

INSPECTION REPORT

MAY PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Bristol

LEA area: Bristol

Unique reference number: 109131

Headteacher: Mrs Lesley Schwarz

Reporting inspector: Dr Colin Lee
21854

Dates of inspection: 14th – 17th October 2002

Inspection number: 246876

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

© Crown copyright 2002

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Coombe Road Eastville Bristol
Postcode:	BS5 6LE
Telephone number:	0117 9030075
Fax number:	0117 9030092
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Richard Merrill
Date of previous inspection:	25 September 2000

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21854	Dr C Lee	Registered inspector	Physical education	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well pupils are taught How well the school is led and managed What the school should do to improve further
19664	Mr J Bayliss	Lay inspector		How well the school cares for its pupils How well the school works in partnership with parents
16038	Mrs J Bavin	Team inspector	Science Music	Educational inclusion Special educational needs
22397	Mr S Fowler	Team inspector	History Information and communication technology	The quality of the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils
21904	Mrs D Gale	Team inspector	Art and design Geography Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage	
22352	Mrs F Gaywood	Team inspector	English Design technology	
22841	Miss P Jackson	Team inspector	Mathematics English as an additional language Religious education	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

The inspection contractor was:

*Criterion School Inspections
Juniper House
23 Abbots View
Abbotswood
Cinderford
Gloucestershire
GL14 3EG*

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway

London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

Page

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

6-9

Information about the school
How good the school is
What the school does well
What could be improved
How the school has improved since its last inspection
Standards
Pupils' attitudes and values
Teaching and learning
Other aspects of the school
How well the school is led and managed
Parents' and carers' views of the school

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

10-13

The school's results and pupils' achievements
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

13-15

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

15-18

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

18-20

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

20-22

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

22-25

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

26

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

27-31

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

32-50

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

May Park Primary School is larger than the average primary school and caters for pupils between the ages of 3 and 11. The nursery has 20 children attending full-time and 19 who attend part-time. From reception to Year 6 there are 369 pupils on roll, with slightly more boys than girls. These numbers are almost identical to those at the time of the last inspection in September 2000. Three-quarters of the pupils are from minority ethnic groups; a third of these pupils speak English as an additional language, with almost a third of this group being at an early stage of learning the language. The main first languages of these pupils are Urdu, Punjabi and Bengali. Over a third of the pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is well above average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is about average, as is the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs. The special needs cover a wide spectrum of learning, emotional and behavioural difficulties, as well as those related to physical disability. There is a significant number of pupils who either join or leave the school during a school year. This turnover is typically around 17 per cent. Children's attainment on entry to the reception class is well below the levels expected for that age. The school has recently experienced a significant turnover of teaching staff. Six teachers have left in the last two years and have been replaced by four teachers appointed to permanent posts and one temporary teacher.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides pupils with a standard of education that is satisfactory overall, but with some good and very good features. There has been good improvement since the last inspection that has removed the serious weaknesses found at that time. There is very good provision for children in the nursery and reception classes that enables these children to make good progress in their early years. All other pupils are achieving what can reasonably be expected of them. Throughout the school, the very good provision for pupils' personal development prepares them very well for life in a multi-cultural society. Pupils' standards are rising and, although they are currently below average in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6, this is an improvement compared with what has been achieved in the past. Pupils are keen to learn and this helps to create a good atmosphere for learning. The school is led and managed satisfactorily by the headteacher and key staff. This, together with the good overall quality of teaching, enables the school to provide satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Very good teaching is a feature of the high quality of provision for children in the nursery and reception classes that helps them to progress well in all aspects of their development.
- Good teaching overall in Years 1 to 6 is improving pupils' standards in all subjects.
- Very good provision for pupils' personal development, which helps pupils' social skills, in particular, to develop very well.
- Very good support for the younger pupils with English as an additional language, which helps them to make good progress.
- There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs and these pupils make good progress when working with support staff.

What could be improved

- The standards attained by pupils at the end of Year 6, in English, mathematics, and science, could be raised higher still.
- The roles and responsibilities of senior staff and subject co-ordinators need further development.
- There is insufficient monitoring and evaluation of pupils' academic standards across the whole curriculum.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

At the last inspection in September 2000, the school was judged to have serious weaknesses. Improvement was required in aspects of leadership and management, the quality of teaching, the curriculum, attendance, and the quality of accommodation. There has been good improvement since that inspection, due to the determination of the headteacher, key members of staff and the governing body to succeed. The local education authority has also given good support to the school. The school's improvement has been achieved during a period of considerable instability in staffing arrangements, with many classes experiencing disruption, due to staff absence and the presence of supply and temporary teachers for short periods. Despite this lack of continuity in staffing, pupils' standards are gradually

rising, because of what has been achieved in rectifying the weaknesses. In design and technology, and information and communication technology, there has been very good improvements in standards throughout the school. Pupils' standards in English, mathematics and science and the quality of teaching are monitored and evaluated more rigorously. The curriculum has been improved by better long-term planning and arranging for much more involvement of the local community. This now takes advantage of the ethnic diversity and the richness of cultural traditions of pupils at the school. There have been good teachers appointed recently, and the return of staff from maternity leave and other absences has settled the school and re-established a strong sense of team spirit amongst all staff. Provision for the professional development of staff is now good. There has been some improvement to accommodation, but much needs to be done to improve the poor quality of the external environment. Attendance remains unsatisfactory and this is due mainly to the extended holidays taken by significant numbers of pupils during term-time. There is now a good capacity to succeed further in the future because of the shared commitment to improvement that has developed amongst staff.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools ¹
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	E	D	E	E
Mathematics	E*	E	E	E
Science	E*	E	E*	E

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

The trend in the school's results between 1997 and 2001 matched the national trend of slowly rising standards, although the gap between the school's results and national averages has remained broadly the same. The pupils in Year 6, who took the tests in 2002, were in classes that had experienced much disruption in the past. Their results were generally lower than those in 2001, with the only improvement being in the proportion of pupils achieving a higher-level than expected in science. However, the overall result in science placed the school in the lowest five per cent nationally for this subject. Pupils attained results that were close to those that the school had predicted, based on what these pupils had achieved in the past. However, the results fell well short of the targets that the local education authority had advised the governing body to set. Although some of the pupils now in Year 6 have a history of disrupted teaching, they are now benefiting from the many improvements in the school since the last inspection. They are on track to achieve standards in English and mathematics that are below average, but standards in science are likely to be well below average. Pupils' progress in science is hindered by weaknesses in their literacy skills, in particular their understanding of the meaning of scientific vocabulary, and using this vocabulary in their writing. The standards in English and mathematics represent an improvement in standards when compared with the school's results in national tests in the past, and they are a satisfactory achievement in relation to the pupils' own past attainment. In other subjects, pupils in Year 6 are achieving the expected standards. This compares favourably with the last inspection, when standards in design and technology, and information and communication technology, were well below expectations. There has also been an improvement in geography, where standards were below expectations at the time of the last inspection.

In the national tests in 2002 taken by pupils at the end of Year 2, the results showed that attainment in reading and writing matched national averages, while in mathematics and science standards were below average. The results in 2002 were a slight improvement on the previous year. There was a rise in the proportion of pupils achieving a higher-than-expected level in all tests. The overall picture since 1997 is of gradually rising standards and the gap between the school's results and national results is narrowing. The work of pupils currently in Year 2 is below average in reading, writing, mathematics, and science, and this is consistent with the levels of attainment that these pupils have shown in the past. Good improvement is seen in design and technology, and information and communication technology, where standards have improved from well below expectations, at the time of the last inspection, to be matching expectations now. Pupils are also achieving expected standards in all other subjects. Children enter the reception class with standards well below those expected for their age in all areas of learning. They make good progress and they are on

¹ 'Similar schools' are defined by the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals; this measure has been found to be significantly related to the levels of attainment normally found in schools nationally.

line to match the expectations for children by the end of the reception year, in personal, social and emotional development, and in their physical and creative development. Children’s communication, language and literacy skills, mathematical development, and knowledge and understanding of the world, are below expectations.

PUPILS’ ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good, pupils enjoy coming to school and most pupils show good levels of interest in their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory overall, but variable between classes, due to the very challenging behaviour that some pupils display.
Personal development and relationships	Good relationships exist between pupils and between pupils and staff, contributing to pupils’ good overall personal development.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. Attendance is below national rates and the amount of unauthorised absence is higher than in most schools.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching in the school is good overall. The very good teaching in nursery and reception classes is achieved through very thorough planning, very good management of classes, and good all-round knowledge and understanding of how children learn. There is excellent day-to-day assessment of children’s progress that is used very successfully to plan the next stage in children’s learning. This helps all children to achieve well in relation to what they knew and could do when they first started school.

Throughout the school, teachers work very well with support staff and use a wide range of resources that stimulate pupils’ learning successfully. English is taught well overall in Years 1 to 6 and the basic skills of literacy are consolidated well across the whole curriculum. The teaching of basic numeracy skills and mathematics as a whole is satisfactory. In the instances where teaching is good or better, learning activities are matched well to the needs of pupils of all abilities. Good teaching of basic skills in most subjects prepares pupils well for their future learning. At all stages, pupils show good levels of interest in their work. They maintain good levels of concentration and interest in their work. Pupils with special educational needs, and those with English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress overall, and often achieve a good rate of learning in individual lessons when supported by adults.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is very good for children in the nursery and reception classes and satisfactory for pupils in Years 1 to 6. Good links with the community are being used well to extend pupils’ learning opportunities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision is good overall. There is early identification, good liaison with parents, and regular review of pupils’ progress towards the targets that are set for them.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good provision overall, but particularly good in the nursery and reception classes, and Years 1 and 2 that meets the needs of individual pupils very successfully.
Provision for pupils’ personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall, with strong emphasis on pupils’ moral development that establishes good understanding of moral values. Wide-ranging initiatives have very good impact on the development of pupils’ social skills.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good attention is paid to all aspects of pupils’ welfare. The monitoring of pupils’ academic progress does not cover all subjects in sufficient detail.

Parents hold satisfactory views overall about the school, and the school, itself, works hard at developing good home-school links.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory overall. The headteacher provides good leadership and receives good support from staff. The roles of subject co-ordinators, many of whom are new, need to be developed further.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body fulfils its responsibilities satisfactorily. Governors provide constructive guidance and have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The school's self-evaluation procedures, and analyses of pupils' work, enable it to identify priorities, set itself targets and take appropriate action for future improvement.
The strategic use of resources	All physical and human resources are used satisfactorily and there is efficient management of the school's finances.

Staffing levels are good, and learning resources and the adequacy of accommodation are satisfactory overall. The school applies the principles of best value satisfactorily, setting itself challenges and securing value for money in the services and resources that it acquires.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • Their children make good progress. • Parents feel comfortable about approaching the school with any questions or problems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The information provided about their children's progress. • The range of activities outside lessons. • Some parents feel that the school could work more closely with them. • The leadership and management of the school.

These are the views of the very small percentage of parents who returned the pre-inspection questionnaire or attended the parents' meeting. Inspectors agree with the aspects that please parents, but do not share all their concerns. Parents' meetings and the approachability of staff mean that parents have good opportunities to get information about their children's progress. However, the language used in annual reports is not helpful as it contains far too much educational jargon. A good range of extra-curricular activities is provided. The school works very hard at working with parents, but there is a varied response to the activities that are arranged. While parents' meetings are well attended, their response to other events, such as meetings about the curriculum, is far less enthusiastic. The school is led well by the headteacher, and the management is satisfactory overall.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Standards on entry to the school are well below average. This judgement reflects the findings of the previous report. Children enter the school with a wide range of prior attainment, and of the present intake, 25 out of 30 come to the school speaking English as an additional language. On average, about 60 per cent of the children in the reception classes come from the school's nursery. About half of the other children who enter reception have attended playgroups, and others have had no previous pre-school experience.
2. Children make a very good start to their education in the nursery and achieve well because of the high quality provision and the very good standard of teaching and care. Excellent bi-lingual support ensures that those at an early stage of learning to speak English make good progress in their learning. Children's special educational needs are identified early and are catered for, so that they are able to make good progress against their prior attainment. The higher-attaining children are given challenging tasks to extend their ideas and thinking skills. This very good picture is continued in the reception classes and, as a consequence, children in the reception classes continue to thrive and to build successfully on their previous learning.
3. By the time they leave the reception classes, the children are attaining standards that meet the expectations for their age in their personal, social and emotional development, creative development, and physical development, and their achievements are good. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. Standards in mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world are below expectations, which is a decline in standards since the previous inspection. In communication, language and literacy, standards are below average, reflecting the findings of the previous report. Children's achievements in these areas of learning are, however, good when measured against the low starting point on entry to the school. Most children will take longer to reach the Early Learning Goals² in most aspects of communication, language and literacy, because their overall attainment on entry is well below average and many need support in learning to speak English. This affects children's progress, not only in language and literacy, but also in most other areas of their learning.
4. In the national tests in 2002 taken by pupils at the end of Year 2, results in reading and writing matched the national averages and those in mathematics were below average. Standards in science, which were assessed by teachers, were very slightly below average. Overall, these results continued the upward trend in the school's results that has been taking place since 1997. Compared with the previous year, there was a rise in the percentage of pupils achieving a higher level than expected in all tests, and this shows that the school is paying good attention to the needs of higher-attaining pupils. When compared with similar schools, results in reading were well above average, in writing and science results were above average, and those in mathematics were average. The pupils currently Year 2 have shown, in the past, that their overall levels of ability are not quite as high as those shown by other year groups when they were the same age. This is confirmed by their lower attainment on entry and the standards they achieved at the end of the reception year. It is also reflected in the standards seen now, and their work is below average in reading, writing, mathematics and science.
5. In Year 6, pupils show a different situation, with standards now being higher than those achieved by pupils in Year 6 last year in the national tests in 2002. In those tests, standards were well below average in English and mathematics, and very low in science. This was broadly the same when the results were compared with those from similar schools. The percentages of pupils achieving levels higher than expected were well below average in English, and below average in mathematics and science. There are well-documented reasons for the results in 2002, which reversed the upward trend that had taken place between 1997 and 2001. The teaching of Year 6 classes was severely disrupted, and many pupils, with very low levels of attainment, joined the classes between Years 3

² The Early Learning Goals set out what children should achieve by the time they reach the end of the reception year in primary school.

and 6. Similarly, significant numbers of pupils with English as an additional language joined the school between these years, and very little specialist support was available for these pupils. The combination of these factors resulted in the poor test results. Some of the problems associated with pupils joining and leaving the school during a school year apply to the current Year 6 classes, but these classes are now benefiting from a settled teaching situation. The quality of teaching in this year group is high, with three-quarters of teaching being good, or better, and pupils with English as an additional language are receiving good support in English and mathematics. As a result, standards, at this early time of the year, although below average in English and mathematics, are an improvement on the standards reflected in the 2002 test results. Standards in science are well below average partly as a result of pupils' past experiences, when both the science curriculum and the quality of teaching had serious weaknesses.

6. The national test results in 2002 for pupils in Year 6 fell well below the targets that had been set for them by the local education authority. However, the results were close to the school's predictions that were based on the pupils' past performance. Targets for 2003 will shortly be set. The school's predictions show significant rises compared with 2002. The information that the school gets from the analysis of test data is starting to be used to predict what other year groups should be achieving although, by being such a new development, the use of the full range of information from assessment is unsatisfactory at the present time. Inspection evidence is of pupils generally achieving satisfactorily across the curriculum in relation to what they have done in the past. The two exceptions are science, which has previously been mentioned with regard to the unsatisfactory achievement of pupils in Year 6 and, and religious education in which pupils throughout the school achieve well.
7. The achievements of pupils are reflected in standards, which are meeting the national expectations in all subjects apart from English, mathematics and science. The steady gains that pupils make in learning, in much of the curriculum, result from good teaching and the positive attitudes that pupils have. In most cases, standards and achievement match what was found at the last inspection. No subject standards are lower than at the time of the last inspection. However, there has been very good improvement in both design and technology, and information and communication technology, throughout the school and in geography by the end of Year 6. Standards in design and technology and information and communication technology were well below expectations and those in geography were below expectations. Improvements are due to the development of good learning opportunities in these subjects, with better planning, teachers' increased subject knowledge, improved resources in information and communication technology, and very good co-ordination of design and technology.
8. Amongst particular groups of pupils in the school there are examples of good achievement. This is clearly evident in many of the pupils with special educational needs, particularly those with complex learning difficulties. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in reading, spelling and numeracy work, because of the very good support that they receive in class from teaching assistants, and also because of the range of support programmes they access. Many pupils with special educational needs achieve good standards when the attainment is measured against their starting point. The higher-attaining pupils in the school are generally achieving the standards of which they are capable, and work planned for them is suitably challenging, although there is insufficient attention to such planning in mathematics.
9. By the end of Year 2, most pupils for whom English is an additional language achieve well. This is due to the bilingual support many of them receive early in their school life. As they get older, there is not so much support and pupils who are still in the early stages of learning to speak English frequently struggle in most subjects, because they do not understand the technical language. Some, whose English is strong, often achieve well and are amongst the higher-attaining pupils. The additional support some pupils receive in Year 6, though it is not bilingual, helps them progress well. Overall, they achieve satisfactorily.
10. Within all groups and classes, throughout the school, there are no significant differences between the achievements of boys and girls in any subject.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Pupils' attitudes to school, to their work and to other people are good. The majority of pupils behave well and the school ensures their personal development is good. Since the previous inspection, there have been significant improvements in the attitudes and behaviour of pupils, which continues to improve. The respect pupils show for the feelings, values and beliefs of others is a strength of the school.
12. The attitudes of children in the nursery and reception classes are consistently positive. They acquire a thirst for learning, and show intense and absorbed interest in their tasks. Their personal development is very good. They begin to relate well to other children and adults, and through activities such as 'circle'³ time and class assemblies, learn how to treat others with consideration. All groups of children develop good self-esteem and demonstrate much perseverance and confidence, as they approach a range of different tasks.
13. The majority of pupils enjoy coming to school and work hard in lessons. They generally show pride in their achievements taking care to present their work well. In whole-class sessions, many pupils feel sufficiently confident to ask their own questions, as well as to answer those posed by their teacher, but a number have to be encouraged to volunteer. Most of the teachers skilfully and sensitively ask individuals specifically focused questions in order to help these pupils gain confidence and share what they know. Pupils generally settle to individual tasks with the minimum of fuss and work conscientiously on whatever is asked of them. For example, in a mathematics lessons in Year 3, each task was based on pupils' previous learning and provided good challenges for the groups of different ability. On the few occasions where pupils do not settle well, much of the work is the same or tasks are not clearly explained.
14. Overall, pupils' behaviour is satisfactory. Most of the time it is good, often very good, both in class and at social times, but a very small minority of pupils show challenging behaviour from time to time. Although teachers and support staff deal with this unacceptable behaviour very well, it does occasionally affect lessons and prevents others in class from learning. The new sanctions for unacceptable behaviour in Years 3 to 6 are already helping to reduce these incidents and peer mediation sessions have a very positive impact on pupils in Year 6. In these sessions, pupils learn to handle their own anger and to help others resolve disagreements peacefully. A number of pupils in Year 2 present challenging behaviour and staff use the school's behaviour policy well to reinforce what is acceptable.
15. The number of pupils excluded from school has dropped since the last inspection. There were no permanent exclusions and only three short, fixed-term ones last year, with none this term. Through the good work done in school, pupils are increasingly aware of the impact of their actions on others and, from the responses received, only a few parents showed concerns about pupils' behaviour. Parents are impressed by the good behaviour shown by pupils when they accompany them on visits out of school and are generally pleased with pupils' attitudes and personal development.
16. Pupils with special educational needs enjoy school and work hard. They develop strong and trusting relationships with those teachers and support assistants who work with them regularly. The school's positive and accepting ethos helps all pupils to be tolerant and accepting of difference. This has a direct bearing upon the social development and positive attitudes of all pupils. It also results in an impressive level of commitment and perseverance from those pupils facing particular difficulties. For example, pupils with physical disabilities, not only participate fully in the whole curriculum, but also win a running race. During the inspection, pupils with a history of poor attendance participated fully and proudly in literacy lessons.
17. Most pupils are very aware of how their actions affect others and treat each other and equipment with care and respect. At lunch and break times pupils play remarkably sensibly, considering the bareness of the play areas. They generally have access to balls and other small equipment for

³ 'Circle' time is a session provided for pupils to discuss certain matters as a class, following strict rules about listening to others and taking turns to speak.

play, and an effort has been made to liven up lunchtimes with clubs and a radio-station run by pupils in Year 6. These social activities are enjoyed and valued by the pupils involved.

18. As they move through the school, pupils increasingly show respect for other people and their values and beliefs, and this is a real strength of the school. By the time they reach Year 6, pupils talk very maturely about the richness of having friends from different religions and cultures. They openly share concerns about what might happen in the future, if people do not live peacefully together and accept one another's differences. Religious education lessons and assemblies have a significant impact on these attitudes and help the pupils to learn about different faiths and values. For instance, in class assemblies, pupils in Year 6 share selections of their own religious music and explain why it is important to them.
19. In addition to the opportunities provided through the peer mediation scheme, older pupils willingly take on responsibility for routine tasks around school, such as operating the audio equipment for music in assembly. Little evidence was seen of pupils carrying out independent research. Overall the opportunities for them to show initiative and take responsibility are broadly in line with what is expected in a primary school.
20. Relationships between pupils are mostly good. They usually co-operate well when working on small group tasks and the majority share equipment fairly and without argument. For example, small groups of pupils in Year 3 shared ideas, rehearsed and produced effective mimes in a religious education lesson, all within six or seven minutes. Pupils with special educational needs, and those whose command of English makes it difficult for them to communicate with the majority, are fully integrated into the social life of the school, and are treated with care and respect by the others. Pupils learn from the good relationships they experience with the majority of adults who teach and support them. This is a notable feature in most classes and, only on rare occasions do teachers raise their voices when talking to a class.
21. Overall, the pupils are confident young people who enjoy school, take pride in their work and are well prepared for their next steps in life.

Attendance

22. The previous inspection judged that attendance, though improving, was unsatisfactory as it was below the national average. The picture is much the same now.
23. Levels of attendance have shown little overall improvement in recent years. They continue to be unsatisfactory, with high levels of unauthorised absence. However, there is not a truancy problem. Pupils attend school when they can. Unsatisfactory attendance levels are a reflection of some parents organising extended visits to family homelands, a number not advising the school of the reasons for absence and, more importantly, a relaxed attitude to the importance of attendance displayed by some parents. Absence levels are of concern to the school, because of the way they affect learning for those pupils that are involved. There is some lateness, but when it occurs it is generally of a minor nature and not disruptive to lessons.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

24. The qualities of teaching and learning are very good in the nursery and reception classes, satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, and good in Years 3 to 6. Compared with the last inspection, teaching and learning have improved in the nursery and reception classes and in Years 3 to 6. The school has now got a settled staff of permanent teachers, which is a marked contrast to the past 18 months, when significant numbers of supply and temporary teachers were often teaching classes for short periods. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 were most affected by this instability and the impact is seen in the irregular progress in learning of many pupils in these classes during this time. The ultimate result was a fall in the school's results in the national tests in 2002 taken by pupils at the end of Year 6.
25. In the reception class, one lesson was judged to be excellent and all teaching in the nursery and reception classes was good or better. The high standard of teaching for the children in these classes impacts very positively on the quality of provision, the rate that children learn, and their

good achievement, whatever their ability. All children are fully included and involved in all activities, due to the high quality of support that is given whenever children might need it. Those at an early stage of learning to speak English are given excellent support by bi-lingual teachers. Meticulous records are kept on each child, which identifies their individual needs and, from this, new targets are set. Children with special educational needs are supported well by the good teamwork of teachers, nursery nurses, and support assistants. Consequently, they achieve well and make good progress. A strength of the teaching is the excellent systems for the assessment of children on a regular basis. The planned focus on individuals, or groups of children, is an effective aid for the monitoring of progress for children of all abilities. Planning ensures balanced development in each of the six areas of learning, with effective links between them all. Activities are well structured and appropriate. All lessons include a rich variety of tasks, some of which encourage independence, and others that need adult support. They ensure the continued development and consolidation of skills. Teachers have high expectations for children's learning. These high expectations result in some challenging tasks and are shared with all the support staff, who make a valuable and knowledgeable contribution to children's learning, particularly in the nursery. Time and resources are used efficiently, and children learn in a busy and happy atmosphere. Teachers display a caring and committed attitude, which enables them to build warm relationships with the children. This obviously has a strong impact on the children's very good attitudes to their learning. In the excellent lessons teachers created an atmosphere of wonder, as children increased their understanding of the world, alongside the very good development of language skills.

26. Throughout the school, the relationships between teachers, and other adults in the classroom, with pupils, are good and all teachers make good use of support staff to provide additional instruction and guidance for pupils. Support staff are briefed thoroughly and the quality of their guidance to pupils is good. These staff and volunteers make a positive impact on pupils' attitudes to learning and to the progress that they make in lessons.
27. In Years 1 to 6, the teaching of basic literacy skills is good overall. Teachers are implementing the National Literacy Strategy effectively, by providing a range of activities that are matched well to the needs of groups of pupils of different abilities. Teachers are successful at using lessons in subjects other than English to develop pupils' speaking, reading and writing skills. The National Numeracy Strategy is implemented satisfactorily. Teachers are confident and promote number work strongly. However, there is less planning of different tasks for pupils of different ability, than in literacy. As a result, lower-attaining pupils sometimes struggle to complete tasks when there are no support staff to assist them and higher-attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged by their work. Teachers have a good overall knowledge of information and communication technology, and they use this successfully to plan appropriate learning opportunities to support pupils' learning in other subjects. A strength of the teaching in Years 3 to 6 is the breadth of teachers' subject knowledge, which is good overall. This knowledge is used well to teach the basic skills in all subjects and this provides a firm foundation for their future learning.
28. The majority of teachers are consistent in their management of pupils' behaviour. They make their expectations clear and provide much positive comment whenever good behaviour occurs. These clear guidelines are a particular help to those pupils who have behavioural difficulties and who, at times, can present a severe challenge to teachers' authority. On the few occasions where behaviour management lacked consistency, or the firmness that was required, lessons were less successful and, in two cases, teaching and learning were unsatisfactory. One other unsatisfactory lesson was due to weaknesses in the teacher's knowledge of information and communication technology that led to pupils failing to achieve any gains in their learning.
29. Other weaknesses in teaching are comparatively rare, but there is most variation in the extent to which teachers carry out ongoing assessment of pupils' learning during lessons. This is satisfactory overall but, in Years 1 to 6, is generally not as thorough as in the nursery and reception classes, where it is the practice of teachers, and the nursery nurses, to note and assess learning while pupils are working at every activity. This information is then used well to plan the next stage in learning for individuals. Most teachers plan and discuss with the class what is intended that they all should learn by the end of a lesson, but this is often vague and is rarely refined to a level of communicating different learning targets for different groups or individuals. A common feature of the best teaching was when teachers' very specific learning targets were clearly displayed and referred to constantly. Additionally, the activities in these lessons were ambitious but, due to very good

awareness of teachers of what pupils could achieve with hard work, they were achievable. Pupils rose to the challenge and, in a Year 3 music lesson and a Year 4 drama lesson, the excellent teaching helped pupils to achieve high standards in their work and a great sense of accomplishment.

30. Teachers of classes in the same year group plan lessons together, but the thoroughness of this planning is variable. Where it is detailed, as in Year 3, thought is given to the needs of different groups of pupils and a range of activities is planned to provide just the right amount of challenge for groups of different abilities.
31. The specialist teaching of children for whom English is an additional language is very good. Most of this teaching occurs in the nursery and reception classes, and results in children making very good progress. This is due both to the excellent support they receive in their home language, and also through parents attending the family sessions and gaining insights into what is being taught in school. For example, during story time, the bilingual teacher told the story in the children's home language whilst, at the same time, using her bilingual skills to build up the children's knowledge and understanding of English. She questioned their understanding both of their home language and English, stressed key words and phrases in both languages, and helped them pronounce words and phrases correctly. As the pupils move through the school, bilingual support is reduced and there is no help in the majority of lessons. In many lessons, insufficient care is taken to ensure that the children always understand language, which is specific to the English culture. During English and mathematics lessons, pupils in Year 6 receive good support from an English-speaking teacher.
32. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Learning support assistants provide invaluable support for younger pupils. They are unfailingly patient when pupils' behaviour is challenging. They provide help discreetly and sensitively within the classroom and when they work with small groups outside the classroom. All members of staff are well aware of the importance of enhancing pupils' self esteem and are very skilled at valuing every pupil's contribution, which helps them to learn effectively. In the best lessons, teachers also plan well to modify activities and resources ensuring that they meet the needs of all pupils. The newly appointed 'learning mentor' provides very strong support for those pupils with particular emotional needs and is highly successful in increasing their readiness to learn in lessons.

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

33. The quality and range of learning opportunities are very good in the nursery and reception classes. These children are offered a very good, broad and balanced curriculum, which is matched to the six areas of learning appropriate to the age group. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, when the curriculum was judged to be good. The curriculum ensures all children are included fully in the activities, which are imaginatively planned. This ensures a rich and varied curriculum that promotes very good learning and makes very good provision for children to make positive progress in all areas of their development. The careful planning ensures a smooth transition from the nursery to the reception classes. Provision for children with special educational needs is very good. Children are identified early and are regularly monitored against the targets set in their individual education plans. The provision for children with English as an additional language is very good. These children are supported well by teachers, which enables them to have full access to the curriculum. Additional excellent support is provided by bi-lingual teachers.
34. The overall quality of the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils in Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory and has improved since the previous inspection. The school's curriculum is broad and balanced, and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. The provision for religious education meets the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus and there is a daily act of collective worship for all pupils. The school is in the process of developing a comprehensive policy for personal, social and health education, which will include citizenship, sex education and drugs awareness. A strong commitment to policies for equal opportunities and racial equality help to ensure that the school operates as a harmonious community.
35. At the time of the last inspection, there were some significant weaknesses in both the breadth and the balance of the curriculum. The delivery of the curriculum for information and communication

technology was poor; the coverage of some aspects of geography, art, design and technology and music were unsatisfactory, and both information and communication technology and design and technology were under resourced. Appropriate steps have been taken to remedy these weaknesses and the school now provides a carefully considered framework of policies and schemes of work for all areas of the curriculum. Planning and provision in all subjects are at least satisfactory and there have been significant improvements in the provision of resources for both information and communication technology and design and technology. The curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6 is now satisfactory and this represents good progress since the time of the last inspection. The school has refined and developed its long-, medium- and short-term planning to take account of improvement to the curriculum, and all policies and schemes of work have been updated to meet the requirements of Curriculum 2000. Although many curriculum co-ordinators are relatively new to their posts, all are providing at least satisfactory leadership, with good leadership in English, science, physical education, music, and information and communication technology, and very good leadership in design and technology. This is having a positive impact on subject development, although curriculum co-ordinators have not yet had sufficient time or opportunity in which to monitor the delivery of the curriculum. The curriculum committee of the governing body is very well informed and governors with special responsibility for special educational needs and for English visit the school regularly. An audit has been carried out within the school to ensure that the curriculum is balanced and that each subject is allocated an appropriate time allocation. This has given a better balance to the curriculum. However, the provision for physical education in Years 1 and 2 is significantly below the minimum time recommended, and there is too long a gap between the teaching of geography units of study in Years 5 and 6 to enable pupils to be able to build on their previous knowledge.

36. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum and to the good variety of extra-curricular clubs and activities that the school provides. The school meets the learning requirements of those pupils with a statement of special educational needs flexibly and sensibly. The individual education plans reflect pupils' needs well and they are reviewed regularly. As a result of considerable in-service training for teachers over the last two years, most individual targets for pupils are clear and measurable. However, this is not entirely consistent. The headteacher and co-ordinator for special educational needs recognise the need to support teachers further to ensure that all targets are equally specific and useful. There are insufficient opportunities for all pupils, irrespective of the severity of their needs, to work with teachers in setting their individual learning targets.
37. The school has recognised the importance of pupils' personal, social and health education, by appointing a co-ordinator for this area of learning. Although only recently appointed, she has already begun to develop a comprehensive scheme of work that can be taught either as a discrete subject, or as part of the normal curriculum. At present, teachers tend to work independently, but they ensure that their lessons make a significant contribution to the development of positive attitudes and relationships amongst pupils. However, the co-ordinator is aware that there is no whole-school strategy for teaching and learning in this area, and has developed a clear action plan to provide a comprehensive and coherent whole-school policy, with appropriate resources to deliver it successfully.
38. The good implementation and high priority given to the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has begun to make a positive impact on pupils' learning. Skills are reinforced on a regular basis and are taught in a well-planned and structured way. Teachers feel confident with the structures of the frameworks, which help them to develop a consistent approach to teaching the curriculum. The school has yet to establish a thorough approach to the analysis of pupils' work, and lesson observations by subject managers that ensures that teaching and learning are effective and appropriate to the needs of all pupils in all curriculum areas.
39. Overall, the school is effective in providing a curriculum that ensures that all pupils are given equal access to the statutory curriculum and all other activities provided. The school places great emphasis on equal opportunities and racial equality, and these policies permeate all aspects of school life. The previous report stated that the curriculum did not draw sufficiently on the richness of the ethnic diversity of the pupils and the local community. This is no longer the case, as the school makes good use of visits and visitors to enrich the curriculum. Pupils are encouraged to recognise the importance of their ethnic backgrounds, as could be seen in history, for example, where pupils study the contribution of Mary Seacole, alongside that of Florence Nightingale.

40. The school's provision for pupils' personal development is very good. It pervades the whole of school life, and underpins what and how things are done. The school is a very caring community, where every effort is made to help pupils from different backgrounds and home circumstances, blend in, yet become individual, thinking learners. For some pupils, this often proves very difficult, but the staff persevere with the task and are powerful role models. This constancy enables pupils to develop a sense of themselves, to make appropriate decisions and choices, and to gain insights into responsibilities needed in adult life. This was very clearly illustrated when pupils in Year 6 were interviewed. They were realistic that life may become more difficult racially and culturally, as they get older, but they said the school was helping them to understand this. They were firm in emphasising how everyone is the same underneath, in spite of race or colour, and their passionate discussion indicated a growing understanding of current conflicts in the world. What came over strongly was the pupils' understanding about the importance of knowing about other beliefs and cultures, and how this can lead to mutual respect and tolerance. The school's work on pupils' personal development now concentrates on turning out confident learners with high self-esteem, self-respect, firm lifelong learning skills and a sense of responsibility for themselves as well as others.
41. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good, with less well developed, but, nevertheless, good provision for their cultural development. Pupils' progress in these areas is central to the aims of the school, which are securely based on beliefs and values that encompass equal opportunities alongside personal rights, social responsibilities and informed choices. These concepts are affirmed and reaffirmed in assemblies and acts of worship, through lessons and the day-to-day life of the school. From the headteacher, in the first assembly of the week, through various lessons, or sessions with the learning mentor, for example, pupils learn about the importance of tolerance, working together and making the right choice. This provides the pupils with a powerful base for making their judgements. Pupils' spiritual awareness provides strong support for their moral development. This is given a high priority from the earliest times in school, where teachers in the reception classes foster moral themes, such as kindness and consideration. Gentle encouragement from the teachers ensured, for instance, that children consider 'kind hands', and discussions led children to reflect on what kind hands do. Because the teacher was sensitive and supportive in her questioning and approach, one child was able to extend his thinking to say, 'kind mouths smile'. Pupils learn to distinguish right from wrong, not only primarily for the sake of keeping rules, but also from a slowly developing respect for others' needs, feelings and beliefs, even when they are different from their own.
42. Provision for pupils' social development also has strong links to that for their spiritual and their moral development. Relationships are good, because teachers work hard teaching pupils the value of sharing, and respecting other people's feelings. Pupils are expected to co-operate, for example, during a very good science lesson for pupils in Year 3, the pupils the teacher inspired pupils successfully to observe their partner's teeth closely, whilst biting into a piece of apple. They also took turns, carefully, passing the pieces politely, because the teacher had paired the teams very well. Other comments such as 'you know what friends do, they help each other', also helped to keep the pupils on track in their social development. In a very good literacy lesson for pupils in Year 6, the teachers provided ample opportunities for pupils to share ideas and co-operate, as well as show independence, whilst meeting all the learning intentions for using active and passive verbs. This rapport mirrored the teacher's own relationships, which were open, friendly and trusting. In an outstanding lesson for pupils in Year 4, excellent teaching and support led to exceptional collaboration and teamwork amongst pupils when they acted out their play scripts. Every group performed well, listening, negotiating and valuing each other's contributions. Because the pupils were given clear choices and opportunities to do the right thing, pupils were able to decide whether or not to leave the room and work outside, knowing they must do this without disturbing others. Feedback to the groups was sensitive from the teacher and pupils alike, because the atmosphere created was open and the teacher reminded the pupils about respecting the performance of others, when she said 'be there for everyone, so we all feel worthy'.
43. At the time of the last inspection, the school's provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development was found to be unsatisfactory. This is because it was considered that the diverse and rich culture was not sufficiently drawn upon, and open attitudes to religions and cultures were not fostered. This is no longer the case. The school makes very good use of the wider community and the curriculum

and extra-curricular activities are much richer and more diverse. A good example of this was seen during a weekly African dance lesson given by a community arts organisation for pupils in Year 5. During these sessions, pupils are developing an awareness of various aspects of African culture, through dance. An additional element is the fact that visiting tutors are French-speaking, so greetings are spoken in French. Each term's work culminates in a performance for the parents in which pupils wear African costumes and masks they have made. African drumming is also available for some pupils, at lunchtime. Other pupils take part in productions for Christmas and all celebrate festivals from many different faiths. The Christian Harvest Festival is linked with the Yam Festival in an assembly for pupils in Years 1 and 2, and with a consideration of the uneven distribution of food throughout the world, in an assembly for pupils in Years 3 to 6. Some pupils have opportunities to play the recorder, or guitar and some sing in the choir, however art and music still play an insufficiently large part in the cultural life of the pupils. Whilst the school has recently had other priorities, consideration should now be given to this, in order to improve pupils' awareness and self-esteem still further.

Extra-curricular activities and links with the community

44. The opportunities provided for pupils to take part in a range of activities outside formal lessons have improved greatly since the time of the previous inspection. At that time, they were judged to be unsatisfactory. The school has worked hard, and successfully, to overcome the weakness. Pupils now enjoy a good range of activities that offer enjoyment, as well as contributing positively to their learning and personal development. There is something for everyone, including sporting activities well supported by parent-volunteers, workshops and theatre visits, music tuition and a variety of art and dance activities. No evidence was found to support the views of a small number of parents who feel that there are too few opportunities for activities outside lessons.
45. The school's links with the community, particularly locally, have also developed well since the previous inspection, when weaknesses were identified in the use made of the local community in support of the school's work. Links with the local, and wider, community, including places of worship, are now good. They enrich the curriculum by extending pupils' knowledge and appreciation of life outside school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

46. The school has improved the way in which it provides for the personal welfare of its pupils since the inspection in September 2000. At that time, the school's provision was judged to be satisfactory, with no significant problems identified in how the school looked after the non-academic welfare of its pupils, except for a need to improve attendance levels. Though there remains a recognised need to continue to promote the benefits of good attendance, the school now provides a good standard of care for all members of the school community. The view of parents that May Park is a caring school is confirmed. The quality of education provided by the school is enhanced by the support it provides for its pupils.
47. At this early time in the school year, teachers and support staff are beginning to get to know their pupils. They are responding sensitively and positively to pupils' individual needs. There is a supportive atmosphere within the school, especially for the youngest children. All members of staff show sensitivity to the religious and cultural differences that exist within the school. They work together to provide surroundings in which all pupils, whatever their personal circumstances, feel well cared for and secure. Relationships amongst all members of the school community are good and, often, very good. The pupils are happy at school and confidently turn to adults when they want help or advice.
48. There is good support during lunchtimes that has a positive effect on pupils' behaviour and safety. First-aid and fire safety arrangements are good. The school's procedures for dealing with minor accidents are secure. As a result of regular risk assessments that are performed to ensure the safety of the school community, no health and safety concerns were identified during the inspection.

49. Child protection arrangements are excellent. They meet statutory requirements. All members of staff understand their duty to be aware of the need to be attentive, and they undertake this responsibility conscientiously and well.
50. In response to a recognition that attendance levels continued to be unsatisfactory following the previous inspection, the school has further strengthened its already well-organised procedures for monitoring and improving attendance. Records of attendance are properly maintained and comply with statutory requirements. Registration procedures are efficient and there is rigorous recording of lateness and unauthorised absence. The school's rigorous policy of recording unauthorised absence works against it when being compared with schools elsewhere. New initiatives have been introduced to maintain the good standard of monitoring and develop improved promotion strategies. These include the appointment of an attendance clerk, the involvement of a learning mentor, and nominating a governor with specific responsibility for attendance matters. There is good liaison with the school's education welfare service, and there are good procedures for contacting parents in the case of unexpected absence. There is close monitoring of each pupil's attendance performance, and it is not for want of trying that the school has been unable to raise overall attendance levels further than has been the case so far.
51. Arrangements for monitoring and promoting good behaviour, and for eliminating oppressive behaviour, are good. The school's policies are focused well on the need to promote good behaviour and there is good definition of rewards and sanctions. Encouraging and praising good behaviour is emphasised. The school's expectations are clearly explained to parents in the prospectus and regularly repeated in newsletters and meetings. School rules are clear, with constant reinforcement through school assemblies and in the classroom. However, whilst procedures are clear, there is inconsistency in the way in which some teachers implement them that results in some lessons not being as effective as they could be. Overall, the procedures, that are well understood and accepted by the great majority of the pupils, are effective. This allows the pupils to take advantage of the opportunities for learning presented to them in an environment in which there is an absence of oppressive behaviour, bullying, sexism or racism.
52. The promotion and monitoring of pupils' personal development are satisfactory. There are some strong elements, as were found when the school was inspected previously. A range of strategies include a personal, social and health education programme, School Council, a peer mediation programme, a caring ethos, community involvement, 'circle' time, when pupils sit together to discuss a range of personal and general issues, involvement in charitable activities and the involvement of parents. Formal monitoring, including teachers' records, and summaries in the pupils' annual reports, has some weaknesses, primarily a lack of individual records of achievement especially positive achievement. However, informal arrangements, which benefit from teachers' knowledge of pupils as individuals, are very good.
53. The school makes very good use of the expertise of outside professionals to support their work with pupils with special educational needs. They have recently initiated regular 'multi-professional meetings' with people such as health professionals, support teachers, speech and language therapists, and educational psychologists. These meetings provide good opportunities for the special educational needs co-ordinator and headteacher to discuss the best way of meeting the needs of individual pupils. The regular contact also means that the school is well placed to request specific assessments of pupils' needs and so move reasonably quickly in implementing new teaching programmes for them.

Assessment

54. The procedures for the assessing and tracking pupils' progress are excellent in the nursery and reception classes. In the nursery, on-going assessment is part of the daily routine, and careful records are kept to track children's progress, from the time they enter the nursery, until they move into reception classes. This means that a clear picture is continually built of each child's development and any positive or negative features are addressed immediately. This excellent practice is maintained in the reception classes. The assessment of children as they enter the reception classes, is used as a basis for future work, and, in addition to this, teachers and support staff regularly assess children across all the areas of learning. This contributes positively to the

progress of all groups of children. The monitoring of children with English as an additional language is particularly good.

55. In the previous inspection report, some improvements in the arrangements for the implementation of assessment procedures in Years 1 to 6 were noted, although it was stated that the whole curriculum was not monitored sufficiently. The current judgement on the procedures for assessment is a similar one to that made at the time of the last inspection. The school has drawn up procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress, but they are not used sufficiently rigorously. They have not yet successfully implemented a whole-school assessment policy, alongside policies for target setting and marking, that ensures that all staff are familiar and confident with the procedures for assessment, and how the information gained should be used. The current procedures mainly address assessment in English, science, and design and technology, and there are some good examples in these subjects. They are detailed in how and what is assessed, and assessments are regular and appropriate, with the rigorous evaluation of key skills. However, useful and informative systems have yet to be fully implemented in mathematics and most other areas of the curriculum. The assessment co-ordinator has only recently returned to school after an absence of two terms and this has clearly had a negative impact on the development of whole-school assessment procedures. She is currently working hard to develop formal procedures for assessment and monitoring, and has carried out a considerable amount of useful data analysis relating to the performance of pupils, by gender and by ethnicity. However, she has had insufficient opportunity to share this information with the rest of the staff. In the absence of the assessment co-ordinator, curriculum leaders have begun to develop their own assessment procedures for assessing pupils' knowledge and understanding in their subject areas, but these are often under-developed and inconsistent, and there is no successful whole-school approach.
56. The use the school derives from its assessment procedures is unsatisfactory and the school has yet to develop a systematic analysis of the results of formal testing in English, science and mathematics. At the time of the inspection, there were no clear targets for the performance of the pupils currently in Year 6 in the standard assessment tests for 2003, and there had been insufficient analysis of the performance of pupils in national tests in previous years. Opportunities are, therefore, lost to use such information, for example, for the organisation of ability groups in English and mathematics, or for assisting the tracking of the progress made by individual pupils. Although some teachers make use of class targets, such as those seen in mathematics, these are often written in language that is too difficult for pupils to understand and there is very little evidence of individual targets being set for pupils in any subject areas. Consequently, although pupils may be aware of what they have achieved, they are not aware of what they need to do to achieve further success. In many subjects, assessment is not yet sufficiently formalised to enable teachers to compile accurate records and to properly inform them of ways of raising pupils' attainment.
57. The procedures to monitor pupils' daily academic progress are satisfactory overall. Most teachers know their pupils well, and have a clear picture of how they believe individual pupils are performing. Informal assessments are made on a regular basis and teachers keep their own assessment information. Teachers often make good use of the whole-class discussion sessions, within their lessons, to allow pupils to evaluate their own progress towards achieving the learning objectives. However, learning intentions in some lessons are too general to allow accurate assessment of progress pupils should make. Teachers in the same year group plan collaboratively to ensure that pupils receive equal access to the curriculum and that assessment leads to future planning. Marking of pupils' work is carried out satisfactorily, although the standard of marking is inconsistent across some year groups.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

58. The school's partnership with parents is good overall. It has improved since it was judged to be broadly satisfactory when the school was inspected in 2000.
59. At that time, whilst parents found much to be pleased about, the response to the parental survey was much less positive than usually found in similar schools nationally. Apart from their children liking school (97 per cent), and making good progress (90 per cent), no other aspect of what the school did satisfied more than 88 per cent of parents. The position is exactly the same now, although care is needed in assessing how representative the views expressed are given the very

low response (11 per cent), to the questionnaire. Overall, whilst the large majority of parents, those responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire and attending the parents' meeting, and those who met with inspectors during the inspection, hold the school in high regard, some parents continue to be unhappy, as at the time of the previous inspection. Inspection evidence finds little to support the views of these parents, insofar as the school not doing what it should, or is able, to do for their children. Despite the perceptions of some parents, this is an improved picture, compared with that reported at the time of the previous inspection, with the strengths being maintained and the weaker elements largely overcome.

60. The school's liaison with parents, which begins with the full involvement of parents when their children start school, has improved since the previous inspection and is now good. Newsletters to parents are well planned, informative and helpful. Parents appreciate them. The school prospectus is a very informative document, presented in a user-friendly way that gives parents all the information they need. The governors' annual report to parents, though a somewhat formal document, contains much of value, but it misses opportunities to properly celebrate the school's successes. Financial information and assessment results are not well presented to be easy for many parents to understand. Annual reports on pupils' academic and personal progress have improved since the previous inspection. There is some inconsistency between teachers and more information could be provided about how pupils' attainment compares with that expected for their age. Parents are presented with reports that give a good view of what their children know and can do in English, mathematics and science; rather less so in other subjects. There is good use of a general progress section, with some objective comment, and indications of areas for development, both academically and personally, that in the best examples is clearly the result of teachers taking time and trouble to make the reports individual. In some examples seen, there was over-use of technical, educational terms but, overall, the reports meet statutory requirements. Contrary to what some parents feel, there is no reason for parents to feel ill informed about any aspect of their child's or the school's activities and achievements, providing they take advantage of the many opportunities presented to them to find out.
61. Very good induction procedures help the children to settle happily and confidently when they first join the school in the nursery. When making home visits, the teachers are accompanied by bilingual staff when necessary. This means that positive and helpful relationships are quickly established. Initial contacts and familiarisation with parents help teachers to make an early assessment of children's needs and are used extremely well to inform planning for teaching and learning. Friendly contact is maintained and parents are made to feel welcome. Parents are regularly invited into the school to participate in activities such as a 'sing-a long', which helps to foster their feeling of involvement. There are similar, very good procedures to help the smooth introduction of children to school, and the establishment of good relationships with parents.
62. Home-school links, supported by home-school agreements that provide for commitment by all involved to the improvement of standards, are good. The school encourages parents and other helpers to participate in its work and has had some success with parents supporting fund-raising events, and a few helping directly in school. The support of those that are able to help, including those who make a positive contribution as parent-governors, is much appreciated by the school. Personal circumstances mean that some parents, who might wish to do so, are unable to directly support the work of the school, either in school or at home. The school's family learning initiative, which offers parents the opportunity to meet informally, is effective in giving guidance to parents, so that they can play a fuller part in supporting their children's educational experiences. There is a supportive Parent, Teacher and Friends' Association that fosters relationships between home and school. Its activities provide opportunities for parents, staff and pupils to socialise and raise funds that provide much welcomed additional financial support to the school.
63. There are regular opportunities, both formal and informal, for parents to meet with teachers to discuss attainment, progress and the curriculum. The headteacher makes herself available at any time and class teachers are very ready to meet parents whenever they can, subject to teaching commitments. There is particularly strong support for parents for whom English is not their first language. Parents are very happy that the school is approachable when they need to discuss problems or have questions to do with their children.

64. The school has worked hard to forge satisfactory links with the families of pupils with special educational and emotional needs. In order to develop this work, and to fully reflect the spirit of the new Code of Practice, the school has yet to extend this to negotiating pupils' individual learning targets with parents and carers.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

65. At the time of the last inspection, the school's management required some improvement and this remains the case. The headteacher provides good leadership founded on good relationships with all members of the school community. Her caring style of leadership focuses on trying to ensure that no pupil underachieves and that any disadvantage in pupils' lives is fully compensated for while they are in the school. She successfully leads the school in putting into practice a wide range of procedures that ensure equal opportunities for all pupils. The absence of several key staff during the last school year, and the ongoing organisation of supply and temporary teachers throughout the year, required many very short-term solutions to staffing difficulties. With the good support of the acting deputy headteacher, the headteacher successfully maintained staff morale. However, the impact of staffing problems on pupils' progress was detrimental to the performance of many pupils but, most especially, those in Year 6, whose poor results in the national tests were one of the consequences. Staffing arrangements are now stable and the good quality of the quality of teaching and support for pupils is already raising standards.
66. Overall management of the school is satisfactory. With key staff back in school, and with several recently appointed subject co-ordinators having immediate, good impact on the development of their subjects, a settled, management structure is now in place. The headteacher is very well supported by the very able deputy headteacher and, together, they have made a good impact on ensuring that the school's aims and values are evident in all its work. The senior management team has a good range of strengths. However, the members of the team currently focus on their individual areas of whole-school responsibility, such as for English, mathematics and special educational needs. There has been insufficient collective involvement in the bigger picture of school improvement, but this is recognised and the school improvement plan provides key targets for the team to work to achieve. These targets include the standardisation of procedures to be adopted by subject co-ordinators in the management of their subjects. This provides a basis for improvement on the current situation, where co-ordinators tend to address their subject's development in isolation, without guidance on expected approaches to subject action planning, or on the tasks to be completed each year. Nevertheless, there are examples of very good subject leadership in design and technology, and physical education, that provide the good practice that senior management plans to build on to improve co-ordination of all subjects. The very good management of provision for pupils with English as an additional language is also providing a standard that other staff are to be helped to achieve in carrying out assessment of pupils' learning and progress.
67. The management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is sound. There are strengths in the day-to-day focus on meeting the individual needs of these pupils and the flexible arrangements the school makes in order to do this. Statutory requirements are met and there has been good improvement in supporting teachers in their writing of individual targets and liaison with outside professional since the last inspection.
68. However, the quality of day-to-day practice far exceeds the paper work. The teachers and support assistants are conscientious and alert, so concerns about a pupil's learning are usually identified. Nevertheless, the systems for identifying initial concerns are not watertight. Consequently, in times of staff change, there is a risk that a pupil's difficulties may not be picked up as quickly as they should be. While aware of the need to do so, the special educational needs co-ordinator has not planned to ensure that the school fully complies with the new Code of Practice.
69. The nursery co-ordinator provides very good leadership in this area of the school. She has the necessary vision and high expectations to ensure that the planning, teaching and organisation of the nursery is of a consistently high standard. There is very good liaison between the nursery and the reception classes, but no recognised co-ordinator with an overview of the whole Foundation Stage⁴.

⁴ The Foundation Stage relates to children from the age of three to the end of the reception year.

70. In working towards improvements in the serious weaknesses that were identified at last inspection, good progress has been made which, together with other improvements in important areas, such as the quality of teaching, and the standards now being achieved by pupils, has resulted in good improvement overall since the last inspection. The improvement has been greatest in the areas of curriculum planning, monitoring of teaching, school improvement planning, and the professional development of staff. This is a very significant achievement in the circumstances of staffing difficulty that have been present for much of the period since the last inspection. Staff now have a strong, shared commitment to raising standards that is already being successful. This is evidence that the school now has good capacity to succeed.

Monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance

71. The school's systems for monitoring and evaluating its own performance are satisfactory. There is a developing of rigour and consistency in its procedures for monitoring and evaluating the curriculum, the quality of teaching and the standards of pupils' work. Teaching of literacy, numeracy and science is monitored, through periodic lesson observations, and this has been effective in refining teachers' skills. Standards of pupils' work are monitored through the analysis of national test results and occasional work sampling. Test results are analysed in detail in terms of performance by different groups of pupils, such as minority ethnic groups, or by gender, or ability as shown by past performance. The data is starting to be used constructively to predict pupils' future performance, but the learning targets set for most pupils are too long-term for them to be really relevant to the pupils concerned. Conversely, the targets set for pupils with special educational needs are precise and short-term, giving these pupils a clear understanding of what they are working towards.
72. The school has policies for self-evaluation, monitoring and review, and performance management, and these are starting to have a strong impact on school improvement. However, subject co-ordinator's reviews of annual developments in their subjects are lacking in detail and are not used sufficiently to identify clear targets for the following year. The school improvement plan lacks a detailed review that informs staff or governors of progress. The arrangements for performance management that have recently been adopted are setting clear targets for teachers to work towards within their own professional development.

The Governing Body

73. When the school was last inspected, the governors were reported to fulfil their statutory responsibilities satisfactorily, supporting the school well. However, they did not ensure that statutory requirements were met and, whilst having a good overview of the needs of the school, there was limited application of monitoring procedures and governors did not play a sufficiently active role overall in shaping the direction of the school. Helped by regular external monitoring visits, there has been good progress since then. Governors fulfil their statutory duties helping to shape the direction of the school in a quiet, supportive way. All aspects of school governance are in place. Governors are properly involved in the work of the school, as members of various committees, undertaking link activities and properly fulfilling their responsibilities for literacy, numeracy and special educational needs. The governing body, as a whole, now fulfils its role as a critical friend in a satisfactory way. Governors are proud of the school, but not complacent. Ably supported by a number of governors with specialist expertise, the Chair takes a very active interest in all aspects of the school's work. Governors are provided with reports from the headteacher that inform them well about school's activities and the opportunities open to it. As a result, taken together with the results of the external monitoring visits, they are in a good position to judge the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They have identified areas of the school's provision that need further development and have strategies in place to support them.

Strategic use of resources and the application of the principles of best value

74. The school has satisfactory, and improving, procedures for ensuring that the financial resources available to it, which are higher than those enjoyed by many similar schools nationally, properly

support the educational needs of its pupils. Governors, especially those directly involved in financial matters, who have the help of a local authority finance officer, feel ownership of the budget. There is a satisfactory identification of priorities related to improving the quality of education and raising standards. There is a clear cycle of financial planning, linked to the school's improvement plan, and the monitoring of expenditure is secure. Overall, the picture has improved since the inspection in September 2000, when, although the school was judged to make good use of its resources, and had good procedures for dealing with finance matters, there were some strategic planning and monitoring weaknesses, particularly relating to the need for more precise procedures to evaluate the impact of spending decisions on the quality of education provided by the school.

75. Financial balances, which are the amount of money the school holds in reserve to protect it against unexpected happenings, or to support planned projects, are being reduced this year from a relatively high level to one that is more realistic. Monies that have been accumulated in the past have been released to directly benefit pupils' attainment and progress, by improvements to the buildings and grounds, supporting staffing levels, and improving the provision of learning resources in line with the school's improvement plan. Governors have proper regard for the use of accumulated financial reserves. The planned use, and the forecast level, are consistent with the school's contingency planning to ensure that it will be able to respond to unexpected changes in circumstances with minimal disruption to its planned strategies.
76. The specific funds element of the school's finances, that is the money received to provide support for pupils with special learning, behavioural, or language needs, is used well. The school contributes a significant amount from its own funds to supplement the specific grants it receives to ensure that there is effective raising of the attainment of those who receive extra support to address their individual needs.
77. The school's overall administration arrangements, and the day-to-day control of its finances, are satisfactory. The school office works smoothly and effectively. The recommendations of the school's most recent audit have been implemented. There is appropriate use made of new technology to support the work of the school. Effective use is made of the information available from the school's computerised management system, and there are financial and administrative procedures in place that allow the administrative staff to make a positive contribution to the efficient day-to-day running of the school.
78. Governors use principles of best value in a satisfactory way, to plan and evaluate the work of the school. Governors are aware of the need to ensure that best financial value is obtained when purchasing products or services. There are some good consultation procedures with governors, making use of a variety of information from parents, staff and the pupils. Governors are aware of trends in performance and are making some effective comparisons with how school standards compare with those expected and achieved elsewhere. They have an increasing appreciation of the need to challenge what is being done in the school to assess the impact on learning, but, as yet, these procedures, though satisfactory, are not fully effective.

Staffing, accommodation, and learning resources

79. At the time of the last inspection, the school had problems with appointing and keeping staff in order to maintain an established team. At present, a full complement of teachers provides much more stability than previously. Senior teachers are now back in place and a new senior management team has been established. The school attempts to support new appointees, to ensure effective planning and working with support assistants, as well as with strategies to deal with challenging behaviour from pupils. The support assistants in the nursery and reception classes are well deployed to support children's learning. The nursery nurses play a significant part in the smooth running of the nursery and in contributing to children's progress. There is similarly good use of support staff in the rest of the school, particularly for pupils with special educational needs. The recent appointment of a learning mentor is an excellent extension of special educational needs provision that is already having good impact on the attitudes, behaviour and academic achievements of the pupils with whom she works.
80. The poor state of the building at the time of the last inspection has been rectified well. The accommodation for the reception classes has improved and provides useful space which is well

organised. The provision for outdoor play for the children in the nursery and the reception classes is very good. Although lacking in climbing equipment, it is well equipped, overall, and used imaginatively to develop children's learning. The staff in the nursery are currently making worthwhile plans to develop the garden area.

81. In the main building, work has been disruptive to classes, as the walls had to be demolished in order to be re-clad. Some internal work is still needed, where the windows meet the walls, because a lot of noise is transmitted from room to room at this point. Connecting doors are also a source of disturbing noise, between some classrooms. Teachers and pupils work hard to ignore this. The external canopy has been modified and developed appropriately, to provide adequate cover around some elevations and particularly the walkway between nursery and reception classrooms and the main building. However, two mobile classrooms are still set at a distance, with no water or toilet facilities, and pupils get very wet when moving in rain, to and from the main building. During prolonged showers, the playground and path areas around the mobile classrooms are flooded, and quite deep puddles are somewhat of a hazard. Play areas are still cramped, bleak and uninviting. The grounds have not yet been developed. However fully costed plans have been professionally drawn up, the school has money laid aside in the budget, and the project now awaits the tendering procedure. The pupils have been fully involved in the planning process, and have expressed their own opinions about improvements. They include a quiet area to commemorate a former pupil who died quite recently.
82. Classrooms are cramped, especially for older pupils, and some carpeted areas are not large enough to sit, without a fuss, for some pupils. Whilst some teachers create a visually stimulating environment within their classrooms, other rooms are less inviting and thought provoking, and are not visually exciting. During the re-cladding of the outside walls, the library had to double as a temporary classroom for each affected class. The high skylight is a feature of the room, however, it is noisy when raining, and hot in sunshine. Some reorganisation and restocking is now necessary in order to bring the library up to scratch as a useful resource for teaching and learning. The information and communication technology suite is very useful, but an inadequate 'room', being part of the corridor, and subject to interruptions. There is no area large enough for pupils to sit away from the machines, whilst teachers are demonstrating a new skill. Learning resources have been improved, generally, and all subjects now have sufficient, high quality resources for teaching and learning.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

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

- ❑ Raise standards in English, mathematics and science by:
 - building on examples of good practice to achieve improvement in year group planning and evaluation of learning activities for different groups of pupils;
 - establishing appropriate short-term targets for individual pupils' learning;
 - making the learning objectives in individual lessons more specific.
(Paragraphs 29, 30, 36, 56, 57, 71, 112, 117 and 131)

- ❑ Develop school leadership and management by:
 - delegating clear managerial roles to members of the senior management team;
 - providing guidance on standardised procedures for subject co-ordination wherever needed;
 - clarifying the expectations of subject co-ordinators and establishing schedules for:
 - ⇒ subject action planning and reviews of annual achievements as a prominent aspect of school improvement planning;
 - ⇒ work scrutiny and monitoring of teaching, by subject and special educational needs co-ordinators that maintain a thorough knowledge of pupils' standards and the quality of teaching.
(Paragraphs 35, 38, 66, 72 and 151)

- ❑ Monitor and evaluate pupils' academic performance and personal development by:
 - developing whole-school assessment procedures, further;
 - using information from assessment, together with that arising from analysis of data from pupils' performance in annual tests, to track pupils' progress and inform the targets being set, in the short and medium term, for pupils' development.
(Paragraphs 6, 55, 56, 119, 133, 145 and 151)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	73
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	42

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	3	21	26	20	3	0	0
Percentage	4	29	35	28	4	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)	30	383
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	125

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	62

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	139

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	41
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	30

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.6
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.6
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	31	28	59

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	26	25	24
	Girls	25	25	26
	Total	51	50	50
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 (83)	85 (83)	85 (85)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	26	25	26
	Girls	24	26	27
	Total	50	51	53
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (83)	86 (65)	90 (67)
	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	30	30	60

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	14	17
	Girls	16	15	18
	Total	28	29	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	47 (64)	48 (55)	58 (74)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	21	9
	Girls	14	16	11
	Total	26	37	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	43 (47)	62 (53)	33 (55)
	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	97	10	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	38	1	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	55	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	29	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	20	1	0
Black or Black British – African	16	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	31	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	52	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)	16.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.1
Average class size	26.6

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	253.5

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	30
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	46.5
Number of pupils per FTE adult	12.5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/02
	£
Total income	981,681
Total expenditure	1,012,006
Expenditure per pupil	2,456
Balance brought forward from previous year	106,613
Balance carried forward to next year	76,288

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	6
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	5

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1.4
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1.4
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	413
Number of questionnaires returned	44
Percentage of questionnaires returned	11

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	59	36	5	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	34	57	5	2	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	27	45	14	5	9
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	30	50	9	2	9
The teaching is good.	34	52	2	2	9
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	25	43	23	5	5
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	57	32	9	0	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	39	45	9	2	5
The school works closely with parents.	27	39	23	2	9
The school is well led and managed.	23	43	18	2	14
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	23	61	14	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	20	32	20	9	18

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

84. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is very good. Children enter the nursery at the ages of three and four and, although some attend full-time, others attend either the morning or afternoon sessions. On average, about 60 per cent of the children in the nursery transfer to the reception classes. About half of the other children that enter reception have attended playgroups, with the remainder having no pre-school experience. A high number of children who speak English as an additional language attend the nursery class, and the quality of support they receive, both in the nursery and the reception classes is very good. There is early identification of children with special educational needs, so that they can receive the necessary good support. Overall, the children enter the nursery with attainment that is well below average particularly in communication, language and literacy. By the end of their time in the reception classes, they have made sufficient progress to ensure that their attainment in communication, language and literacy, their mathematical development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world, improves, from well below average, to below average on entry to Year 1. In their personal, social and emotional development and in their physical and creative development, they attain average standards. The commitment of the high quality staff, the very good quality of teaching, and the excellent procedures for monitoring children's progress and achievement, make a strong contribution towards enabling all groups of children to achieve well across all the areas of learning.

Personal, social and emotional development

85. Many of the children enter the nursery with below average skills in this area, and the teaching in the nursery provides a climate in which children improve these skills. This good practice continues in the reception classes, so that, by the time they leave the reception classes, the expectations of the Early Learning Goals⁵ are reached by the majority of children. Their achievements are very good. This reflects the findings of the previous inspection report. In both the nursery and reception classes, children with special educational needs gain from being identified early and from the well-targeted support they receive. With the help of bi-lingual support teachers and all staff, children who use English as a second language demonstrate their growing confidence in adapting to their school environment, with the consequent positive effect on their learning and achievements. Through the many very good opportunities provided in the nursery, all children begin to socialise, work as a group, and show politeness and consideration towards each other. They develop the confidence to make independent decisions. Although, during the inspection, many children had only been in the school for a short time, they were already enjoying the security of well-established routines, and opportunities for individual responsibility. While engaged in role-play, they show little communication with each other, but play happily alongside each other, sharing equipment and closely observing or imitating the stimulus provided by the nursery staff. They relate well to the teachers and the nursery staff. They show positive attitudes to all the learning activities and respond well to their teachers' high expectations of both their behaviour and learning. This very good development continues in the reception classes. The children show much personal independence and self-sufficiency in their ability to find and use equipment or when tidying up after a lesson. They persevere with their tasks, and many demonstrate an impressive ability to become absorbed in their tasks when not under direct teacher supervision. A very good feature of their development is their eager attitude to learning. They go about their tasks with curiosity and a keenness to explore more about the world around them. The appreciation and respect for each other's culture is implicit in the planning and ethos of this area of children's development, and reflected in the very good relationships of the children with each other, and with all other adults.
86. The quality of teaching in the area of children's personal, social and emotional development is consistently very good. Every opportunity is used to reinforce this aspect of children's learning, whether it is planned or spontaneous. Teachers' planning ensures that there is a range of activities and opportunities for the children to gain confidence and develop necessary skills, and mutual respect for each other. Teachers and support staff provide very good role models in the way they

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

interact with the children and by the way they value their efforts. In the nursery, staff are always at hand to encourage, calm children, or help them to develop their relationships, noticing immediately when support is needed. They provide a warm and caring atmosphere, where all children can develop their self-esteem and confidence. In the reception classes, teachers have good expectations, and carefully help children to adjust to more formal routines, while maintaining opportunities for them to develop their independence and ability to socialise and share. Class assemblies are used effectively to consider ideas, such as being special or being kind and considerate.

Communication, language and literacy

87. By the time the children leave the reception classes, their attainment in this area of their learning is below the expectations of the Early Learning Goals. The majority of children enter the nursery with communication, language and literacy skills that are well below average. In relation to their low starting point, children make good progress and their achievements are good. Of the 30 children in the nursery, 25 speak English as an additional language. Achievement is particularly good for these children. This is because they receive excellent language support and are monitored carefully and consistently. Children who have special educational needs are helped to develop their skills for language, through the well-considered support and tasks to match their needs. The attainment of children in this area of their learning is similar to the judgements made during the previous inspection.
88. In the nursery, very good emphasis is put on the development of children's language skills. The listening skills of the children are good. Nearly all listen attentively, and endeavour to respond appropriately to simple instructions and questions. However, few find it easy to engage in discussions because of language differences. They listen and watch intently, and, soon after entry to the nursery, try to join in with songs and rhymes. They show an increasing interest in books, many of them choosing to sit quietly and browse through the books they choose. They begin to use pencils and markers in their attempts at early writing skills. In the reception classes, children show a positive enjoyment of books, enjoying humour and making good attempts to re-tell familiar stories such as 'The Hungry Caterpillar'. The children listen very well. Although, for the majority, their understanding of English shows very good progress, a significant number do not find it easy to speak clearly or at length. They listen carefully to each other, but many do not readily respond and develop a discussion. They begin to understand the sequence of a story, and enjoy joining in with the stories they hear, and the opportunity to 'read' and think about new vocabulary. The higher-attaining children are developing a growing awareness of sounds. They are beginning to make recognisable attempts at writing letters. They recognise their own names and recognise letters that are in their names, when looking at words in other contexts. A sampling of previous work shows how well children's writing skills progress. The higher-attaining children are able to write one or two independent sentences, and use their knowledge of letter sounds to help them with their writing. Children of average ability recognise single letters, but need adult support with independent writing, while lower-attaining children are still at an early stage in the development of their writing skills.
89. The teaching of communication, language and literacy is very good overall. It is never less than good, with one excellent lesson seen. Teachers generally have high expectations, and every opportunity is used to develop children's language and literacy skills through all areas of the curriculum. Teachers are aware of the need to spend much time talking to the children and to give the children time to articulate their ideas and knowledge. Exciting opportunities are provided in the nursery for the encouragement of language development, whether it is in the area of role-play, or talking about what happens when conkers are poured down a chute. The nursery nurses play a consistently effective and knowledgeable role in their contribution to this area of the children's development. In the reception classes, careful planning ensures that the children are given a wide range of guided and independent experiences in which to develop their language skills. In a lesson in one reception class, the teacher provided excellent opportunities for children to explore the new language they were learning, and to develop their understanding of the written word and how stories are sequenced. The imaginative use of the outdoor area to re-enact the story of 'Going on a Bear Hunt' made an effective contribution to children's overall progress in skills for communication, language and literacy development. Teachers are capably supported by learning support assistants. In both the nursery and the reception classes, excellent use is made of day-to-day assessment. Teachers and support staff make perceptive observations, and use this to plan for

and develop the learning of individuals and of different groups of children. This means that the needs of all children are suitably catered for, with the consequent, positive effect on the progress that all the children make. The bi-lingual teachers provide excellent and regular support for those children in the early stages of learning to speak English. Stories are explained to them in their first language, and new vocabulary is learned successfully. Meticulous records are kept, which identify individual needs, and targets are set which are relevant to these needs. Assessments confirm that the majority of these children make good and, frequently, very good progress.

Mathematical development

90. By the end of their time in reception, children reach standards that are below the expectations of the Early Learning Goals. Although this is below the standards found at the time of the last inspection, when compared to their attainment on entry, which is well below average, children achieve well in this area of learning. This is because teachers, both in the nursery and the reception classes, devise many relevant and interesting opportunities to encourage children's mathematical learning, with appropriate challenge for the more able children. The achievements of those children who speak English as a second language are good. The consistent support for the learning of mathematical language enables them to effectively develop their understanding of mathematical concepts. Children with special educational needs are carefully monitored to ensure that work is suitably matched to their prior attainment and to enable them to achieve well, alongside other groups of children.
91. The nursery provides a very solid and practical foundation on which children's mathematical skills can be built. They begin to recognise and count through activities, such as counting candles on a cake to celebrate a teddy bear's birthday. As the children play with sand and water, they are encouraged to consider different containers, and what these will hold. When they use construction kits, together with staff, they count the pieces. In the 'shop', they weigh and sort objects, and begin to understand comparative language, such as big and little, heavy and light. As they move into the reception classes this good practice is continued. The children count and match successfully to ten and some go beyond this. The higher-attaining children successfully rearrange a jumbled sequence of numbers to ten, whilst lower-attaining children manage to sequence to three. A study of children's previous work, shows that, while in the reception classes, children begin to put the days of the week and events of the school day in the correct sequence. They recognise two-dimensional shapes, and the more able children can add numbers to at least ten successfully. They recognise and count coins. The excellent systems for the continual assessment and monitoring of the children, ensure that all groups of children are suitably challenged and make good progress.
92. The teaching of basic skills for the mathematical development of the children is very good. At this early stage of the children's time in the nursery, teachers ensure that mathematical learning is an integral part of a wide range of activities. Teachers and nursery staff help children to see that mathematics is all around them, and counting and the language of mathematics is in continual use. The expectations of the staff are consistently high, and very good use is made of a range of strategies and resources to stimulate and motivate the children. In the reception classes, teachers have very good subject knowledge and an understanding of how young children learn. They intervene appropriately when, for example, children are experimenting with play dough to emphasise mathematical language. A gradual transition is made from informal and independent learning to more structured and guided learning. Number songs are used to develop children's ideas of number sequencing and, for example, what happens when one is taken away. Activities are fun, and the teachers use challenging questions to extend their understanding and reinforce concepts. The results of this are eager and lively responses from the well-motivated children.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

93. By the end of the reception year, children reach standards which are below the expectations of the Early Learning Goals. This reflects lower standards than the previous inspection, but children enter the school with limited experience of the world around them, and the majority are at an early stage of learning to speak English. Through the support for their language skills, and the interesting range of experiences provided, their achievements are good overall. Those children who have special educational needs are supported well, as individuals, to enable them to make good progress.

94. Activities in the nursery, such as sand and water play, and experimenting with soapy water and natural materials, support the good progress of the children. Their eager curiosity means that they stay with activities for an impressive length of time, while they manipulate, squeeze, pour and mould different materials. They explore the use of moving toys, showing interest in how things work. When children use the computer, they use the mouse competently. They can control the tapes they hear in the listening corner. They enjoy exploring the environment of the outdoor area, which provides an extra, very good stimulus for their curiosity. In the reception classes, children begin to understand that everyone has a past. In small groups, they examine baby photographs, and begin to understand how human beings grow and change. They learn to consider what is happening and what could happen next by observing, for example, how toast is made. They continue to develop their skills in information and communication technology, and this is frequently linked to what is going on in the classroom. For example, in the hospital role-play corner, children make 'prescriptions'. They also begin to understand simple scientific principles, such as how the slope of a ramp can affect the speed of a toy car. By the end of their time in the reception classes, the more able children are beginning to systematically attempt to record what they know. In both the nursery and the reception classes, children develop their understanding of other cultures, not only through the celebration of, for example, Diwali, but through the consistently good opportunities around them to know and respect the cultures of others. They use clothes from other cultures in their role-play and learn about different foods.
95. The teaching in this area of children's learning is very good overall. In the nursery, the range and nature of experiences, provided by the teachers for the children are stimulating and worthwhile, with the consequent positive effect on children's learning. The nursery nurses play important roles in this teaching, so that the team effort has a big impact on the children's very good learning. The good way that teachers communicate with the children ensures that the children remain intent and focused on what they are experiencing. In the reception classes, teaching ranges from good to excellent. To encourage independent learning, teachers organise small group activities in which children explore and investigate. The staff effectively move around the groups ensuring an equal division of time for all. In the excellent lesson seen, the teacher made sure that the work was appropriate and well suited to the children's needs, and teaching took place in an atmosphere of continual learning, which was fun. A very good feature is the teachers' use of questions, asking 'why', 'how' and 'what do you think?' This constantly extends children's understanding and the deeper consideration of what they are learning.

Physical development

96. The children make good progress in their physical development, and by the time they leave the reception classes, they meet the expectations of the Early Learning Goals. At the time of the previous inspection, no judgement was made on this area of learning, as the children were not observed in physical education lessons, or using the outdoor area. No physical education lessons were seen during the current inspection, but the children were observed using the equipment of the outside area. All groups of children achieve well against their prior attainment. This good physical development also benefits children's skills in other areas, such as handwriting and their use of pencils, scissors and paint brushes.
97. In the nursery and the reception classes, children successfully develop their physical skills during both indoor and outdoor play. For example, children in the nursery show good co-ordination when using construction toys and manipulating play dough. When painting and drawing, they use paintbrushes and markers with increasing care. When playing outside, they move around on a range of tricycles and other moving toys, showing increasing precision in their ability to control the direction and speed they go. In reception, children competently use tools to draw, cut and stick, and in this show considerable dexterity. They handle and build models, using construction sets, and, when working outside, show good co-ordination as they jump and run, as well as a developing awareness of space.
98. The teaching in this area of learning is good overall, with some particularly very good, helpful attention to developing these skills in the nursery. All teachers provide a good range of resources and equipment for children to improve their skills, both independently and with guidance. It was not possible to see any physical education lessons during the inspection, as children had not yet

started using the hall for this area of their learning. Teachers make effective use of the outdoor area, with an imaginative range of equipment for the children to explore. This ensures that all the children are busy when they are outside, and enjoy exploring and challenging themselves. A weakness in provision is the lack of climbing equipment, where children can climb and move in and out of spaces.

Creative development

99. By the end of the reception year, children reach average standards in relation to the Early Learning Goals in their creative development. All children achieve well and are learning to use different media, tools and techniques. The standards seen in the last inspection have been maintained.
100. On entry to the nursery, children are given the opportunity to explore with paint, and the results are displayed to produce a bright and attractive nursery environment. The range of materials used is imaginative and stimulating, and of obvious benefit to children's all round development. Children are given many opportunities to explore texture, form and shape in two or three dimensions, which they do so with interest and perseverance. They use buttons, paper and straws to create their pictures and manipulate the play dough to make monsters. In the role-play area, they become doctors or nurses and seriously listen to heartbeats or take temperatures. They have many opportunities to explore drawing with different types of pencils, crayons and markers, and most of them have the confidence to create images as they see them. They use the construction kits successfully to create their own designs and happily play with these. The children enjoy singing, but, as yet, some are reluctant to join in as a whole class. In the 'listening corner', however, individual children quietly listen to tapes and happily join in with familiar rhymes. In the reception classes, most of the children display a good level of creativity in many areas of their development. One girl made her own puppet, using the range of cutting and sticking materials available, while a boy carefully chose the paper he needed and made a mask to support his role-play as 'Superman'. In both these examples, the children used their own initiative and independently chose the materials, with no guidance from the teacher. Their use of the role-play area is imaginative, and they begin to play together in small groups, developing their own stories around a theme. Similarly, the small groups, who were using construction toys, made their vehicles and, together, created a road for them to drive along. A scrutiny of previous work shows that the children successfully become familiar with different techniques for painting and creating pictures of their own. They use splatter painting, make pictures with shapes, and use a range of materials to construct their own models. Information and communication technology is used well to support their creative development.
101. The teaching of this area of children's learning is very good. In the nursery it is supported well through the involvement and interaction of the nursery nurses, particularly in the role-play area. All teachers successfully use creativity to develop children's imagination and increase their skills, but also to help them develop an appreciation and awareness of the world. Creative development contributes most effectively to children's language and mathematical development, their personal and social development and successfully incorporates a range of skills for their physical development. All this ensures positive and confident responses from the children. Teachers prepare materials and resources with careful thought, so that the children's experiences are continually broadened.

ENGLISH

102. In the national tests taken by pupils at the end of Year 2, results have shown a steady rise since 1997. This improving picture is a result of a settled team of teachers in Years 1 and 2, which is ensuring that pupils make reasonable progress. Teachers take every opportunity to improve vocabulary and ensure pupils have varied opportunities to practise speaking and listening. However, in many cases, the pupils' limited command of the English language continues to be a problem. The inspection findings indicate that pupils are achieving below expected standards this early in the year, but careful analysis and well-targeted support is continuing to have a positive impact on their learning.
103. In the national tests taken by pupils at the end of Year 6 in 2002 results show a severe fall on the results of the previous year, at all levels. The overarching factor in this decline was the disruption of

teaching for a long period, for this group of pupils. The team of teachers now established in Years 3 to 6 is more settled and teaching basic skills well. The mobility of the pupils themselves was also a contributory factor, with only 18 out of the 56, who took the tests, having been in the school for their whole primary education. Inspection findings show that, although standards are below expectations, the pupils currently in Year 6 are more likely to achieve results in line with the school's previously broadly upward trend.

104. The school has begun to develop links between English and other subjects and this is working well, particularly in science, where the pupils' general lack of language capability inhibits their ability to achieve successfully in other subjects. Teachers continue to target pupils' speaking abilities, and their listening skills have improved, overall, because of the attention given to them recently. Given the fact that pupils' English is poor when they start school, their achievements are quite good in the basic skills and they make satisfactory progress. Pupils enter Year 1 with standards generally below those typical for the age group. For many pupils, their lack of vocabulary, and the difficulty they have in expressing themselves clearly, hampers their progress. Some teachers make good use of the talk-partner system, where one pupil discusses an answer with another, to pool ideas and vocabulary. This helps pupils to extend and reinforce their understanding.
105. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are also improving their basic skills, because teachers successfully model good ways of reading and writing and build well upon the pupils' previous learning. Because they are clear about what to do, it is easier for pupils to work independently when necessary. Most do this well, but a significant minority have problems with behaviour and teachers have to work hard to modify and adjust their management skills to stay on top of the situation. As pupils move up the school, teachers continue to challenge pupils at all levels with tasks matched well to differing abilities, and to enable them to have confidence in their own ideas and imagination. In a very good lesson for pupils in Year 2, the teacher had planned appropriate work to build on spelling techniques. She helped pupils to understand how the various phonemes had to change in order to build 'families' of words. The pupils were all very successful, and were so pleased, they gave spontaneous cheers at the end of the session. This raising of awareness, as well as self-esteem, is an important factor in how well the pupils learn.
106. The good readers in Year 2, are generally accurate, confident and fluent. They are encouraged to use expression, and some teachers make this a target for specific pupils. Reading in literacy sessions also reinforces this. They are, currently, reaching standards typical of their age, but other groups are below and well below that standard. This means that the overall standard in reading is below expectations at present, but indications are that these pupils will continue to mirror the steady, upward trend, by the end of Year 2. Some pupils understand the difference between fiction and non-fiction books, and recall the author, title and 'blurb'. Some offer ideas for the type of stories they like, but, in discussion, most could not state a preference. Many pupils are doing well in reading the texts they are given, but are far less sure with new, unknown ones. Teachers work hard to enable pupils to use different strategies for tackling words that are unfamiliar and they continue this when reading in other subjects. In writing, teachers offer an appropriate range of reasons for writing, and these are also well linked with literacy skills, when writing in other subjects. Pupils' written work is often lively and imaginative, generally neat and handwriting is legible and well formed. However, pupils' punctuation is not secure and many frequently forget to use the most basic of functions, such as full stops and capitals. Teachers remind them, and also work on sequencing, connecting and improving the quality of sentences, at length. They mark work, sensitively, so that pupils know what to do in order to improve. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported, as are those for whom English is an additional language. Targeted support from teachers, support teachers, those working in pupils' mother tongues, and learning support assistants, all have a clear focus to raise standards.
107. In Years 3 to 6, pupils continue to make satisfactory progress in all aspects of their English work. Even though weaknesses in pupils' communication skills still present a problem, teachers plan well, make consistent comments in marking that are helpful to pupils, and generally have high expectations of what pupils should achieve. This is in marked contrast to last year, when the teaching team was not functioning as a unit, and teaching and learning lacked the constancy needed, especially for pupils who have low self-esteem and insecurities in their lives. The quality of teaching was very good, overall, during the inspection, building upon the sound work accomplished in the first few weeks of term. Good analysis of detailed data has highlighted those groups and

individuals in need of a special focus. The school has committed itself to improving reading, boys' writing, offering 'booster' classes for girls, especially to give them more confidence, and the need to develop pupils' literacy skills in all subjects. Many of these methods are beginning to have a positive impact on the pupils' self-belief, and monthly, focused writing is helping pupils to see exactly what is needed to improve to the next level.

108. Good opportunities for speaking and listening occur in lessons and during 'circle' times, when pupils consider spiritual, moral, social and cultural ideas. A very good example of this was seen in a good religious education lesson in Year 5. Because the teacher had set up a good, sensitive learning environment, pupils were able to talk and write perceptively, about their own special places and what was important to them. As they read their offerings, during the ending session of the lesson, other pupils listened appreciatively, and gained understanding into why aspects of worship, a Mosque, or the Kingdom Hall, might be important to some people. In other very good lessons, pupils learn about grammar and how, for example, to change verbs into the first person, for particular effects. This lesson in Year 5, really challenged the pupils to use their imaginations and to overcome embarrassment in front of their classmates. They had been studying stories from oral traditions from the 'Arabian Nights'. The teacher set up a beautifully decorated chair for the pupils to 'mount' as if it were the horse from the story. Through her careful, sensitive questioning, the pupils grew in confidence to describe their senses and feelings, as well as to use more powerful sentences for better effect. By the end of the lesson, all aspects of the pupils' work in English had improved. The teacher brought out the best in her writers, through imaginative planning, sensitive discussions, and exemplary discipline and management of some quite challenging behaviour.
109. In an outstanding lesson in Year 4, pupils had been writing play scripts and the teacher had planned, carefully, that they should combine work to perform a small scene for each other. Due to her exceptional teaching strategies, sympathetic questioning, gentle humour and atmosphere of success and positive learning, all groups made very good progress in their learning. The main emphasis was on speaking and listening, but pupils' reading, negotiating, acting, social and moral skills were all enhanced by the experience. The teacher's very high expectations were apparent to the pupils and they worked so hard to live up to them. Every person in the room was valued and encouraged for their contribution. Many times, pupils were so keen on a performance that they clapped, spontaneously, and were very discerning in their feedback comments. The teacher was skilful in making a teaching point from everything, but used many different ways to do this. She even managed to lead a short discussion about stereotyping, and had constructive comments for pupils who found the task difficult. This enabled all to succeed at all levels of ability.
110. Pupils in Year 6 cover an appropriate amount of work that provides them with a suitably broad range of opportunities for practising all language and literacy skills. In a very good lesson, involving active and passive verb changing, pupils, including those who required special support in English, worked exceptionally well to co-operate and share ideas, yet be independent when necessary, because the teachers had set up the lesson for successful outcomes. Well-planned activities, appropriately challenging tasks, and a learning environment, which generated fun, ensured a very good social setting, as well as very good learning outcomes for literacy. The most able readers read at a high-level, using inference and deduction appropriately. They are self-motivated and able to speculate about events, using the text well in order to substantiate their ideas. Other groups try hard with their reading and most enjoy information texts as much as stories or poetry.
111. In writing, pupils are offered appropriate opportunities to write for a range of purposes. These include improving sentence constructions in order to reach higher standards. In discussions, they say they are beginning to understand what they need to do, to ensure they reach higher levels. Good, monthly, graded writing sessions are helping to focus on improvement, at all levels. Work is generally neat and well presented, mirroring the high expectations of teachers. Marking is helpful in this, as teachers remind pupils to use a rule for underlining, or to take care with handwriting. It is also useful in giving a clear idea of how to improve to raise standards, such the use of more powerful adjectives, better use of adverbs or connectives. Pupils' handwriting is legible, and generally well formed. Spelling is acceptable and phonetically possible, but sometimes careless. Punctuation is the same. At one time, a pupil is careful and, at another, the spelling and punctuation is not at an appropriate standard. Teachers are working on this in specifically focused sessions throughout the year. They hope that results will be similar to those in 2001, and that a reasonable percentage of pupils will reach the higher level, through careful monitoring and analysis of work.

112. The subject co-ordinator provides good leadership and management, and is handing over the co-ordination to a colleague, soon. The new co-ordinator is a very good practitioner and keen on the subject. Careful analysis has taken place and pupils in Years 3 to 6 have been singled out for several initiatives, designed to complement each other, to raise standards. Listening skills have been a focus recently, and speaking is still high on the list for more work, in order to improve vocabulary and learning experiences. The work on listening is beginning to have a positive effect on learning. The school has identified the need to consider boys' writing, although no evidence was noted during the inspection. Reading at home is also a priority, alongside on-going in-service training for teachers in all aspects of English, in order to keep new members of the team up to scratch with requirements. Generally, the school makes good use of ending sessions to lessons, bringing the pupils back to the purpose of the lesson, and pointing towards new learning, when appropriate. However, the initial learning intention of the lesson, in some classes, is often too vague, or couched in language that pupils cannot readily understand. Tightening up on this would help pupils to reflect on their own learning much more closely. At present, a small proportion of teachers is inclined to tell the pupils that they have reached the objective, rather than letting them decide whether they feel confident to say that, or not.
113. Currently, sufficient, well-planned work takes place in information and communication technology to support the teaching and learning in literacy. Teachers are also careful to offer opportunities to practise these skills in other subjects, such as mathematics, science and history. The library has been out of use as a useful resource, due to the re-cladding work on the school building. Each class has used it as a classroom for a period of time. A useful audit has been done on the range and quality of books on offer, and more new books have been provided. However, it is still not a useful enough resource for teaching and learning. The action plan for English, the enthusiasm of the co-ordinator, and the good teamwork from all teachers, indicate that standards can rise further, because the staff is committed to it and the pupils are now more eager to succeed.

MATHEMATICS

114. Pupils' standards at the end of Years 2 and Year 6 are below average in numeracy and all other areas of mathematics, such as algebra, space, shape and measures, and data handling. However, standards at the end of these year groups have risen slowly, but steadily, since the last inspection, when they were well below national averages. The quality of teaching has significantly improved since the last inspection and the good use of the National Numeracy Strategy is now helping to improve standards in all year groups. Insufficient analysis of test results, and a lack of ongoing assessment to accurately match work to individual pupils, is slowing down the rate of improvement.
115. Over time, there are no marked differences in the performances of girls and boys. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and make satisfactory progress. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress in Years 1 and 6. This is because of the good support provided by staff funded through the Ethnic Minority Achievement Service. Although not receiving bilingual support, a small, targeted group of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, including some dual-language speakers, is withdrawn for numeracy lessons in Year 6. This enables all pupils to have more focused, individual teaching. In other year groups, pupils at an early stage of learning to speak English do not have sufficient support and, at times, their lack of understanding of English prevents them learning mathematics at a satisfactory pace.
116. By the end of Year 2, most pupils have a secure understanding of place value to 100, with quick mental recall of addition and subtraction to 20. At the start of Year 3, many pupils are using strategies, such as doubling and inverse operation, to work out their answers, but a few are still struggling to order numbers to 50. Most pupils recognise the need to use standard measurements and are familiar with metres and centimetres, recognising when to use a ruler or a metre stick. Pupils generally use rulers accurately to measure short lines in centimetres, and can make reasonable estimations when considering the length of familiar objects. Many pupils in Year 6 are able work with large numbers in excess of 1,000, understand inverse processes, equivalent fractions, and ratios. About half confidently convert fraction to decimals and percentages, such as $\frac{3}{100}$ to 0.03 or 3 per cent, but a significant number of pupils, about a third, are still struggling to work with one decimal place and with changing, for example, $\frac{9}{4}$ into $2\frac{1}{4}$.

117. The quality of teaching and learning has improved significantly since the last inspection and is good overall. Although there were no unsatisfactory lessons seen, only two were very good. Teachers are confidently using the National Numeracy Strategy and this ensures that work is planned systematically over time and covers all areas of the National Curriculum. However weekly and daily planning is often vague, for example, 'Describe shapes and their features', and not consistently based on pupils' previous learning. Individual and group tasks are, at times, either too difficult, or lack challenge, and there is insufficient difference for the wide range of ability. During whole-class activities, especially at the start of lessons, teachers motivate and interest the pupils well by asking probing questions at a lively pace. This provides good opportunities for the pupils to apply what they know and explain how they arrive at the answers. For example, pupils in Year 1 were introduced to doubling simple numbers, by using their fingers, and pupils in Year 6 used their understanding of doubling and other multiples to work out the eight times table. Most teachers are now in the good habit of using the last five to ten minutes of lessons to recap what has been learnt, giving pupils a good sense of achievement.
118. In most lessons, the teachers list key vocabulary and use it effectively during lessons to reinforce pupils' understanding. However, pupils are very rarely actively encouraged to use it in their replies to questions. The good relationships and use of positive behaviour strategies help maintain a hard-working atmosphere in the majority of lessons, even when mismatched activities do not encourage concentration. Pupils are encouraged to present their work well and most try hard and enjoy mathematics. In Year 6, pupils are encouraged to do homework based on their lessons, but this is mostly very informal and does not impact significantly on pupils' progress, nor prepare them for secondary education.
119. Since the last inspection, the use of non-statutory testing and recording of pupils' progress has improved. As yet, this assessment data is not used effectively to set targets for groups or individuals, nor to track progress from year to year. However, test results of pupils in Year 5 have been used well to group pupils in Year 6 and to make effective use of external funding.
120. The use of mathematics in other subjects, including information and communication technology, to extend pupils' mathematical skills, knowledge and understanding, is developing steadily and is now satisfactory. The length of lessons is now appropriate and the profile of numeracy has been raised. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic but, due to other priorities in the school, has not been sufficiently involved in the monitoring and evaluation process to make an significant impact on raising standards. Overall, the school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

SCIENCE

121. Standards attained by pupils in Year 2 are just below average for their age and this represents satisfactory achievement in relation to what these pupils have achieved in the past. However, standards in Year 6 are well below average. This represents some underachievement for the oldest pupils in the school, even although the pupils currently in Year 6 are attaining standards are higher than those in national test results in 2002. Improvements in the planning of the subject are very recent and pupils' attainment and achievement reflect this. The progress of the older pupils has been adversely affected in the past, when the school was not providing a full curriculum, and there was a high proportion of unsatisfactory teaching. Older pupils have also suffered recently from an exceptional number of staff changes.
122. Since the last inspection, there has been a significant improvement in teachers' planning for pupils to use a range of different skills in science. Over the last two years, the school has rightly focused on developing English and mathematics. One of the main reasons for pupils' poor results in science is their difficulty in expressing themselves on paper. However, as a result of recent developments, teachers now provide good opportunities for pupils to apply their literacy skills successfully in the subject. For example, younger pupils 'bullet point' facts about animals, and older pupils report on scientific investigations in their own words. Similarly, pupils make good use of their mathematical skills when they record information in charts and on graphs. There is satisfactory application of information and communication technology skills, for example, through the use of digital cameras to record experiments and in researching using the Internet.

123. The inclusion of practical activities in science has improved and it is now a positive feature of pupils' work. For example, younger pupils scrutinise printed pictures of people of different ages, in order to record the ageing process. In Year 3, pupils observe the effects of different drinks on eggshell, over time, and, at the beginning of Year 6, pupils learn about reflection by shining torches against a variety of materials. Practical activities, such as these, help pupils who are developing English as an additional language to learn effectively alongside their classmates. However, while the most able pupils understand the importance of a 'fair test' in Year 6, most have difficulty in identifying the crucial scientific element of an investigation.
124. By the end of Year 2, pupils have the secure understanding of what causes water to freeze and ice to melt. Most are also confident that a cake hardens during cooking because of the heat, but that this change is not reversible. However, while they have a basic knowledge that living things require food and water for survival, they do not explain why an animal inhabits a particular habitat. Similarly, they are convinced that a car will travel faster down a shiny ramp than a coarse one, but do not recall that the incline of the ramp also has an effect.
125. Early in Year 3, pupils show a sound knowledge and understanding of the different types of human teeth and their function. In Year 4, pupils develop their understanding of human processes by studying how the human skeleton and muscles work. They use textbooks and observation sensibly to add to their information. However, most pupils are cautious in expressing their own ideas and do not predict with the assurance expected for their age. In Year 5, pupils who are more confident with the subject make reasonable predictions but, by the end of the year, there is a significant minority of pupils who do not reliably identify the key feature in their practical work, such as the shininess of reflective material. In Years 5 and 6, there are too few pupils reaching the higher levels of knowledge and understanding.
126. Teaching is satisfactory and improving. Teachers show secure subject knowledge and the regular use of practical work makes lessons interesting for pupils. Teachers' expectations and the usefulness of their marking vary, but these are sound overall. Recent improvements in teachers' plans enable them to modify work to meet the needs of different groups of pupils effectively. This detail in planning contributes to the satisfactory progress that is made by pupils with special educational needs in science. During the inspection, examples of very good teaching were seen when members of staff provided a skilful balance of direct teaching, and questioning pupils while they worked practically and independently. In these lessons, teachers made very good use of their assessment of pupils' learning as the lesson progressed.
127. The co-ordinator is new to the post having taken over the leadership of the subject last Easter. She has made a very good start to helping staff to raise standards. This has already had a positive impact, because teachers are now following national guidance far more consistently to develop all pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding systematically.

ART AND DESIGN

128. Standards of attainment at the end of Years 2 and 6 are similar to those expected for pupils of these ages. Standards are, therefore, similar to those reported at the last inspection. Pupils' achievements overall are satisfactory. All pupils, including those whose first language is not English, and those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in developing different techniques and skills, because of the consistent support they receive. The lack of opportunity for three-dimensional work and paint was a weakness identified in the previous inspection. This weakness has been satisfactorily rectified. Resources are now efficiently organised, and easily accessible to staff. Overall, the improvement in art and design is satisfactory.
129. By the end of Year 2, there are sound examples of pupils' response to a variety of ideas. A positive start is made in Year 1, for example, where pupils collect and arrange natural materials to create designs in the style of Andy Goldsworthy. Such experiences contribute much to their awareness of shape, pattern and texture. Pupils know how to mix colours and create different tones, by adding lighter or darker shades. They learn a wide range of skills, which they use to create their own designs. For example, after exploring different ways of printing, they successfully make and use their own press-print tile and use this to transfer their final design to tee shirts. The learning in this

topic was successfully supported by the use of information and communication technology, which pupils used in creating their design. Similarly, they use information and communication technology to produce pictures after the style of Mondrian. This shows their growing awareness of the many styles and techniques used in art forms.

130. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 respond well to a varied form of stimuli. Their work shows that their creativity is developing satisfactorily alongside the gains they make in knowledge and use of the necessary skills. For example, pupils in Year 4 display their knowledge of techniques for shading and creating line and tone in their observational drawings, with pleasing effects, while pupils in Year 5 use their own viewfinders to make more precise drawings from closer and more direct observation. By the end of Year 6, pupils know and understand a range of art forms and artistic vocabulary. They understand what to aim for in their work. They look at the work of various artists, and use concise techniques to create images, which are 'distorted' or 'elongated'. They have firm opinions about what styles and media they like and choose to use, and use previously learned techniques to add a further dimension to their work. Although some pupils have a good eye for detail, which is reflected in their good drawings, there are others whose work shows a lack of maturity. Although pupils use sketchbooks satisfactorily as a regular feature, there is only limited amount of work in them so far this term.
131. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with some good teaching observed for the older pupils in the school. Teachers plan effectively, but, at times, the objectives for some lessons are too wide and not sufficiently broken down into small steps. However, the outcome of the pupils' work shows that teachers are ensuring a sound basic teaching of skills and techniques alongside the necessary knowledge and understanding. The series of lessons planned around a specific topic culminates in the positive use of what the pupils have learned. This is a strength of the teaching and planning. In the instances of good teaching, teachers use time well. Continual support and discussion by the teachers help to extend pupils' understanding and encourage further effort. This leads to enthusiastic and motivated pupils who apply themselves to their tasks with the utmost concentration and absorption. Teachers pay good attention to those who need extra support, so that they can achieve at a similar rate to others. At times, opportunities are missed to encourage worthwhile discussion on what the pupils are seeing and experiencing.
132. Overall, it is obvious from discussions that pupils enjoy their work in art and design. In lessons the majority of pupils show an enthusiasm and a willingness to persevere with what they are doing. In other lessons, particularly in Year 2, pupils need many reminders to participate quietly and apply themselves to their tasks. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development. The majority of older pupils share their ideas and evaluate theirs and each other's work with good humoured and friendly criticism, reflecting on their knowledge and observations of different styles. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution to their cultural development, through the knowledge of western artists, but the study of art and design from other cultures is less well promoted.
133. The co-ordinator has considerable enthusiasm for art and design and is committed to ensuring that pupils enjoy a wide range of experiences. She provides satisfactory leadership, supporting teachers when requested. She has not had sufficient opportunity to monitor and evaluate the subject throughout the school, and particularly the teaching and learning of pupils in Years 3 to 6, and so is not yet able to comprehensively prioritise what needs to be done for improvement in the subject. She has sensibly changed the scheme of work, as it was seen not to suit the needs of the school. The school now bases its planning on useful guidelines from a published scheme of work. This provides the necessary breadth and balance to the planning of art and design throughout the school. Good artistic links are made with other parts of the curriculum, where appropriate. This was evident in the colourful use of materials and textures to create a whole-class montage to link with work in geography on the rain forests. Three-dimensional work in clay was linked to a history topic on the Greeks. There are no procedures for assessment, and no worthwhile portfolios of pupils' work to show good attainment or how well pupils achieve.
134. Visitors to the school regularly provide expertise to add a further dimension to pupils' work. Information and communication technology is well integrated into planning, however, the library has yet to be used as a good resource to support learning. The school has a good display policy. Although at the time of the inspection, displays of art were just satisfactory, the co-ordinator

recognises the need to improve the quality of displays through the school and has rightly identified this within her action plan.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

135. At the time of the last inspection, in 2000, standards in the subject were judged to be low and progress to be poor. The school was asked to consider raising the quality of design and technology, through appropriate teaching development, because no progress had been made since the time of the previous inspection. This is no longer the case. Standards are now similar to those typical for the age groups, at the end of both Years 2 and 6. This is due, in no small measure, to the excellent leadership and very good management given to it, since that time. The co-ordinator had only been teaching and in post for a short time but she has accomplished much. She has had considerable guidance from the local education authority, and has received a national award as an excellent newcomer to the leadership of the subject. She has put all this advice and knowledge to very good use, in supporting the staff and ensuring they feel more confident and raising the quality of their knowledge and understanding. This has had a considerable, positive impact on teaching and learning, which are now good, and pupils say they love doing it because they get to solve problems. Few lessons were being taught, at the time of this inspection, but teachers' planning, discussions, and the portfolio of available evidence, contribute well to the making of the judgement.
136. The whole process is now much better understood and taught. Pupils consider well, the design brief, evaluating what works well and what could be improved in a shop-bought sandwich, for example. They then design their own, taking into consideration the type of bread, filling, and so on. Detailed, focused, practical tasks ensure they are fully aware of all the considerations to be made before production. In a good lesson seen in Year 3, pupils gave very careful thought to three types of ingredients and how the preparation of them might change the appearance, texture and taste. They were very well self-controlled, sociable, and polite as they created, then tasted their various fillings. A similar process has been followed in all parts of the school, on various different projects.
137. The co-ordinator has successfully implemented the parts of the nationally available schemes that she felt relevant to the school. However, she has made appropriate alterations, where necessary, such as changing the Year 6 project on slippers, to hats, which is much more in keeping with their understanding and lifestyle. From their earliest times in school, pupils are actively involved, in the designing process, as well as the making of the item. Pupils in Year 1 made moving pictures for Easter cards, and those in Year 2 used movement in the design of a toy for a younger pupil to play with. Some tried with 'Incy Wincy' spider, whilst other models incorporated two different winding mechanisms. Older pupils considered the use of pneumatics to get movement into their model monsters, with the help of balloons or syringes. Some of these were very imaginative and kept quite close to the original design drawn by the pupils. This is because the teachers now know how to structure the lessons, and are more confident to let pupils try things out.
138. The co-ordinator also organised a school-wide project week on puppets. This work also demonstrated the school's newfound ability to plan for all ages and stages, as well as the very good progression of skills now being taught. An effective extra-curricular session is available to some pupils. It is so over-subscribed that the names of participants must be drawn out of the hat. Unlike before, the subject is now well resourced and work fits well into the timetable, to support and enhance other subjects, where possible. For example, the work on food technology in Year 3 coincides, most appropriately, with the work on healthy eating in personal and social education, as well as 'my body' work on teeth, in science. All work is now well organised and set at appropriate levels. The co-ordinator's action plan reflects, accurately, what needs to be done to move the subject further forward and to raise standards higher. This includes monitoring work closely, especially that of new teachers, who have not benefited from the valuable in-service training she gave to staff recently. Also, the portfolio of evidence should be annotated and levelled, so that teachers have an even better idea of what pupils need to do to improve further. Her vision and flair for the subject has resulted in good improvement, and staff commitment indicates an ability and shared capacity to succeed.

GEOGRAPHY

139. Standards of attainment at the end of Year 2 are in line with what is expected nationally. This reflects the findings of the previous report. Although no lessons were seen, discussion and the work in pupils' books this term shows that they have a broad band of knowledge and the achievements of all pupils, including those whose first language is not English, and those with special educational needs, is satisfactory. This is because teachers identify the nature of the support that is needed for all pupils.
140. At the time of the previous report, pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 was judged to be below expectations. Because no lessons were seen, and there was no previous work available to examine, there is insufficient evidence to form a judgement on the current standards at the end of Year 6. However, discussions with a group of pupils from Year 6 show that they have sound re-call of their previous learning, and that their achievement is satisfactory. In the previous inspection, pupils' progress was judged as unsatisfactory, so this indicates an improvement.
141. Overall, the subject is showing good improvement. A clear scheme of work ensures that there is coverage of all the areas of the National Curriculum. The curriculum plan is well balanced for most year groups and provides a better balance of knowledge and skills, but there is a need to ensure that there is a better balance between time for history and geography in Years 5 and 6. Resources have improved and been up-dated, with a better range of globes, maps and aerial photographs. The evidence from the work available shows that these are used well to support learning.
142. Pupils in Year 2 have become familiar with the wider world by following the travels of 'Betty Bear'. They explore their own environment in more detail, identifying local features such as the school and local shops on their maps. They use keys to identify places on a map. They begin to look at different sources of information to help them find places and use maps to help them locate them. They consider what they like about a familiar environment, and this allows for all pupils to give their observations on the places and people they have seen. For example, one pupil writes about a visit to Breen, another to Bristol and a third to Bangladesh. Such activities heighten their awareness of different places and cultures.
143. In discussions with a group of pupils in Year 6, they show that they can confidently identify features on a world map; recognise how land is used and the effect of climatic changes. They give well-informed opinions on what they have learned about the world, particularly in relation to their topic on the rain forests. Those pupils, whose first language is not English, participate knowledgeably in the discussions. The work of pupils in Year 4 shows that they are developing their knowledge and understanding of settlements well, for example, through working out how place names tell us what the landscape was like before a settlement was formed. Their mapping skills are good, and they competently use keys and symbols in identifying places on a map. From the work seen in Year 4, all groups of pupils make satisfactory progress. Their recorded work shows that they retain knowledge and ideas at the appropriate level. This, again, indicates satisfactory achievement overall, which is an improvement since the last inspection.
144. No teaching was observed during the inspection and a secure judgement on the overall quality of teaching is not possible. However, a scrutiny of teachers' planning and discussions with teachers, show that there is sound coverage of the elements of geography with an appropriate balance of knowledge and skills. From the limited evidence available, literacy and numeracy skills are used satisfactorily. Pupils in Year 2 use their independent writing to record what they observe, while pupils in Year 4 examine the origin of place names and relate this to language today. The library is efficiently used, particularly by pupils in Year 6 for research on their topics. Pupils in Year 6 explain how they use co-ordinates when using maps. Information and communication technology is used effectively to support learning. Pupils in Year 4 use a website to consolidate and extend their understanding of the use of maps, and there are good opportunities for e-mail connections across the world. There are sound opportunities for pupils to visit their locality and further a-field to support their learning. In discussion, pupils revealed a serious and considered interest in what they have learned. Their books are well presented and reflect that teachers are providing sufficient depth to what pupils are learning.
145. The co-ordinator has initiated many improvements for the subject, and has sufficient knowledge for the further development. The leadership and management of the subject are, therefore, satisfactory. However, she has not yet had opportunity to monitor teaching and learning throughout

the school in order to help her to form a clear view of pupils' achievements. Although teachers use on-going assessment to provide relevant support for groups of pupils, assessment procedures are not sufficiently formalised to give a clear record and picture of what pupils have achieved.

HISTORY

146. The last inspection report indicated that pupils' attainment was in line with expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6, although standards were unsatisfactory in Years 3 and 4. The attainment of pupils is now judged to be matching expectations throughout the school and the progress made by all pupils is satisfactory.
147. As it was not possible to observe any lessons in Years 1 and 2 during the course of the inspection, judgements are based predominantly on discussions with pupils, studying teachers' planning and an interview with the history co-ordinator. Pupils in Year 1 begin to develop a sense of history, by studying how modern toys and modern homes are different to those from the past. In Year 2, this is developed further by a study of how seaside holidays have changed since Victorian times. Good use of historical artefacts, particularly photographs, is a strong feature of the history curriculum and contributes to pupils' language development and literacy skills. Pupils have good recall of their history topics and are very confident in talking about them. They know, for example, that only modern toys contain batteries, that Victorian dress was very different to what we see today and that only modern homes have the benefit of electricity. The curriculum is enriched by educational visits and pupils talked with enthusiasm about their day at Blaise Castle and all the costumes that they had seen. In Year 2, pupils develop their knowledge of important events and people from the past, and the curriculum is enriched further by opportunities for them to celebrate their ethnic diversity. For example, they were able to identify similarities in the lives of Florence Nightingale and Mary Seacole and to recognise that they both found difficulties in overcoming prejudice. These opportunities contribute to good attitudes within school by encouraging respect for pupils from all ethnic backgrounds. Local history forms an important part of the curriculum and the school has developed good links with local community groups, such as Living Easton and the Avon Wild Life Trust.
148. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 study a range of historical topics to develop further their awareness of the passage of time and, in most classes, the provision of time-lines helps pupils to develop a sense of chronology. The historical knowledge and understanding of most pupils are typical for their age and most are able to link different periods of history. Educational visits continue to be an important part of the history curriculum. Pupils in Year 3, for example, undertake a detailed study of Roman times, which includes a visit to Caerleon Roman site in Wales, whilst, in Year 4, pupils visit Montacute House as part of their topic on the Tudors. History is often linked to other areas of the curriculum, such as English, physical education, and information and communication technology. In one very good physical education lesson, pupils were challenged to develop a dance that might have been seen in Tudor times. In Year 4, pupils were confident to retrieve information from the Internet as part of their research into the life of Henry VIII and, in Year 3, pupils discussed knowledgeably what might have been contained in an evacuee's suitcase. Pupils with special educational needs do not make as much progress as they could in Years 3 to 6, because there is insufficient match between the work planned and the varying range of abilities. The same is true for pupils with English as an additional language. This is due to all pupils within each class undertaking exactly the same tasks.
149. Pupils in Year 6 have good knowledge of different eras and can recall information from their previous learning throughout the school. They organise these in a time-line, showing a sound sense of chronology. They have a sound bank of knowledge and understanding, which is in line with expectations. They are aware that aspects of the past can be studied through the use of archaeological evidence, such as pictures, written accounts, and photographs, and can distinguish between primary and secondary evidence. Pupils discuss religious conflict from the past and identify similar examples today.
150. Teachers have secure knowledge of the subject and are assisted by a comprehensive policy and scheme of work. Good use is made of visits and visiting speakers to enrich the history curriculum. Teachers make appropriate use of information and communication technology, by visiting a range of useful websites and using CD ROMs to assist in developing pupils' research skills. This makes a positive contribution to pupils' historical awareness. In all lessons observed in Years 3 to 6,

teaching was judged to be at least satisfactory and in one Year 3 lesson, the teaching was judged to be very good. The very good lesson was the result of good planning, confident teaching and the provision of a range of well-chosen resources. Pupils were encouraged to imagine what it would have been like to be evacuated and then to suggest what they would take if they were to be evacuated today. During this lesson, the very good questioning helped pupils to develop their historical knowledge, improve their speaking and listening skills and to appreciate the feelings of others.

151. The management of the subject is satisfactory. Since the last inspection, the co-ordinator has introduced a new scheme of work, which ensures that the specific areas to be studied are visited on a regular basis. She has also carried out an audit of resources and improved the provision of resources to support teaching and learning. She is now aware of the need to ensure that assessment procedures are implemented systematically, that teaching is monitored, and that work is more carefully matched to the needs of pupils of all abilities.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

152. At the time of the last inspection, pupils' standards at the end of both key stages were judged to be poor, resources were inadequate, the co-ordination of the subject was unsatisfactory and the school was failing to deliver all the required elements of the National Curriculum programme of study. There has been a very good improvement in eradicating all of these weaknesses. Pupils are now matching national expectations by the end of Year 2 and by the end of Year 6. This improvement has been achieved by developing resources and establishing a computer suite that is just large enough for class lessons. A broad and balanced scheme of work, based on good whole-school curriculum guidelines is now taught and this places an emphasis on the systematic development of pupil's computer skills. The training of most teachers is currently being carried out and this has increased their subject expertise and confidence. Curriculum co-ordination has improved with the appointment of a knowledgeable and enthusiastic subject co-ordinator.
153. In Year 2, pupils use the mouse and keyboard accurately and acquire a range of basic technological skills. They can enter, save, and retrieve their work and discuss the various functions of certain keys. As well as developing keyboard skills, work in information and communication technology lessons is frequently linked to other subjects, particularly in literacy, mathematics and art. In one Year 2 lesson, for example, pupils created designs in the style of Mondrian that took account of the use of straight lines, geometric shapes and colour, whilst, in Year 1, pupils used the computer to write their own names. Almost all pupils in Years 1 and 2, including those with special education needs, show great confidence when asked to 'log on' to programs, and some have quite advanced keyboard skills. The school makes good use of digital cameras and computer-generated pictures of pupils are evident in all classrooms in Years 1 and 2. Although no data handling was seen during the inspection, pupils could talk about how they had used the computer to produce graphs and charts. The wide range of experiences that pupils now have in Years 1 and 2 allows them to make good progress and is a considerable improvement from the time of the previous inspection when they did not have opportunities to develop their skills. They now have a good understanding of information and communication technology and use it confidently and with purpose.
154. Between Years 3 and 6, pupils build on their previous good progress, and there are no significant differences in the standards achieved by pupils of different gender or ethnic backgrounds. This is to their credit as most of them were in school at the time of the previous inspection, when standards and resources were poor. These pupils have now been provided with good opportunities to catch up on aspects of the subject that were not previously addressed and by Year 6, their knowledge, skills and understanding are in line with national expectations. In many lessons, work on computers is linked to other areas of the curriculum. For example, in Year 6 lessons, pupils were being challenged to retrieve information from a range of scientific texts both efficiently and quickly, as well as developing an ability to ensure that information retrieved was reliable and appropriate. Pupils in Year 3 use their word-processing skills to develop and publish class booklets, whilst in Year 6 pupils produce multimedia presentations linked to the story of Romeo and Juliet. In a Year 3 lesson, pupils were learning how to insert graphics to illustrate their poems, and a Year 6 lesson had strong links to both science and personal and social education. Pupils readily exchange

information and are becoming increasingly aware of intended audiences, as could be seen in their e-mail links that had been established with pupils in America and Canada.

155. The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school. As a result of training, most teachers are becoming increasingly confident in the use of information and communication technology and the marked improvement in resources is having a positive impact on teaching. Teachers plan effectively and set challenging targets for their pupils. All classes have regular, weekly lessons in the computer suite, when teachers focus on developing pupils' computer skills. Pupils enjoy these lessons and work successfully as individuals and in mixed-ability groups and this successfully promotes their social and moral development. Good planning allows pupils to work at their own pace and good levels of co-operation result. Indeed, in one Year 5 lesson, a passing pupil from Year 6 stepped in to assist a group who were experiencing a particular difficulty. Some pupils have very good computer skills and one pupil in Year 5 was able to assist the teacher when she was unable to get a program to load. Almost all pupils are highly motivated by the developments in this subject and discuss their work enthusiastically.
156. The school has invested heavily in resources in order to ensure that there are greater opportunities for pupils to work regularly on computers and this has improved their attainment considerably. Teachers make very good use of the inter-active whiteboard, and classrooms are currently being rewired to provide computer accessibility. However, the new computer suite is not well designed. It is too cramped; the carpet area is too small to accommodate pupils away from the computers and the open access to the corridor leads to constant distractions. Indeed, the only unsatisfactory behaviour seen in information and communication technology lessons was as a result of pupils becoming fractious, because they were too close to each other.
157. Although the subject co-ordinator has only been in post for two terms, she has already drawn up an action plan for future development. Her good leadership has enabled teaching and support staff to develop in confidence, make good use of the regular opportunities that they have to teach in the new computer suite, and to raise pupils' standards of attainment. The management of the subject is good overall, but monitoring of the subject has not yet included observation of teaching. The co-ordinator has completed a thorough audit of exactly where the subject is now and the subject action plan identifies suitable priorities that include monitoring of teaching and the development of assessment procedures. The school has used its funding well to furnish the computer suite and resources have improved considerably in the last two years. The appointment of a technician helps to ensure the smooth running of the suite. The school is well aware of its obligations to pupils about safety and security, when using the Internet, and health and safety procedures are satisfactory.

MUSIC

158. Evidence of the quality of teaching from the only two music lessons observed, in Year 3 and Year 5, is good. In these lessons, all pupils learned quickly because teachers had planned in detail to meet the needs of different groups of pupils including those with special educational needs, and during the lessons they managed behaviour skilfully. This enabled all pupils to enjoy and benefit from a variety of musical experience through composing, performing and evaluating. Younger pupils demonstrated a good ability to work rhythmically and older pupils 'read' a series of symbols accurately in order to perform in small groups. However, there is insufficient evidence to make fair judgements about pupils' standards by end of Years 2 and 6.
159. There are regular opportunities for musical appreciation in assemblies, when pupils listen to different music each week as they enter and leave the hall, and, in some classes, pupils listen to Mozart during snack times. However, opportunities to make pupils aware of what they are listening to and invite their response are missed. There are too few opportunities for pupils to sing on a daily basis.
160. Nevertheless, the subject co-ordinator has developed the subject well. At the time of the last inspection the subject was sorely neglected, because there were too few resources and too many teachers lacked confidence in the subject. Since then, the subject leader has developed her knowledge and expertise and selected a good scheme of work that helps other teachers. Consequently, teachers' plans indicate that the provision for the subject is now satisfactory. These

plans show good opportunities for pupils to enhance their numeracy skills and understanding, for example by linking musical phrases with symmetry. Pupils' composition and performance work makes a sound contribution to their literacy.

161. Good use is made of visiting teachers to teach African drumming and guitar; there is a choir for most of the school year, and there are regular opportunities for pupils to perform in public, either as a school or with other schools. Opportunities such as these make a very valuable contribution to pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development. There is a good supply of resources to support these activities and the school makes good use of information and communication technology to record pupils' performance on videos, cassettes and compact discs. Throughout the school, all members of staff work hard to ensure that all pupils have equal access to music. The very popular drumming club, for example, has places allocated in rotation so that everyone has their turn.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

162. At the time of the last inspection, standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 were similar to those found at these ages in other schools. Teaching was satisfactory, overall, but with some that was unsatisfactory. Subject management was satisfactory. Neither pupils Year 2 nor those in Year 6 have been observed during this inspection, but both teaching and subject co-ordination have improved.
163. Pupils in Years 3 to 5 are achieving standards in dance that are at least in line with expectations for their age. Games standards match expectations in Year 3 and records show that swimming standards are generally below national expectations by the time pupils leave the school. The one example of standards exceeding expectations was in a Year 4 dance lesson in which pupils created Tudor-style dances for groups of four. Pupils showed their good ability at planning, performing and then evaluating their own work and that of others. Pupils' movement in the dances was very controlled, capturing the feel of what movement in heavy Tudor clothing must have been like. Different steps and actions were linked very smoothly into well-choreographed sequences that interpreted Tudor music very successfully.
164. The qualities of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 cannot be judged, due to lessons being outside the inspection period. Teachers' planning for these classes is satisfactory, shows good attention to safety measures, and includes use of suitable resources for the appropriate skills to be developed. However, this planning also indicates a very low time allocation to physical education in Years 1 and 2 that is well below national recommendations. In Years 3 to 5, teaching and learning are good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan lessons thoroughly, with learning activities building successfully on each previous stage. The management of pupils' behaviour is good and, indeed, is frequently not required because of pupils' very positive attitudes to the subject. Such attitudes were very evident in the excellent behaviour of boys in Years 3 and 4 at the local swimming pool, when they waited very patiently for their lessons to start. All pupils are fully included in all lessons, and teachers and support staff have a very strong commitment to ensuring that this is always the case. There are good arrangements for ensuring that any form of physical disability is no barrier to full involvement in physical education. Pupils are making good progress in the well-taught lessons, and satisfactory progress over time. This applies to all pupils, including those with special educational needs, and those who speak English as an additional language. The latter's participation and progress in swimming is helped by the school's respect for beliefs and the consequent single-gender grouping of pupils.
165. In one year of leadership of the subject, the co-ordinator has already achieved a level of very good leadership and management. A factor contributing to his very good management skills is the national primary link programme for school sports co-ordinators, in which he participates. This develops skills, such as auditing the subject and action planning, very successfully, as well as providing a network of local expertise that the school can access. The school has good links with a variety of organisations and individuals that are making good contributions to physical education provision. A community arts programme has very good input to dance in the school. The local professional football club's community programme provides coaching for pupils in Year 5. Out of school hours, the well-attended football club benefits from the very good coaching skills of two parents, both qualified coaches, who support the co-ordinator at weekly sessions. Extra-curricular

activities involving sport are severely restricted by the daily hire of the school hall to an after-school club.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

166. By the end of Years 2 and Year 6, pupils have made good progress and achieve standards, which are broadly in line with those expected for their age. The school has done well to maintain these standards since the last inspection at a time when the school's priority was to concentrate on raising standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Teaching is good overall, with some very good teaching in Years 3 to 6.
167. Pupils are consistently taught to accept that people hold different religious beliefs and worship in different ways and in different places. By the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6, pupils have studied various aspects of many faiths and compared their own beliefs and practices to other major faiths, particularly those of other pupils. They are also helped to understand, from an early age, that what people believe affects the way in which they live their lives and this can also affect other people.
168. The quality of teaching is usually good and, consequently, pupils' knowledge and understanding develops well. Even in the one unsatisfactory lesson seen, it was clear that the pupils knew about Diwali from previous lessons, but, on this occasion, the methods used did not consolidate or extend their knowledge and understanding. In other lessons seen, teachers were very specific in what they wanted the pupils to learn and usually shared this with them at the start of the lesson. The very good relationships between pupils and teachers, particularly in Years 3 and 5, created excellent atmospheres in which pupils felt safe to be open, honest and sincere. They talked about their feelings, about their own faiths, and places of worship and listened very respectfully to each other. For example, in Year 3, after sharing ideas and planning in small groups, pupils very sensitively mimed how Noah felt and what he did as he prepared for the flood, getting the animals into the ark. In a very moving, spiritual way, pupils in Year 5 shared thoughts on their own special places. A Mosque, the Kingdom Hall, a field, a bedroom and great-grandfather's grave, were spoken and written about, so that everyone could imagine and feel the 'holiness' of that place and why it was so special.
169. Pupils in Year 6 were equally moving when talking about how they are helped to respect each other's beliefs, accept differences, and consider how intolerance affects others. They have a sound knowledge of the main features of Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Judaism, recalling relevant symbols, practices, places of worship and celebrations. They are very aware of the importance of prayer to all the major faiths and talk openly about how they pray, whether they are Christian, Sikh or Muslim. They have developed a strong awareness that people of most faiths believe in one God but call Him by different names.
170. Religious education lessons provide the pupils with excellent opportunities for speaking and listening, but there is no support for pupils who are at the early stages of learning to speak English and who struggle to understand and express themselves in what is not their home language. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and play a full part in the lessons. There are insufficient opportunities for all pupils to carry out independent research using books or information technology.
171. Overall, teachers are knowledgeable and confident with this subject and follow the guidelines provided by the Locally Agreed Syllabus. This ensures that pupils' knowledge and understanding are built up systematically over time. However, there is, as yet, no assessment or recording of pupils' progress. The school was without a co-ordinator for a year, but has appointed someone very recently with experience and expertise in this area to build on and extend the already good foundation. Plans are clearly in place to meet the need for assessment and record keeping, designed to provide the teachers with more accurate information on which to plan lessons and raise standards even further. Assemblies make a useful contribution to religious education, endorsing pupils' learning about tolerance and respect for one another's beliefs. Pupils are encouraged to pray or reflect according to their own persuasion. Religious education is a crucial part of the school's provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and has a powerful impact on their very good attitudes towards each other.

