to colleagues that will help to improve teaching and learning. The school is in a good position to raise standards in this subject.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Subject summary

126. Standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are above the national expectations. Standards are higher in Year 2 and Year 6 than they were at the time of the previous inspection when they were judged to be average. Standards are above expectations because of :
 - the skills of the teachers and learning support assistants;
 - the scheme of work and associated assessment procedures matched to the requirements of the National Curriculum;
 - the opportunities provided for pupils to use information and communication technology to support learning in other subjects;
 - the very good leadership and management by the subject leader
 - the very good resources.

Subject commentary

127. Teaching and learning are good in Years 3 to 6. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement about teaching in Years 1 and 2 because no teaching was seen. In half the lessons observed the teaching was very good. Teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 are good for several reasons. All staff have benefited from training funded under a national initiative and led by the subject leader who is both very knowledgeable and very enthusiastic. In a good Year 4 lesson the support provided by the teacher and, impressively, by the teaching assistant, ensured that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, made good progress. They learned well how to select a drawing tool to produce a Christmas design including blocks of colour. They used a repeating pattern tool to print out a sheet of Christmas wrapping paper before saving their work to file. Good planning is based on a scheme of work that follows the latest national guidance. The scheme has been adapted by the Local Education Authority, with a significant contribution by the subject leader that meets all requirements of the National Curriculum. Additionally, the scheme is linked closely to an assessment procedure that enables all teachers to check on the progress of pupils in relation to nationally expected standards of attainment. Good use of these assessment procedures informs planning. For example, in a very good Year 3 lesson, pairs of pupils of different levels of attainment worked well together to prepare articles in which text and graphics were combined for a class magazine, consolidating writing skills learned during the literacy hour. During the task, the teacher and learning support assistant not only helped pupils, but also questioned them about what they were doing and so assessed their learning. A brief evaluation of the lesson is added to the planning sheet and referred to for subsequent lesson planning. The provision of resources is very good, particularly so in the information and communication technology suite. These are improvements since the previous inspection. This means that all pupils now make good, and sometimes very good, progress in lessons and as a result standards have risen.
128. Discussion with pupils in Year 2 indicated that the teaching of word-processing and graphics skills ensures that younger pupils gain familiarity with the layout of the keyboard, control the cursor with a mouse, log on and off, save their work and open programs. They add text to pictures, for example, when pupils in Year 2 add sentences to pictures of fireworks. They are beginning to use the Internet to search for information. They also know that information and communication technology is not just computers, but includes many domestic items.
129. In Years 3 to 6, pupils are very confident when using word-processing and graphics software, for example, when designing a multimedia presentation that combines text, graphics and sound. The majority are also engrossed and enthusiastic when using information and communication technology in conjunction with learning in another subject. In a very good lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6, drawing tools were selected by the pupils to produce on the screen a design for a space station previously sketched in their design and technology notebooks. They labelled their drawings using text boxes. In a subsequent design and technology lesson pupils, used a digital camera to make a pictorial record of their space stations. Pupils will incorporate these pictures into their evaluations of the project. Pupils use the Internet to find information. For example, pairs of pupils in Year 6 researched space topics such as constellations and moon landings in conjunction with work in science and geography and researched inventors from Victorian times in conjunction with their history topic. The finished booklets were well presented because of the use of different fonts, colours, imported graphics – some located on the Internet, borders and the use of Word Art to make attractive headlines.

130. Pupils with special educational needs make the same progress in lessons as other pupils because of the level of support provided by the teachers and support assistants. A significant percentage of pupils are able to practise their information and communication technology skills at home. To help those pupils who do not have facilities to practise at home the school makes provision for access to computers in school, for example, at lunchtimes.
131. As a result of the good teaching, all pupils use the skills they have learned with confidence, are keen to learn, concentrate well on tasks and behave well in lessons. These positive attitudes contribute significantly to the rate at which they make progress within lessons.
132. The leadership and management of the subject are very good. The subject leader has a high level of expertise and a very good knowledge and understanding of the requirements of the National Curriculum. She monitors planning, collects samples of work to check on attainment, observes teaching and ensures that both formal and informal support is available for all staff.

MUSIC

Subject summary

133. By Years 1 and 2, pupils achieve well and attain above the national expectations. In Years 3 to 6; pupils achieve very well and attain well above expected standards. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. This is a result of good teaching and the very good management by the subject leaders. Music is one of only two examples of teaching which is graded highly at both key stages. There has been good improvement in standards since the last inspection.

Subject commentary

134. By the end of Year 2, pupils sing a wide variety of songs with confidence. Teachers put good emphasis on pupils pronouncing the words clearly and with expression. Pupils include actions to enhance the meaning of the words and follow instrumental and piano accompaniment effectively. They are developing an understanding that written symbols represent the beat and follow these when clapping the rhythm. Teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to grow socially and co-operate as they select songs, and sing group parts at different intervals.
135. In Years 3 to 6, pupils continue to benefit from a wide musical curriculum. Pupils are able to write their own musical notation to create compositions and have a good understanding of the elements of music such as the pitch, tempo and dynamics. Teachers play a wide range of music from different periods and from different cultures for their pupils to listen to, often in other lessons. As a result, pupils display a good deal of knowledge about various composers and the type of music they wrote. For example, some pupils in Year 6 readily identified the different styles of music composed by Beethoven and Vivaldi. Pupils often record their feelings and moods when listening to music by their writing or paintings.
136. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Singing throughout the school is generally above average. Teachers have very good subject knowledge which they use successfully to teach pupils to sing in tune taking different parts including solos and providing rhythmic support. However, pupils do not always respond fully to the mood of hymns and songs during acts of collective worship. Pupils of all ages delight in playing

both untuned and tuned musical instruments and make good and often very good progress.

137. Teachers develop literacy and numeracy well in the subject. Pupils learn the words of songs and read books to discover more about musical instruments and the lives of great composers. Pupils' exploration of patterns of sound and rhythm links with their work in mathematics. Pupils show very good attitudes to music. They are enthusiastic, enjoy music and are keen to contribute.
138. The extra-curricular provision is very good. Two recorder groups and the choir meet during the lunchtime period and after school. All children are given the opportunity to learn an instrument and receive tuition from the local authority visiting peripatetic music service.
139. The school is proud of the performances pupils have staged both within school and in the community. Younger pupils sing at the local residential home for the elderly. Some pupils in Year 6 rehearsed and performed with Camerata, the Manchester Chamber Orchestra. Groups of musicians such as from the Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra also visit school to enable all pupils to listen to professional musicians play.
140. Pupils' personal development is enhanced by opportunities to take part in public performances such as full scale musical productions in the past and, during the inspection week, the Christmas concerts. Plans are being made for a summer production of The Rocky Monster Show. Pupils taking part in events such as the Young Voices concert at the Manchester Evening News Arena help to raise money for charity.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Subject summary

141. In Years 1 and 2, pupils make satisfactory progress and by the end of Year 2 achieve the level expected for their age. In Years 3 to 6, pupils make good progress and attain above the national expectations. This is due to the consistently sound teaching throughout the school and very good teaching for the oldest pupils. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to other pupils of the same age. Standards are similar to those found at the last inspection for pupils in Key Stage 1 and have improved for pupils in Key Stage 2.

Subject commentary

142. Teachers plan lessons carefully to enable pupils to systematically develop their physical abilities over a wide range of skills. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 working on a series of movements including moving and balancing on and off apparatus. They were continually encouraged to think not only how they could refine the quality of those movements but also the connections between. By observing each other's efforts and defining the next steps, pupils could see how their own work was improving. Teachers throughout the school expect pupils to extend their skills in a similar way and put much emphasis on how the individual pupil can achieve.

143. Teachers also use physical education to enhance pupils' social and cultural development. For instance, pupils in Year 4 co-operate well and enjoy learning the steps to Irish country dancing. Teachers make relevant links between physical education and other subjects of the curriculum so that learning in one enhances learning in another. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 looking at games in history enjoy some traditional Victorian party games in their dance lesson. During activities, teachers observe pupils closely and spend extra time with individuals or groups needing extra help so they make similar progress to that of the others.
144. Teachers put appropriate emphasis on exercising carefully and include a warming-up period for pupils at the beginning of a lesson. However, teachers do not always allow sufficient time for cooling down at the end. Swimming is taught in a block of work every three years for pupils who cannot swim. As many pupils have private lessons this is a good use of curricular time. By the time pupils leave school they swim 25 metres unaided and beyond. Discussions with pupils about their progress provide good opportunities for the development of pupils' speaking and listening skills. Pupils' numeracy skills are developed through their increasing spatial awareness, following rules and accurate scoring and recording.
145. Provision for pupils to take part in sport outside the normal lesson period is very good. Pupils play football and netball in the playground at lunchtime on a rota basis and badminton is played in the hall before school starts in the morning. A comprehensive selection of sports is played against other schools. These include football, netball, cricket, rounders, athletics and cross country. Pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 have the opportunity to attend an outdoor pursuits centre for a few days each year. These activities contribute well to pupils' personal and social development as well as their physical skills.
146. Physical education is well led by the committed and enthusiastic co-ordinator. All teachers have received Top Sport training in gymnastics and various team games. As a result, teachers' skills have improved with a subsequent raising in standards, particularly of older pupils.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Subject summary

147. By the end of Year 2, pupils reach the standards expected in the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. By the end of Year 6, they attain standards which are above those typically expected for their age. Standards are about the same as they were at the time of the last inspection. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good. It is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and pupils make steady progress. Teaching and learning in Key Stage 2 are good, and there is some very good teaching in Year 6. The pupils in Year 6 are faced with searching questions and are asked to consider the relevance of Christianity in their own and other people's lives. The pace of learning in Key Stage 2 is good and in response to very challenging teaching in Year 6 it is very good. Pupils who have special education needs contribute well and learn at a similar pace to others. Their views are valued and deliberately sought. They remain positive about trying hard. The subject is well led and managed by a subject leader who has a very clear view of the potential that the subject presents, not only for learning about religion, but also as a context for pupils' personal development. The subject makes an important contribution to the pupils' very good relationships, which prevail in the school.

Subject Commentary

148. Pupils develop a satisfactory understanding of other faiths. In Key Stage 1, pupils know about the Jewish celebration of Hanukkah and the Hindu festival of Diwali. This knowledge is extended in the juniors where pupils know more of the details and symbolism of these celebrations. By end of Year 6 pupils have developed a good knowledge of Christianity and this is aided by a series of trips to various Christian churches. Work that results from these trips is of a high standard. No personal links are made with other faith communities and knowledge and understanding other faiths are not of the same high standard.
149. In Key Stage 1, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of Christianity and are beginning to consider how religion determines the way people treat each other. This knowledge is well developed in Key Stage 2, and especially in Year 6. Here pupils know how the early church was formed and are able to write in detail about the relevance of church traditions and symbols.
150. Where teaching and learning are good, pupils are asked to consider the link between religion and their daily lives. For example, in a good lesson in a class of Year 1 and 2 pupils, the discussion was broadened to include Christmas as a time for thinking about others. This link is not always emphasised enough in the school. In an otherwise good lesson in a class of pupils from Years 5 and 6, the teacher asked the pupils to consider why the three kings did not tell Herod about the birth of Jesus. While the discussion was useful in considering their motives it was not extended to relate directly to pupils' personal experiences; for example, by considering difficult choices pupils may face in their daily lives.
151. Teaching in the Year 6 class encourages pupils to develop their own personal response to religion. In a very good lesson the teacher built on the information pupils had gained from their visits to local churches by asking deep questions such as Why do you think people go to church? This stimulated lively discussion and was very well managed by the teacher. He successfully created an open and frank atmosphere in which pupils felt comfortable about expressing their personal views. All respected each other's views and many supported their views with well reasoned arguments. Increasingly probing questions led pupils into thinking about values which determine how they and others act.
152. All teachers are good at exploiting the opportunities lessons present for developing skills in other subjects. The opportunities teachers give for pupils to talk helps develop pupils' skills in speaking and listening, whilst accounts of visits help to develop their writing skills. Teachers provide a good example for all pupils by showing how much they value the pupils' personal opinions. This is one of the reasons why relationships are open, honest and supportive and the subject makes a positive contribution to pupils' personal development.
153. The subject leader is a good role model and leads by example. His personal commitment to the subject ensures that it has a high profile. He has implemented a scheme of work which follows the locally agreed syllabus and has added to resources ensuring that there are sufficient books and artefacts for teachers and pupils to use. He has observed teaching and learning in other classes and has a clear idea of how to develop the subject further. The strong and effective leadership he provides ensures that the subject plays a prominent role in developing the very good relationships within the school.