

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST HELEN'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Bristol

LEA area: South Gloucestershire

Unique reference number: 109158

Acting Headteacher: Mrs J Rosher

Reporting inspector: Mrs L Brackstone
21872

Dates of inspection: 19th – 22nd May 2003

Inspection number: 246881
Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Greenhill Alveston Bristol
Postcode:	BS35 2QX
Telephone number:	(01454) 866530
Fax number:	(01454) 866532
E-mail address:	head@sthelens-pri.s-gloucs.sch.uk
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs R Hannam
Date of previous inspection:	January 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21872	Mrs L Brackstone	Registered inspector	The Foundation Stage Geography History	What sort of school is it? What should the school do to improve further? How well are pupils taught? How high are standards? a) the school's results and pupils' achievements How well is the school led and managed?
9652	Mr C Herbert	Lay inspector		How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with the parents?
30669	Mrs M Sandercock	Team inspector	English Art and design Music	
10611	Mr M James	Team inspector	Mathematics Design and technology Physical education	
7336	Mrs L Howard	Team inspector	Special educational needs Educational inclusion English as an additional language Science Information and communication technology Religious education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

The inspection contractor was:

PPI Group Ltd
7 Hill St
Bristol
BS1 5RW

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33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Helen's is a voluntary controlled primary school that caters for pupils aged four to 11. It is situated near Thornbury in South Gloucestershire and serves the villages of Alveston, Tytherington and Rudgeway. There are 263 pupils on the school roll, which is bigger than the average primary. There are slightly more boys than girls (141 compared to 122) which is particularly noticeable in Years 4, 5 and 6. Year groups vary considerably in size and consequently the nine classes are divided up on an annual basis depending on the numbers. The vast majority of pupils are of white British heritage. Although there are a very small number of pupils who use English as an additional language at home, none are at an early stage of language acquisition in school. Although only six per cent of families claim free school meals the number eligible is much higher and thus this criteria is not an accurate measure of judging the socio-economic status of the pupils, which is average overall. Pupils come from a very wide range of backgrounds including privately owned houses and three small council estates. About ten per cent of pupils have special educational needs and this is less than the national average. Three per cent of pupils have statements of special educational needs and this is above the national average. Pupils with special educational needs experience moderate learning difficulties, speech and language problems, physical disabilities and emotional and behaviour issues. Children start school at the start of the academic term in which they will be five into either a mixed Foundation Stage and Year 1 class or a separate Foundation Stage class. Children start with levels of attainment that are broadly as expected and most have attended the pre-school situated in the school grounds. The vast majority of pupils transfer to the neighbouring beacon school of Marlwood. At the time of the inspection the acting headteacher, who is the substantive deputy headteacher, had been in post for three weeks, prior to the new headteacher starting at the beginning of the next academic year. This was because the previous headteacher had recently left to take up an advisory post in the local education authority. A temporary teacher was covering the substantive deputy headteacher's class.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Currently, the school is being conscientiously steered by the acting headteacher who is very well supported by the acting deputy headteacher. It has recently been recognised with Investors in People and Department of Education awards for school improvement. Good quality teachers are well supported by effective non-teaching staff. This enables all pupils, including those with special educational needs, to make good progress, despite the high mobility rates in Years 4 to 6. The school currently provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- By the end of Year 6, standards in science and reading are above average. Standards in art and design and physical education are above national expectations.
- The Foundation Stage curriculum is very well planned and the teaching for this age group is of a very high standard.
- All pupils make good progress throughout the school because the overall quality of teaching is good and they are well cared for.
- Pupils' performance is tracked efficiently and good strategies are put into place to ensure that the school meets its targets. Procedures for checking progress in English and mathematics are good.
- Provision for special educational needs is good.
- The range of learning opportunities are good; provision for activities outside of lessons for pupils in Years 3 to 6 are of high quality and the community contributes well to pupils' learning.
- Parents are provided with very good quality information and they support the school well.

What could be improved

- The attitudes and behaviour of a small number of pupils.
- The role of the subject co-ordinator.
- The use of homework to support pupils' learning.
- The judging and checking of achievement in all other subjects except English and mathematics.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in January 1998 and has made satisfactory progress since then. At the time of the last inspection standards in information and communication technology were judged to be below national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6. The school has made good progress in this subject and standards are now as expected throughout the school. Weaknesses were noted in teacher challenge and expectations of work and this has improved satisfactorily. The report highlighted the need to formulate and implement strategies for checking and judging the quality of teaching and learning and the curriculum offered. A framework for checking teaching has been devised but this is not, as yet, being used to fully identify the strengths and weaknesses of the teachers. In addition to the key issues identified improvements in pupils' progress have been made. The quality of teaching has remained good overall but is now of very good quality in the Foundation Stage. Information for parents was considered satisfactory but is now a very good feature of the school. Parental involvement in the school remains high. At the time of the last inspection provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development was judged to be good but is now considered satisfactory because there are no consistent plans in place. Leadership and management were also reported to be good at the time of the last inspection. However, they are currently satisfactory as a result of the transition period between headteachers and the increased responsibilities required from governing bodies. The nature of the intake has changed and there are a small number of pupils who attend school from homes who are less than supportive. Consequently, although the attitudes, behaviour and personal development of the pupils are satisfactory overall, this judgement represents a decline since the last inspection when it was considered good. The previous report highlighted behaviour management as a strength but this is now only satisfactory because systems are inconsistent and there is no whole school approach to behaviour management. In the subjects of the curriculum other than English and mathematics, assessment is unsatisfactory, as it was at the time of the last inspection. At the start of the forthcoming academic year an experienced headteacher takes up post. Coupled with the dedication of the staff towards improvement, the school has a good capacity to succeed.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	A	B	D	D
Mathematics	A	A	C	D
Science	A	B	B	B

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

Children start school with standards in all areas of learning that are as expected for their age group. They make good progress in the Foundation Stage because the quality of teaching and learning is very good overall and curricular provision is of a very high standard. By the time that they are ready to start Year 1 of the National Curriculum they have exceeded nationally recommended levels in all areas of learning. Good teaching in Years 1 and 2 also enables the pupils to make good progress and, by the end of Year 2, standards in English, mathematics and science are above average. Pupils who started St Helen's in the Reception class continue to make good progress in Years 3 to 6 and frequently attain above average results in the standardised tests. There are a significant number of pupils who enter St Helen's in Years 4 to 6, many of whom have special educational needs or have transferred to enable them to attend the nearby popular secondary school. These pupils also make good progress and many achieve the expected levels at the end of Year 6. Consequently, by the time that they reach the end of Year 6 standards are above average in science and reading. Overall standards in English and mathematics are average.

Standards in physical education are above the nationally expected levels at the end of Years 2 and 6; swimming is of excellent quality and is as a consequence of regular use of their own school swimming pool. Very good standards in art and design are found at the end of Year 2 because the quality of teaching by a specialist in this year group is of very high quality. Art and design standards remain above the nationally agreed levels at the end of Year 6. Standards in design and technology, history, geography and music are in line with nationally expected levels at the end of Years 2 and 6. Standards in religious education at the end of Years 2 and 6 are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils with special educational needs made good progress in relation to their prior attainment because they are taught well and provision is good. The school has set appropriate targets for improvement and is making good progress towards achieving them.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Satisfactory overall. Most pupils are enthusiastic about school and enjoy being involved in their activities. However, there are a small number of pupils who display negative attitudes and are disrespectful to their teachers.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory overall. Most pupils behave themselves in lessons and around school. However, there are a small number of pupils who behave in an anti-social manner in their classrooms, in assemblies, in the dinner hall and during playtimes.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory overall. Most pupils respect each other's feelings but a small number of pupils do not fully understand the impact of their anti-social behaviour on their teachers and classmates. Relationships within the school are satisfactory overall.
Attendance	Good. Attendance rates are above the national average and pupils are punctual.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. The quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage is very good and is a strength of the school. Notable strengths are the very good understanding of the needs of this age group and high quality management strategies. All adults in the Foundation Stage have high expectations of behaviour and work and basic skills are taught consistently very well. This is ensured through rigorous planning, highly effective teaching methods and very thorough assessment procedures. All staff are deployed very well to promote learning skills and high quality resources enable the acquisition of knowledge and skills. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 to 6 is good. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and teach literacy and numeracy well. Lessons are well planned and pupils know what to do. A good range of teaching methods is used to maintain the interest of the pupils and these include work as individuals, within pairs and groups and as whole class sessions. Lessons move at a good pace and this ensures that pupils are acquiring the appropriate skills. Good use is also made of support staff and an interesting range of resources. Pupils are managed well in Years 1 and 2 but at times teachers' expectations of behaviour are not high enough in Years 3 to 6. Satisfactory use is made of praise to encourage pupils but the quality of marking is not consistent. Homework lacks consistency and is not used well enough to support learning. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well in class and this ensures that they are fully involved in lessons.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good overall. Provision for the Foundation Stage is very good with a very high quality range of opportunities planned for these young children.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The needs of pupils are well met through individual education plans that identify short, measurable steps for progress.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Satisfactory overall. Appropriate opportunities are provided for the pupils to explore values and beliefs. A sense of community is fostered and they are developing an understanding of their own cultural heritage. However, provision to promote the pupils' understanding of the difference between right and wrong behaviour is ineffective. Multicultural awareness is underdeveloped.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The school takes good care of its pupils and checks their personal and academic progress carefully in English and mathematics. However, assessments in all other subjects are weak and there is no whole school approach to behaviour management.

The school works well with its parents and values the support given.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory overall. The acting headteacher and her deputy are steering the school well through an interim period between substantive headteachers. Subject management is well developed in some key areas but requires more in depth co-ordination in a number of the foundation subjects.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory overall. Governors are extremely supportive of the school and give their time willingly by sharing their expertise and helping in class. The committees meet regularly and discuss school planning issues. Whilst having a clear understanding of the strengths of the school, the governing body is just developing an awareness of its weaknesses.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Effective tracking procedures have been recently devised and these are used to check individual pupils' progress. National test results are carefully analysed and points for future improvement clearly identified.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Governors have a satisfactory understanding of the principles of best value and apply it appropriately. However, they have just started to develop an awareness of the need to consult and compare using wider criteria.

The overall number and match of staff are adequate. However, support for the Reception classes is inconsistent and specialist staff are not used to best effect in this age group. Accommodation is satisfactory overall; there are extensive playing fields and a swimming pool but the large number of mobile classrooms does not promote cohesive staff nor help with pupil movement and behaviour in and around the site. Learning resources are adequate.

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.• Teachers have high expectations.• Their children make good progress at school.• Teaching is good.• They feel comfortable approaching the school with problems or concerns.• The school helps their children to become mature and sensible.• Behaviour is good.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The range of activities outside of lessons.• Closer working relationships with the school.• More information available on the progress of their children.• The right amount of homework.

The inspection team agrees with most of the positive views expressed by parents but cannot agree that the behaviour is consistently good. Inspectors agree that there are weaknesses in the amount and content of homework. The range of activities outside of lesson is good for Years 3 to 6. However, inspectors cannot agree with any of the other points they wish to see improved.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children start school with average skills in all areas of learning. They make good progress during their time in Reception and, by the time that they are ready to start Year 1 of the National Curriculum, they have attained above average standards. This is because the quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage is very good and curricular provision is very rich. Good improvements in the children's achievements have been made since the last inspection.
2. Both boys and girls continue to make good progress in Years 1 and 2, which is a good improvement since the last inspection when it was considered satisfactory at this stage in their education. Over the past three years standards at the end of Year 2 have remained above the national average and this is a good feature of the school's results. In the 2002 standardised tests pupils at the end of Year 2 attained well above the national standard in reading and writing and above average standards in mathematics. In comparison to similar schools standards were well above average in reading and writing and above average in mathematics. There is no national test for science at the end of Year 2 but in teacher assessments standards were average. Inspection evidence confirms that standards in reading, writing and mathematics have been maintained at this good level. Standards in science have improved as a consequence of a whole school focus on this subject that has been led by a talented subject manager. Pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2 because the quality of teaching and learning is good. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and this ensures that their achievement is good in relation to prior attainment. Standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science have been maintained at a good level since the last inspection.
3. Over the past three years standards at the end of Year 6 have exceeded the national average in English, mathematics and science. In the 2002 national tests at the end of Year 6 standards in science were above average and average in mathematics. However, standards in English were below average. This dip is explained by a significant number of pupils in this cohort who joined the school in Year 5 who had special educational needs, particularly in literacy skills. In comparison to similar schools standards in science were above average but below average in English and mathematics. Inspection findings indicate that standards in science in the current Year 6 have been well maintained and are still above average. Standards in mathematics remain average. However, there has been a good improvement in English, particularly in reading and standards are now average.
4. The school has carefully tracked pupils through the school and it is clear from the information gathered that pupils who started St Helen's in the Reception class continue to make good progress in Years 3 to 6 and frequently attain above average results in the standardised tests. It is also evident that the significant number of pupils who enter the school in Years 4 to 6 also make good progress in relation their prior attainment. For example, 30 per cent of the current Year 6 class had not attended St Helen's since the Reception class. However, it is evident that they have made good progress in relation to their prior attainment on entry into school and many achieve the expected levels at the end of Year 6. Standards in Year 6 at the time of the last inspection were above average in English and mathematics and well above in science. However, these results reflect a change in the nature of the population rather than any relation to the quality of teaching and learning in the school.
5. Standards in physical education at the end of Years 2 and 6 are above the expected levels for these age groups. This is as a direct result of a good range of extra-curricular activities on offer to the older pupils. Standards in swimming are very high and this is because of the very good facilities available on site to teach this skill. Standards in art and design in Year 2 are well above national expectations because the quality of teaching and learning is very good in this subject in Years 1 and 2. Standards in art and design at the end of Year 6 remain above national expectations. This represents good improvement since the last inspection when standards were considered as expected at the end of Years 2 and 6 and progress was judged to be satisfactory. Standards in information and communication technology were considered to be below the nationally recommended levels. However, since the last inspection good improvements have been made and standards are now as expected at the end of Years 2 and 6. This has been successfully achieved through the installation of

a dedicated suite and extensive staff training. Standards in design and technology, history, geography and music are as expected for pupils at the end of Years 2 and 6. At the time of the last inspection standards were judged to be good in history but the slight decline in standards is as a result of the need to introduce literacy and numeracy consistently throughout the school. Standards in religious education in both Years 2 and 6 meet the expected levels of the locally agreed syllabus.

6. Pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy are of a good standard and are used well to promote standards in subject areas across the curriculum. For instance, literacy and numeracy skills are used well to support geography, science and information and communication technology lessons. This was particularly evident in the local field study work being undertaken in Years 5 and 6.
7. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their specific attainment on entry into school. This is because their needs are quickly identified and are swiftly met through high quality planning and effective support.
8. Pupils make good progress throughout the school because of the good quality of teaching and the dedication of all staff. The school sets realistic targets that fully include and challenge all pupils. All pupils achieve well in relation to the targets set for them. Overall, the school adds good value to its pupils' education.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Children in the Reception classes have very good attitudes and they behave well. Through the very good care and support they receive from staff, children settle quickly into classroom routines and are happy and eager to be involved in a wide range of learning activities. Overall pupils in Years 1 to 6 have satisfactory attitudes to school and to their learning and their behaviour in and around school is also satisfactory. However, there are a small number of boys and girls, particularly in Years 3 to 6 whose attitudes and behaviour are unsatisfactory. The relationships between pupils and each other and between pupils and adults are also satisfactory overall. Pupils have not maintained the good attitudes and standards of behaviour that were evident at the last inspection.
10. The pupils' behaviour and attitude to learning are satisfactory overall. There is a considerable difference in the quality of this aspect of school life across the school. For example, in Years 1 and 2 the attitudes and behaviour of pupils were good or better in the vast majority of lessons. However in Years 3 to 6 the attitudes and behaviour of the pupils were satisfactory overall. In a small number of lessons in the upper end of the school the attitudes and behaviour of pupils were judged as unsatisfactory. This reflects the impact of the unsatisfactory provision for moral development and the lack of a whole school policy for behaviour. Occasionally, a small number of pupils in these lessons were allowed to get away with inappropriate behaviour such as swinging on their chairs, fiddling with pencils and rulers and calling out in an insolent and unacceptable way. This created a restless and unacceptable environment for learning. Where good behaviour management was evident there was a purposeful atmosphere in class with a good learning ethos. Standards of behaviour in the playground, in the dining hall at lunchtime or in assembly are also satisfactory overall. However, noise levels in the dining hall were allowed to rise to unacceptable levels and the behaviour of a few older pupils was inappropriate. There was no indication of any racist behaviour during the inspection and there have been no exclusions.
11. Relationships between all members of the school community are satisfactory overall. The majority of pupils have a good understanding of right and wrong and always show respect towards each other and all members of the school community. There was no evidence of graffiti or vandalism in or around school and pupils take satisfactory care of the accommodation. The quality of these relationships has a positive impact on pupils' learning, as they are all included in all school activities.
12. The opportunities for pupils to take responsibility in school are satisfactory. Pupils enjoy taking responsibility for setting up and working the overhead projector prior to assembly. Additionally, class representatives are elected to sit on the school council where they discuss a variety of issues such as playground activities. Other pupils take the registers to the school office. Additionally, more senior pupils organise games for the school fairs in the summer and at Christmas and run the school café. Year 6 pupils are given the opportunity to enjoy a residential visit to the Forest of Dean. The

lunchtime gardening club gives pupils the opportunity to be involved in the planting out of flowers and tomato plants. Pupils are also aware of the needs of those less fortunate than themselves and make generous donations each year to a variety of local charities. For example, tinned fruit is sent to charities supporting the homeless in Bristol and pupils raise money for Shelter, Christian Aid, Comic Relief, Blue Peter appeals and Cancer Research. These opportunities have a satisfactory impact on the personal development of pupils.

13. Pupils with special educational needs have satisfactory attitudes to work, most participate in activities and discuss confidently within group settings. Relationships are satisfactory and most pupils with special educational needs enjoy coming to school. Pupils with emotional and behaviour difficulties are generally well supported and this enables them to take a full part in lessons.
14. The attendance of pupils to school continues to be good and above the national average. The rate of unauthorised absence is broadly in line with the national average. Punctuality to school is good.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good and has been well maintained since the last inspection. However, no unsatisfactory lessons were observed during this inspection and this is an improvement since the last inspection when a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching was observed.
16. The quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage is consistently very good and has improved considerably since the last inspection when it was considered to be satisfactory. Subject knowledge is excellent and all adults involved with these children fully understand their needs. Lessons are presented very well with staff ensuring that the prepared activities are both interesting and exciting, but yet firmly rooted in the Foundation curriculum. This was evident in an excellent session in the information and communication technology suite where the teacher successfully developed all of the areas of learning in the Foundation Stage curriculum, enabling the children to have a very good knowledge of their own learning. During this lesson the children used a program on the computer to draw butterflies, which they identified as '*symmetrical*'. They developed their physical skills as they used the '*mouse*' as a control and required careful co-ordination as they moved their cursor around the screen. After their picture was completed the children were then required to write about how the butterflies had changed from caterpillars and this developed their writing, spelling and scientific skills.
17. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are excellently taught in a manner that appeals to these youngsters. For instance, at snack time the children are encouraged to '*buy*' their milk using pretend amounts of money. This successfully reinforces their numeracy skills in a very practical and realistic manner. Literacy skills are also very well promoted in the Foundation Stage through the use of very good quality storybooks as a starting point for a learning project, such as '*The Very Hungry Caterpillar*', which appeals to young children. Teaching is very well planned to meet the needs of children of all abilities. Regular assessments take place and these are used very well to inform planning. This results in all groups of children being appropriately challenged. Specific activities are also included in both daily and weekly planning and this ensures that they work at an appropriate pace to suit their needs. Very high quality strategies are employed in teaching, notably the use of first hand experiences and the use of appropriate language. For example, everyday situations are set up, such as working in the '*Garden Centre*', where staff involve themselves in role-play to support and develop language and social skills. There is plenty of purposeful involvement with children and use of structured play activities suitable for the age group. Imaginative approaches capture the interest of the children and maintain their motivation.
18. The learning support assistants spend limited time in the Foundation Stage, but when available, they make a very valuable contribution to the quality of children's learning and progress. Management of the children is consistently very good and this has a positive impact on their learning. All adults are consistently very clear about the behaviour that is to be expected. Children's learning is very good and all ability groups do well in relation to their capabilities and their previous learning. Children are encouraged to take reading books home to share with their parents and this promotes close links with the parents.

19. The overall quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 to 6 is good. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure and this enables the pupils to systematically acquire and understand the relevant skills. The teaching of both literacy and numeracy is good and the national strategies are used well to teach these skills consistently. Lesson planning in Years 1 to 6 is good. Daily planning is very detailed with national planning documents used for literacy and numeracy. Learning objectives are clearly identified in each lesson and shared with the pupils to help them understand what skills they are acquiring. Good use is made of a wide range of teaching methods. For example, pupils work individually, in pairs and in whole class sessions. This was evident in a Year 4/5 lesson where the teacher made good use of *'talking partners'* to ensure that the pupils were involved in their learning. Time is generally used well. For example, in a good Year 1/2 literacy lesson the pupils worked at a good pace in the information and communication technology suite using an interesting program to identify 'ee' and 'ea' sounds within a list of words. In a good numeracy lesson in Year 5/6 the teacher used their recent geography field study trip to Thornbury to develop their data-handling skills. Consequently, this one session was successfully used to develop numeracy, geographical and information and communication technology skills.
20. Pupils are interested in their learning when teacher expectations are high. For example, in a Year 2 geography session the teacher made very good use of questioning to challenge the intellectual skills of the pupils. On the other hand, in a lesson observed with older pupils the task set was not fully challenging because they had covered the work previously and were not stimulated by the content of the lesson. Teacher expectations of behaviour are good in Years 1 and 2 but are variable in Years 3 to 6. For instance in a Year 3/4 geography lesson the teacher was very pro-active in her management of the pupils. Consequently, the lesson moved at a fast pace because the pupils fully understood the implications and consequences of any weak behaviour. On the other hand, a number of lessons were observed in the upper end of the school where pupil management was inconsistent and insufficiently rigorous. As a result, at times pupils were not fully concentrating on their studies and this led to weak attitudes and some incidents of unsatisfactory behaviour.
21. Relationships between teachers and their classes in Years 1 to 6 are generally good. Much verbal praise is provided to encourage and motivate the pupils. However, this is not extended to ensure that the pupils fully understand what they need to do next to improve their learning. The marking of books is inconsistent throughout the school and it is evident that systematic monitoring of this has not taken place. In Years 4 and 5 there is evidence that pupils are provided with evaluative comments to help them improve, but this is not consistent throughout the school. Homework is unsatisfactory overall. Pupils in Year 1 and 2 are given regular spellings to learn and reading books are taken home to share with parents. However, there is no consistent format for this and parents are unsure when to expect the work to be done at home. Homework is inconsistent in Years 3 to 6 and it is evident that it is not planned in a systematic manner, which is made clear to all concerned.
22. Support from classroom assistants is good and they work closely with class teachers to ensure that all pupils are fully included in all activities. However, the management of their time within the classes is inconsistent and this leads to situations where classes are either understaffed, such as in the Reception class, or overstaffed if pupils, who are funded for individual support, are absent.
23. The teaching of pupils who have special educational needs is good throughout the school and enables them to make good gains in their learning. The requirements of individual education plans are built into daily activities and staff ensure that support is given to meet individual and group needs. This ensures that all pupils are fully integrated into the life of the school community and that all develop good levels of self-confidence.

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

24. The curriculum provided by the school is good. It provides a rich and balanced curriculum that meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and of the guidelines for religious education for pupils aged five to 11. The curriculum for the children in the Foundation Stage is very good and provides them with a stimulating range of learning experiences. At the time of the last inspection there were no schemes of work in place for each subject. However, this has been rectified and national guidelines are used to ensure a consistent approach to skills development. The school has

satisfactory policies in place to teach about the misuse of drugs and other substances and for sex education, supported by lessons for personal, social and health education. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have some planned opportunities for personal, social and cultural development whilst the pupils in Years 3 to 6 are taught this in class assembly times.

25. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been introduced well and long term planning for mathematics and English is satisfactory. The reinforcement of the teaching of literacy and numeracy through other subjects is good throughout the school. For instance, although not introduced to the school as soon as in other schools, the National Literacy Strategy is now securely embedded in the practice of the school and is beginning to have an impact in raising standards. Pupils use their writing and reading skills across the whole curriculum. Good use is made of these skills, with pupils using strategies like listing, note taking, information writing and report writing to record their work. Good opportunities are made in every subject for pupils to express their views and to listen critically and objectively to others. Teachers' questioning ensures that pupils' confidence and skills develop well. Discussions are well used in subjects like geography, music and art and design and generally, pupils use these opportunities well, though good practice in managing these sessions with established and consistent rules needs to be shared.
26. The school has reviewed planning and development to ensure that the curriculum offers a wide range of opportunities that meet pupils' learning needs and aptitudes. This is particularly difficult when some classes are of mixed age pupils. Even with planning for units of work through a two-year cycle some pupils occasionally do not cover all the work they should. This is because the numbers in Years 3 to 6 fluctuate and time spent in the upper part of the school varies. The school is aware of this and is working hard to solve this problem. Curricular planning is achieved through satisfactory half-termly and weekly planning. These help to ensure that pupils learn appropriately for their age and ability. Additionally, there is targeted support for small groups of pupils whose standards do not quite reach the nationally expected ones in English and mathematics. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. This is because the identification process for pupils with such needs is clearly understood by staff and the individual education plans for these pupils are well written with appropriate attainable targets. Work planned for them helps meet their targets and they are well supported by teaching assistants in class. They make good progress in lessons.
27. The school has satisfactory links with the local secondary school that help pupils transfer to the next stage of their education. More capable pupils attend problem-solving courses and there is a well-established induction programme. Links with local primary schools are also satisfactory. There are good links with the pre-school on the same site whose pupils usually transfer to the main school. They visit the school, attend an assembly and have a stall at the summer fete. Links with the community that contribute to pupils' learning are good. The school enters enthusiastically into all church and village activities and in turn they are very supportive of the school. A local hotel recently gave the school £1,000 to buy new televisions and CD players. The church is used well by the school as a learning resource as well as for services and celebrations. Several pupils sing in the church choir.
28. The curriculum is greatly enriched for the pupils by a range of visits and visitors. The theatres, museums and art galleries in the nearby city of Bristol are well used to widen and deepen pupils' knowledge. Pupils travel further afield to Willsbridge Hall and Slimbridge Wildfowl Trust for environmental scientific work and to Tudor Lodge and Clevedon to support history topics. The local police and fire service help the school's life skills programme. The pupils raise money for cancer research and Rumanian children through activities such as Comic Relief, a mufti day and a toy sale. Local residents recall their experiences of the past and pupils interview others to find out their views on the increasing traffic congestion. There is a good range of extra-curricular clubs, particularly for pupils in Years 3 to 6. These include sports, art, gardening and information and communication technology activities.
29. The schools provision for equality of opportunity is satisfactory. Half of the junior pupils have instrumental lessons from peripatetic music staff. Some lessons take place before and after school, in break and lunchtimes. However, the vast majority take place during school lessons. The school has not developed a strategy that ensures pupils do not always miss the same part of the same lesson for a whole year.

30. The ethos of the school stresses its Christian foundation and provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory and has been maintained since the last inspection. There are opportunities within school and class assemblies for pupils to reflect upon the content of the occasion, though these are not stressed enough. There are too few opportunities for spiritual development planned in the curriculum for most pupils, though children in the Foundation Stage are given many relevant opportunities to wonder at the natural world.
31. Provision for pupils' moral development is unsatisfactory and has declined since the last inspection when it was considered very good. Pupils are expected to understand the consequences of their actions upon others and the difference between right and wrong, but too little time is spent directly discussing these issues and getting pupils, especially the oldest ones, to confront their own actions. Pupils are told how not to behave but too little emphasis is put on why. Consequently some pupils do not understand exactly why their actions are unacceptable, nor the distress they cause to others. Pupils, again especially the oldest ones, do not show respect to adults, constantly misbehaving in a very wearing, low-level way during lessons. They reluctantly conform when told, for example, to '*stop talking, pay attention, sit up!*' but immediately the teacher's attention moves away they continue talking, look elsewhere and slide down in their seats. Sometimes this constant need to remind pupils of the rudimentary rules of polite behaviour slows the lesson and therefore the rate of learning for all the pupils.
32. Provision for social development is satisfactory. At the time of the last inspection it was considered very good and this is a significant decline since then. There are opportunities for the oldest pupils to look after younger pupils in the playground through the playground friends scheme. Year 6 pupils read with those in Year 3 and both groups say they enjoy and learn from the experience. Two pupils from each class represent their peers on the school council, but this is still at an early stage of development and its impact on the life of pupils is limited. Each class offers opportunities for pupils to exercise responsibility through monitor jobs within the class. Most pupils are able to work together in small groups. Older pupils do not find it easy to talk to visitors and are socially gauche. Respect for school property is not embedded in pupils' behaviour especially when playing outside.
33. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory overall. This represents a decline since the last inspection when it was judged to be good. There are good opportunities for the pupils to learn about the culture of Great Britain, but too few for them to learn about the vibrant, multicultural city a few miles away. Good use is made of the museums, art galleries, theatres and the religious education resource centre in Bristol to help pupils understand their place in the world and their unique British inheritance. However, music and art studied in the curriculum do not embrace a wide range of time and place. Pupils learn about the major religions of the world in their religious education lessons, but only visit the local Anglican Church. The important Christian festivals of Christmas and Easter are regularly celebrated and the Hindu festival of Divali has been celebrated. Visitors from other religions such as Judaism have shared their beliefs with the pupils. However, there is a lack of recognition of people of other ethnic heritage in displays, book stock and written language, though seven per cent of the pupils come from such backgrounds.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

34. The school continues to provide a high level of care for the emotional and physical needs of its pupils. This view is shared by parents who spoke about the caring ethos of the school at their meeting. There are good procedures in place for the promotion and monitoring of attendance. However, the procedures to promote and monitor behaviour and to eliminate oppressive behaviour are unsatisfactory.
35. The school maintains appropriate records for first aid, fire drills, accident recording and the contact of family and friends in case of an emergency. Good procedures exist to ensure swimming pool safety. The procedures for child protection are effective and the designated teacher ensures that all members of staff have an appropriate understanding of it. The school looks after pupils well at dinnertime and in the playground but the midday supervisors do not always ensure that noise levels and behaviour in the hall are appropriate.

36. The governing body takes its responsibility for health and safety seriously through its site and security committee and the school reacted very quickly to rectify a safety concern, which was pointed out during the inspection.
37. The school promotes and monitors attendance well. The impact of this is that attendance rates have remained above the national average since the last inspection. However, the procedures for the promotion of good behaviour and for eliminating oppressive behaviour are unsatisfactory and are the result of the unsatisfactory provision of moral development across the school. The absence of a whole school behaviour policy also means that there is nothing on which to base a consistent application of behaviour management.
38. The procedures for monitoring personal development are satisfactory. Pupils receive individual support and their progress through the school is recorded well in their records of achievement. All members of staff have a good awareness of each child's strengths and weaknesses and plan to enable each child to make as much progress as possible to achieve realistic targets. The overall procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory. In English and mathematics the procedures are good and they have improved since the previous inspection. The use made of the information gained from these procedures, in these subjects, is also good. Assessments are undertaken at the end of suitable topics or units of work and teachers keep detailed records of pupils' current attainment, as well as the progress they have made. This assessment information is used effectively to ensure that pupils are provided with work that is suited to their particular needs, with pupils regularly being presented with a varying range of activities, in English and mathematics.
39. Procedures for monitoring pupils' progress through the school, in these subjects, are good. The school possesses considerable evidence about the attainment of pupils, both from its own procedures and through the information provided by the national and optional tests. This information is carefully used to plot the progress that pupils have made. It is also used to set targets for pupils in English and mathematics, relating to future improvement.
40. In the subjects of the curriculum other than English and mathematics, assessment is unsatisfactory, as it was at the time of the last inspection. Opportunities are sometimes listed in teachers' planning and general evaluations are occasionally produced at the end of units of work. However, at present practice is inconsistent. Where they exist, these evaluations do not provide enough information about the performance of individual pupils, to identify either their present attainment or the progress they have made. Few other records are kept. The information is also inadequate to help in the planning of new work that is suited to pupils' particular requirements.
41. The school is effective in identifying children with learning difficulties when they start school and ensures their needs are met. Teachers review pupils' targets, which are of good quality, on their individual education plans regularly. The special educational needs co-ordinator receives information about any child new to the school and is able to identify any concerns. These are shared with the pupil's teacher and the necessary support given to ensure that the pupils are given good care. The school has developed appropriate links with other agencies to ensure that pupils receive as much support as possible but does not receive help from the behavioural support team to gain advice on how best their needs can be met within the school. They know each of the pupils extremely well and the school is successful in caring for pupils who are known to need particular attention and for whom the school needs to be particularly vigilant. This is endorsed by the school's commitment to inclusion. Provision for pupils who have statements is good and the school ensures that all other agencies, as outlined in their statements, are fully involved. Annual reviews of the statements are appropriately completed and again all agencies involved with the pupils either attend the review or submit reports.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

42. The school promotes itself well to its parents and those who responded to the questionnaire or who attended the meeting had positive views about most aspects of school life. Parents hold St Helen's School in high esteem. The quality of information provided for parents is very good. The school has maintained the high quality of this aspect of school life since the last inspection.

43. The contribution of parents to school life is good. A significant number of parents help out in school on a regular basis in a variety of roles and many more provide effective support for visits into the community. The school also benefits from an active and hard working parent-teacher association. Parents are very supportive of the variety of activities that are planned and some of the money raised from these events has been used to build the pergola and quiet area and to provide bark for the adventure playgrounds.
44. The information provided by the school is very good. Annual reports on pupils' progress are very informative and they include appropriate targets to enable pupils to make further progress. Similarly, the weekly newsletters are very informative and attractively designed for easy reading.
45. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are always invited to play a full part in the special educational needs process. They are encouraged to attend review meetings to discuss their children's individual education plan. Parents of statemented pupils attend and contribute well to the annual reviews.
46. The school values all the support given by its parents and it has a good impact on pupils' learning.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

47. Both the acting headteacher and her temporary deputy are steering the highly committed staff well through an interim period between substantive headteachers. All staff are extremely dedicated and share a common vision, which enables them to work closely together as a team. The school aims to develop independence, strong values, respect cultural identities and encourage tolerance and fairness; these are satisfactorily met.
48. The delegation of staff with management responsibilities is satisfactory overall with a number of good features. The extremely conscientious assessment co-ordinator has recently developed a system that tracks pupils progress in English and mathematics as they move through the school. She has been actively involved in analysing test papers and provides detailed information for her colleagues. The co-ordinator for the Foundation Stage is an excellent practitioner who leads by example. She has worked very hard planning a suitable curriculum and has an outstanding vision for the needs of the youngest children in school. Co-ordinators are talented practitioners in their specific areas of responsibility and promote their subjects well. Each subject co-ordinator manages a budget and all have a good awareness of available resources in school. The English co-ordinator, who is also the substantive deputy headteacher and acting headteacher, has displayed good practice by analysing the national test results in her subject. In her role as a senior manager she also has an understanding of overall standards in English. However, all other co-ordinators have a limited understanding of standards in their subject areas throughout the school and this is a weakness. The substantive deputy headteacher, who has been in post for five terms, has not been fully involved in the management of the school until just prior to the inspection. As a result, her knowledge of management issues is at an early stage of development. The staff are truly committed to the success of the school; the interim senior management team are eager and keen to move the school forward and there is a good capacity to succeed.
49. The management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The co-ordinator is very experienced and all the paperwork is well organised. The requirements of the Code of Practice are fully met. There is a good special education needs policy, which endorses the school's commitment to the full inclusion of all pupils. The special education needs co-ordinator effectively monitors the targets on the individual education plans and the overall provision for pupils with special educational needs. The school supplements the special educational needs budget which is spent on high quality learning support assistants who have been well trained. However, the management of their deployment is less effective. The governing body is well informed about the special needs provision in the school through regular meetings between the special educational needs co-ordinator and the designated governor.
50. The governing body is extremely supportive of the school and governors are very proud of its caring ethos. They share their professional expertise willingly and a small number of governors help in

school on a day-to-day basis. The governing body fulfils its responsibilities satisfactorily. The school prospectus and governors' annual report to parents meet requirements and there is an appropriate committee structure. Satisfactory strategies are in place for checking the performance of the headteacher and school planning issues are discussed thoroughly. The governing body is very clear about the strengths of the school, but is just starting to develop an understanding of its weaknesses. For example, there has not been an awareness of the underlying reasons for the problems with the attitudes and behaviour of a small number of pupils. The governing body is aware of the need to provide value for money and appropriately applies the principles of competition and challenge to different levels of service and quality of product used. However, their use of consultation and discussion with the pupils, parents and wider community is limited.

51. The monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching are satisfactory. A suitable framework for checking and judging teaching has been recently devised, but is yet to be used effectively to identify the strengths and weaknesses of various methods. In addition to this the school has not developed opportunities for subject co-ordinators to watch their colleagues teach so that strategies for effective teaching can be shared. This was identified as a weakness in the previous report.
52. The school development plan is a detailed document for the coming year and identifies the main tasks that will be undertaken and highlights where money will be spent. The governors are clear about the tasks included on the plan and have a suitable awareness of how the areas identified for improvement will be evaluated. There is also an overview of priorities to be considered in the future but procedures for these strategies need to be budgeted for over a longer period of time.
53. The school has an appropriate programme for the performance management of staff. There is a committee that meets annually to review the performance of the headteacher and this is satisfactorily carried out. The areas identified for teachers are linked to priorities in whole school planning as well as personal issues highlighted for improvement. There are suitable systems in place for the induction of staff new to the school and newly qualified teachers are well supported. All staff are aware of their duties and responsibilities, carrying them out in a committed and enthusiastic manner.
54. The budget plan is appropriately linked to areas detailed in the school development plan. The governing body has regular reports about how the budget is spent and members of the finance committee meet on a regular basis to discuss issues as they arise. Recommendations from the most recent audit report have been successfully implemented. The school administrator and her clerical assistant manage the day-to-day financial and administration affairs of the school very well. Procedures concerning invoices, statements and budget figures are accurately and efficiently dealt with through the expert use of new technology systems.
55. There is a satisfactory match of qualified teaching and support staff to meet the demands of the curriculum. The teaching of music is enhanced by the very good provision of peripatetic specialists. However, the allocation of support staff is not as effective as it could be. For example, provision staff in the Reception class is minimal and yet the experienced nursery nurse is not used to support this age group. In addition to this there are a number of classes where support staff could be deployed more effectively.
56. The adequacy of accommodation is satisfactory overall. The presence of an on-site swimming pool ensures very good provision for the teaching of physical education. Additionally, the two adventure playgrounds allow pupils the opportunity for stimulating play. The caretaker and his staff are very effective members of the school community and they ensure that the school is well looked after. Learning resources are also satisfactory overall. However, the provision of multicultural books in the school library is limited.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

57. To improve the quality of education, the governing body and staff should:

i. Improve the attitudes and behaviour of a small number of pupils by:

- introducing a planned programme for moral development that provides a clear moral code and systematically promotes the school's values; and

(Paragraph 31)

- devise a whole school approach to behaviour management and ensure that it is consistently applied throughout the school.

(Paragraphs 9, 10, 20, 34, 37, 50 and 118)

ii. Improve the procedures for assessing pupils' achievement in all other subjects, except English and mathematics by:

- introducing consistent procedures to check pupils' achievement and ensure that the results of these are used to inform teachers' planning.

(Paragraphs 38, 98, 102 and 124)

iii. Ensure that homework is used to reinforce pupils' learning by:

- devising a progressive programme for homework that is fully understood by parents and pupils and is appropriately linked with class work.

(Paragraphs 21, 82, 87, 105 and 106)

iv. Develop the role of the subject co-ordinators by:

- involving them in the checking and evaluating of teaching and learning.

(Paragraphs 83, 98 and 112)

In addition to the key issues above, the following less important issues should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- Ensure that all pupils are fully aware of their own National Curriculum levels when their targets are set.

(Paragraphs 21 and 82)

- Prepare the pupils to live and work in a multicultural society.

(Paragraph 33)

- Review the deployment of support staff, particularly in relation to the Reception class.

(Paragraphs 22, 55 and 82)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

48

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

30

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	4	12	23	9	0	0	0
Percentage	8	25	48	19	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

YR – Y6

Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	263
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	17

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

YR – Y6

Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	7
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	27

English as an additional language

No of pupils

Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1
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Pupil mobility in the last school year

No of pupils

Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	26
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	21

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.4
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
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	25	17	42

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	23	24	23
	Girls	17	17	17
	Total	40	41	40
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95 (87)	98 (87)	95 (95)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	24	23	23
	Girls	17	17	16
	Total	41	40	39
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	98 (87)	95 (89)	93 (84)
	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	24	22	46

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	18	19	22
	Girls	17	12	19
	Total	35	31	41
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	76 (76)	67 (74)	89 (93)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	19	19
	Girls	19	15	15
	Total	36	34	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	78 (78)	74 (81)	74 (88)
	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	244	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	2	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	6	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	1	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	5	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.3
Average class size	29

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	159

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
	£
Total income	599,291
Total expenditure	597,302
Expenditure per pupil	2,206
Balance brought forward from previous year	18,179
Balance carried forward to next year	20,168

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Number of questionnaires sent out	263
Number of questionnaires returned	98

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	63	35	0	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	62	33	5	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	33	60	3	3	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	35	50	9	0	4
The teaching is good.	61	34	3	1	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	49	36	10	2	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	58	36	4	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	62	35	1	1	1
The school works closely with parents.	43	43	7	5	3
The school is well led and managed.	46	44	5	3	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	49	45	4	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	39	49	5	2	3

Other issues raised by parents

Some parental concern regarding the behaviour of a small number of pupils was highlighted as a written response and confirmed by the inspection team.

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

58. Children are admitted into either the Reception class or a mixed Reception Year 1 class at the start of the academic year in which they will be five. The reception children follow the Foundation Stage curriculum¹, a step in education prior to starting Year 1 of the National Curriculum. Most have attended the local pre-school before they start school. There is a wide range of standards on entry into school. Assessments made with the children and inspection evidence, suggests that the children have average skills in all areas of development when they start school.
59. During their first term in the Reception class almost all children confidently work within the second or third stage or '*stepping stone*'. By the time they are ready to start Year 1 of the National Curriculum all children have made good progress in relation to their prior attainment and most are working beyond the final stage or '*stepping stone*' in all areas of learning and attainment is above that expected for children of this age. This is an improvement since the last inspection when progress was judged to be satisfactory.
60. Children make good progress because of the very good teaching and learning. This is a good improvement since the last inspection when it was judged to be predominantly good. Children quickly settle into the routines of the class because very good procedures ensure that good links are firmly established with home and this enables them to be well prepared to start school. The information collated from baseline assessment is used very effectively to provide appropriate support. Learning support assistants work very closely with the teachers and they work effectively as a team. Work is planned with a very clear focus on children's individual learning needs and a wide range of stimulating activities in all areas of learning. All adults give very clear instructions and encourage children to listen carefully. High quality use of praise motivates the children, encourages engagement in learning and promotes their self-esteem. Both the indoor and outdoor areas provide a stimulating learning environment where there is a very good range of learning resources available for the children. This has a positive impact on their learning. The provision for children prior to starting Year 1 of the National Curriculum is excellent and good improvements have been made since the last inspection.

Personal, social and emotional development

61. Nearly all the children enter the Reception class with levels of skills in personal and social development that are as expected for their age. By the time they are ready to start Year 1 of the National Curriculum the vast majority are exceeding the final stage or '*stepping stone*' of the early learning goals in this area. This shows good achievement and reflects the very skilful teaching in both classes where children are constantly encouraged to feel confident about what they can achieve. Teachers and other staff successfully use all opportunities to further children's personal, social and emotional development. Children undress themselves for physical education and attend to their own personal hygiene after visiting the toilet. They are very well behaved, polite and have a very good awareness of simple class rules. The children take turns with equipment and happily share resources. For example, they take turns playing in their '*Garden Centre*' and know that they have to share the equipment. They are developing a good ability to work together. For example, children play happily together or beside each other with the plants and know that they must take turns. This was also clearly evident when they were observed sharing a very precious butterfly. This was passed around the class and each child sensibly took a turn to explore it.
62. The children are developing very good listening skills and make progress in the ability to concentrate on the tasks set. They show consideration towards each other and learn how to apologise effectively if they upset someone by their actions. The children have a developing respect for different beliefs

¹ This consists of six areas of learning: personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy development; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development; and creative development. Each area of learning is made up of four stages or '*stepping stones*', from which both progress and standards can be measured.

and cultures. For instance, they have celebrated the Chinese New Year, participated in the Hindu story of Ramu and Sita and made diva lamps to recognise the significance of Divali. They respond very well to the wide range of stimulating activities. The children show real interest in all activities and always sit quietly when adults are talking. Very good attitudes towards learning develop as a response to the skilful management of the teachers and learning support staff. The adults provide very good role models for the children; they always treat each other and the children with courtesy and respect. This leads to trusting relationships and helps the children to understand one another's point of view. Staff also promote children's personal development effectively by organising equipment very well and ensuring that resources are easily accessible to them. This helps them to become independent learners. This was evident when the children were required to have 'tickets' when they went to the class cinema and then organise the appropriate collection of these. Provision for this area of learning has made a very good improvement since the last inspection.

Communication, language and literacy

63. Children start school with a wide range of skills but attainment on entry is broadly average. By the time the children are ready to start Year 1 of the National Curriculum, the majority will have attained or exceeded the final stage or 'stepping stone' of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Children speak confidently and write and read well. This represents a good improvement since the time of the last inspection, when standards were described as 'broadly average'. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is very good with some excellent teaching seen. Teachers plan a very wide range of activities and adapt the literacy strategy extremely well to meet the needs of these young children. Across all areas of learning, activities are characterised by a strong focus on developing children's communication skills, writing and reading.
64. Through the whole range of activities in all areas of learning, children are encouraged to listen, discuss and give opinions and this has a very positive impact on their rate of learning. Teachers show children that their efforts at communicating are valued. Activities are planned carefully with the specific focus of improving speaking and listening skills, like class games such as passing a message from one to another. Key vocabulary is very well taught so that children use correct terms like head, thorax and abdomen, when referring to the parts of a butterfly or pull, poke, pinch and roll when discussing how clay can be manipulated to make sculptures. All children sit quietly and listen very well, for example when listening to a song or instructions and their knowledge of rhymes is good. A few less capable children speak in short phrases but the ethos of warm encouragement and the teachers' very high expectations give high levels of confidence to these as well as other children.
65. All children quickly start to show an interest in books and enjoy sharing them with adults individually and within larger groups. They learn which way to hold a book and how to turn pages and join in well-known phrases. When discussing the book *'The Very Hungry Caterpillar'*, selected from a collection of books by Eric Carle, it is clear that children know about authors and illustrators and find books exciting. Average and more capable children can use pictures to gain clues to work out unknown words and use initial sounds to help. Many already recognise several frequently used words by their shape. All children have a very clear understanding that print carries meaning. Less capable children can 'tell' the story of *'The Very Hungry Caterpillar'* and clearly remember the sequence of events. Teaching is very good, linking vocabulary and images with words and letter sounds. The excellent opportunities for discussion and for example, to handle real butterflies, ensure that words and sounds are remembered and this enhances the teaching of reading extremely well.
66. When children first start school the average children can hold a pencil and trace lines with reasonable accuracy, with the more capable making reasonable attempts at letter formation. These skills are immediately developed, together with an encouragement to use their writing to record what they know. By Remembrance Day in November, a more capable child wrote *'Wig r sandy stil'* to record the time of silence and by Palm Sunday, writes, unaided, *'the peepoy shouted hosasa as jesus went a logg the rod on a donkey'*. This high level of progress results from the very good teaching in writing. Very good strategies are used to encourage children to write. Sounds are taught extremely well and children rearrange words and copy model sentences. They work on letter and word recognition at every opportunity and are encouraged to form sentences when speaking. Writing is an integral part of their world so that in their knowledge and understanding work, they label creatures like snails, 'slime' and slugs, 'slipee' and label their own pictures of plants with, 'roos', 'bulb' and 'leevs'. This

demonstrates a very plausible attempt at writing words, using secure phonic knowledge. Less capable children, who have difficulty controlling a pencil on admission, work on a wide range of very well prepared and extremely well focused tasks to practise pencil control and letter formation. By Christmas, they can trace over words reasonably and by Easter can copy '*Jesus gave his special friends bread and wine*' with well formed letters though still somewhat variable in size. Children can read their own work back to others and all recognise and most can write their own name. The vast majority are on course to attain and many will exceed the early learning goals in writing.

Mathematical development

67. Children make good progress and they are on course to exceed the expected level or final '*stepping stone*' when they leave Reception. This is a good improvement since the last inspection. All children successfully count to 20 and the more capable children count further. The majority clearly understand the concept of counting out an appropriate number of objects with confidence and both sort and sequence objects. The children confidently remember number rhymes, such as '*Five Currant Buns*'. In using water and sand, they understand such words as '*empty*' and '*full*' and in comparing length they confidently use '*long*' and '*short*'. Many children successfully extend their mathematical vocabulary to name a variety of two and three-dimensional shapes. The children understand the concept of addition and subtraction and they understand how to find '*one more*' and '*one less*'. More capable children successfully add two numbers. Children carefully count out amounts of money when '*buying*' milk, or tickets for the '*St Helen's Cinema*! They are also successfully developing their number skills through paying for items in the '*Garden Centre*'. Most children are developing appropriate control, in forming their numbers correctly. Only a very small number occasionally reverse some of their digits.
68. The quality of teaching is very good overall. The work is very well planned and carefully matched to the needs of the children. Teachers have high expectations of the children. Many opportunities are provided for the children to count within practical activities, such as counting money, working out numbers present and those having dinners and sandwiches. A very good provision of resources, such as water, sand and number games and number lines, help children develop their mathematical language and understanding.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

69. Children start school with some general knowledge and understanding of the world around them, but by the time the children are ready to start Year 1 of the National Curriculum, they have achieved good levels in this area of learning and exceeded the final stage or '*stepping stone*'. The overall quality of teaching and learning is very good and this has an important impact on the progress made. All children are fully included in the activities planned to develop this particular area of learning. The children talk confidently about everyday occurrences, use words such as '*day*' and '*night*' and gain an appropriate understanding of the past and present. For example, they have created their own personal timelines, which show how they have developed from a baby to a toddler to an infant. They also understand that they will eventually grow into a teenager. They show an interest in the world in which they live. For instance, they know how beans grow and confidently label the main parts of a plant. They have experimented with candles and use a good range of vocabulary to describe how the wax melts. When they first start school they talk about their own families and friends with growing confidence. They develop a good understanding of Christian celebration such as Shrove Tuesday and know that at Christmas time the birthday of Jesus is celebrated. The children operate simple equipment such as tape recorders and competently use their control skills to write, play games and paint pictures using computer programs. They build a wide range of objects using a good range of construction equipment. They confidently use simple tools and have a good sense of how to join materials together.

Physical development

70. Children make good progress and they are on course to exceed the expected levels of attainment at the end of Reception. In class, children hold pencils and crayons correctly and they show increasing skill in producing their writing neatly and colouring pictures carefully. Their dexterity in handling large and small items in the classroom is developing very well. For instance, they carefully use

construction kits and jigsaws, thread small objects onto a string and sew around the outline of a butterfly. Children handle a range of materials with skill. For example, they use dough and plasticine to make animals, letters and numbers. Children show appropriate control using paintbrushes and they cut out items such as trees and raindrops with some accuracy. They handle the construction toys with confidence and produce houses, vehicles and figures. The children have suitable opportunities to use larger outdoor play items and those provided aid the further development of their physical skills. For instance, in lessons in the hall they show good control and co-ordination as they confidently bounce a ball and skip and hop around the room. The quality of teaching is consistently very good. Both teachers and learning support assistants join in with the children and demonstrate how to carry out different activities and develop various skills. A wide and varied array of activities is provided and the need for safety is always emphasised. The children are encouraged to keep busy all day and this has an important impact on their attainment.

Creative development

71. At the time of the last inspection standards in this area of learning were described as '*sound*'. Improvement in this area of learning is very good. The vast majority of children have reached the final stage or '*stepping stone*' of this area of learning. They will exceed the early learning goals in the art aspect and many will reach the early learning goals in music and dance by the time that they are ready to start Year 1 of the National Curriculum. Teaching in this aspect is very good with some excellent teaching seen so that during their time in Reception children make very good progress in their creative development.
72. There are very good opportunities to use paints, pencils, crayons, paper weaving, pattern work and clay and to complete high quality collages, sculptures and pictures. These opportunities to experiment with materials, texture and colour extend across all areas of learning. Children have used pencil and dyes to record what they observe when looking at plants and the results are excellent. All children paint a picture of themselves mixing colour very well to get accurate skin tones and hair and eye colours. Careful observation and fine attention to using materials of a very high quality ensure that children use paint, clay and colour extremely carefully. A very good level of discussion when looking at three-dimensional figures ensures that every viewpoint is examined when making their own clay animals from their designs. The vast majority of children exceed the early learning goal relating to exploring colour, texture, form and shape in two and three-dimensions.
73. In both classes, there are frequent opportunities to sing from memory and explore sound. Enjoyment of music is very evident among these young children and singing is often a spontaneous response to enhance a discussion or activity, creating an excellent ethos for learning. The children sing confidently. Songs are often chosen or adapted to foster their knowledge and understanding of the world, so that having sung '*heads, shoulders, knees and toes*' and correctly identified the body parts, memorised and mimed, children sing '*head, thorax, abdomen, abdomen*' to complement their learning in science. More capable older children respond rhythmically using clapping or un-pitched instruments in time and attempting to vary the tempo with a fair degree of success. Younger children respond well to challenges to shake, tap and scrape their instruments when the '*composer*' signals that they should. They use the instruments to make soft and loud sounds and all children can name instruments like maracas, triangle and guiro with a high degree of accuracy. High quality teaching ensures that the vast majority of children exceed the early learning goal relating to recognising and exploring sound.
74. Their use of imagination through dance is also fostered enabling them to express their feelings with great sensitivity. Opportunities to look at real butterflies were developed through mime with children looping slowly like caterpillars, spinning themselves quickly into a cocoon and remaining still whilst they changed into butterflies. Silky scarves were then used as wings and children flew in and out, carefully avoiding each other, resting on '*flowers*' and sipping nectar as they wished. These excellent opportunities for expressive work support the children's spiritual development extremely well and enable them to demonstrate a very high level of sensitivity.

ENGLISH

75. Standards at the end of Year 2 are above average and in Year 6 are average in writing, speaking and listening but above average in reading. This signifies a slight dip in standards in Year 6 since the last inspection, when standards in both Year 2 and Year 6 were above the national average. The school has tracked the progress of pupils from Year 3 to Year 6 and the evidence shows that pupils make good progress. However, the high incidence of pupils aged seven to 11 leaving and joining the school has caused standards to dip slightly. Results in the Year 2002 national tests were well above the national average in Year 2 and above those in similar schools. However, results in Year 6 were below the national average due to only a small proportion of pupils attaining the higher level in the tests. The school continues to give frequent opportunities for speaking and listening and has worked hard to improve writing and reading skills. Pupils are encouraged to write in a range of styles in all subjects and this has consolidated their literacy skills. The evidence in pupils' books and in lessons, shows that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress throughout the school and there are no differences noted between the attainment of boys and girls.
76. Speaking and listening standards are above average in Year 2 and average in Year 6. Pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 make good progress because teachers have high expectations, ensuring that all are fully included in discussion sessions. Year 2 pupils listen carefully to each other and the vast majority already know that they must take turns to speak. Lessons are interesting and refer, incidentally, to other subjects or experiences and this encourages the pupils to think and concentrate. Throughout Years 1 and 2 many opportunities are provided for the pupils to speak in focused groups and whole class situations. This had a positive impact on their speaking and listening and the development of their own self-esteem. More capable pupils in Year 2 can confidently describe the parts of stories they have enjoyed most and younger Year 1 pupils can describe how to mould clay using vocabulary like *'pinch, pull and roll'*.
77. In Years 3 to 6 this emphasis to nurture speaking skills is continued. Pupils are positively encouraged to give their views orally and speaking skills are well supported by the encouragement for pupils to prepare talks. Pupils in Year 3 described their favourite pastimes, giving well-prepared speeches to their peers. One described, in a clearly planned and well-delivered talk, the equipment and the amount of practice needed to reach competition standard in gymnastics. Her peers listened attentively and asked pertinent questions at the conclusion. In Years 5 and 6, when the rules about taking part are clearly understood, pupils give detailed answers to questions. Year 6 pupils, talking about the quest genre in reading, could explain links between unlikely heroes like *'Frodo Baggins'* and *'Harry Potter'*. However, when rules are not clearly established, some pupils cannot stay focused in the relaxed ethos of discussion times and for them, discussion lacks purpose. Less capable pupils are fully included in discussion and because of the good encouragement, usually articulate clearly, though without the richness in their vocabulary.
78. In Year 2 and Year 6 standards in reading are above average. Guided reading sessions are consistently used with the clear intention of raising standards and these are successful sessions. An enthusiasm for books is positively fostered in Year 1 and builds on the very rich experiences of children in the Foundation Stage. By Year 2, pupils are confident readers and enjoy books. The more capable pupils read with expression and can explain how to use the contents list and index to find information. They understand what the author, illustrator and publisher do and can name and discuss the works of their favourite authors like J K Rowling, Dick-King Smith and Roald Dahl. A good command of phonics ensures that less capable pupils break down and sound out unfamiliar words. These pupils know the difference between fiction and non-fiction books and can locate, though not confidently use, the contents list. All pupils become very immersed in reading tasks like finding and listing stories by a particular author and comparing illustrations by different illustrators. Teachers prepare and support reading tasks very well. For example, when discussing authors' style, the range of books is wide and authors' notes are provided at the appropriate reading level for all groups of pupils. Less capable pupils are particularly well supported in reading tasks, so that they are able to summarise the story of *'The Shopping Basket'* succinctly, using voices for *'the horrid animals who steal the fruit'*.
79. In Year 6, most pupils continue to be enthusiastic readers due to the regular and high quality emphasis placed on reading in school. Many Year 6 pupils choose books, having seen films or having been recommended to read them by friends and several have clear preferences relating to genre. The positive support for reading through the school ensures they enjoy books by authors as

different as J K Rowling, Jacqueline Wilson, J R Tolkien and Enid Blyton. All have a good understanding of fiction and non-fiction books and many can précis stories quickly and interestingly. More capable pupils can refer to a wide range of stories they have read in order to support their views. For example, when an average pupil asked *'What is a staff?'* a more capable pupil referred to Gandalf, the Harry Potter wizards and others, sharing the view that *'a hand reaching out for a staff is like trying to keep links across time between generations of wizards'*. Less capable pupils are also well supported in improving their reading skills and their understanding of books and vocabulary. Questions and answers are discussed quietly and individually with these pupils so that they can take a full part in lessons. Library skills are developing appropriately and pupils sometimes search out information to support their learning within other areas of the curriculum. Targets for improvement are usually recorded and this has an important impact on the progress made by the pupils. Younger pupils in Year 3 and 4 read their own work confidently, identifying the difference between the dialogue and narrative and using emphasis and different voices to highlight and enhance their reading. The love of reading is positively encouraged through the school's *'Book Week'* and *'Bedtime Story'* sessions.

80. Standards in writing at the end of Year 2 are above average and in Year 6 are average. In Years 1 and 2 pupils build on the good work in the Reception Year, so that Year 2 pupils develop a neat and legible style of letter formation and a high level of confidence in using sounds for spelling. They take care over the presentation of their work and usually the average and more capable pupils write in a cursive style. Year 2 pupils are given a wide range of opportunities to write. The more capable pupils write confidently using full stops and capital letters accurately, usually using apostrophes for speech marks and contractions correctly. Bullet points are used for listings such as when writing a recipe. Average pupils can write clear, meaningful sentences and accurately use full stops and capital letters, sometimes using question marks. Some opportunities to write poetry show that pupils can use this style of writing effectively, with an average pupil writing, *'Here comes the wind, drying all the washing'*. Very good attention is given to rehearsing sounds to help in spelling. This means that less capable pupils are not hampered in their progress and can write at length too. In Year 2, having written three or four sentences in September, less capable pupils can write lengthy pieces with a beginning, middle and end. Although the writing is not consistently separated by full stops and capital letters, it makes good sense and ideas are followed through well. All pupils make good progress. A particular strength of the teaching is the opportunity to use the different styles of writing across all areas of the curriculum so that pupils can practise their skills regularly and usefully.
81. In Years 3 and 4 extended writing skills are developed further. Good opportunities to refine and improve their writing are given and pupils use adjectives, verbs and adverbs confidently. A simple phrase like *'speaking quietly'* was improved to *'muttering'* and then to *'whispering and hatching their plan,'* in a shared writing session. Year 4 and 5 pupils use a neat cursive style and by this age, pupils' handwriting is above average. More capable Year 4 pupils know about idioms and can explain that to be in someone's black book means *'they have been in disfavour with someone for doing something wrong.'* Teachers plan well and work hard to enhance pupils' vocabulary and to introduce different forms of writing. One less capable pupil in Year 4 writes in poetic style, *'one night, happiness just flew awa'*. By Year 5, pupils have an appropriate grasp of different poetic forms like Haiku and can count syllables to ensure correct phrasing. In Year 6, a number of pupils are clearly working at above average level for their age, for example, reasoning arguments convincingly using well-chosen and precise vocabulary. These more capable Year 6 pupils can separate fact like *'Brunel won a competition to design a bridge'* from opinion like, *'Brunel was the greatest of England's engineers in Victorian England'* in information text. Satisfactory use is made of their information and communication technology skills to publish completed stories and poems. Average and less capable pupils can create interesting phrases and sentences as the introduction, the climax or *'a cliff hanger'* in a story and good use is made of their writing skills across other areas of the curriculum for example, to communicate in both formal and informal styles with their friends. The wide range of opportunities now provided in writing reflects the school's priority to develop this area of English and is beginning to prove successful in raising standards.
82. The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good and has improved since the last inspection. Teachers have a good understanding of the literacy strategy and it is used well to ensure that skills are taught progressively throughout the school. Teachers make good use of a wide range of resources to motivate and interest the pupils and plan carefully for different groups within the class. This ensures that concentration is usually good. The use of support staff, when they are available, is

good. The support given in Year 1 and Year 2 ensures that all pupils receive teaching of a consistently high quality. However, in some classes, where older pupils are often taught in mixed age groups, teachers have no support at crucial teaching times. They plan very well and use their own time and skills fairly but the lack of in-class support means that their expertise is in great demand. A lack of skilled intervention at the right moment sometimes hampers progress and impedes concentration. Teachers use questioning appropriately to assess what the pupils can understand and use this information to adapt tasks in ensuring that the needs of all pupils are met. Pupils' books confirm that targets for improvement are devised from the monitoring and checking of the pupils' work and this has continued since the last inspection, though has not developed significantly. Homework is given sporadically; regular spellings and reading in Year 1 and Year 2 are followed by some opportunities for older pupils to work at home, but these opportunities are not consistent.

83. Subject management is good. The co-ordinator has a clear plan for development in the subject and teaching improvements already introduced, like the use of writing, reading and speaking and listening across the whole curriculum and the work to extend pupils' vocabulary have already paid dividends. The school tracks pupils' progress well, using regular testing and carefully sampling work. Targets for improvement are shared with both pupils and parents, who are clearly told what pupils can do, but the process has not yet been extended to discuss with pupils what else must be learned to attain a higher level. The co-ordinator has worked hard to audit resources and provide suitable materials to support the teaching of the literacy strategy. She acknowledges a need to monitor the provision and completion of homework to ensure consistency. The shared planning systems in place ensure that teachers' planning is monitored but, as yet, there have been few opportunities for the co-ordinator to be involved in class observations so that the most effective teaching methods can be analysed and shared amongst staff.

MATHEMATICS

84. Standards at the end of Year 2 are above the national average and at the end of Year 6 are broadly in line with the average. No difference was noted between the performance of boys and girls. Pupils in Year 1 and 2 are making good progress. About a quarter of the pupils who are currently in Year 6 have joined the school since Year 3, many of them more recently. Evidence shows that the pupils who have been in the school since Year 2 have also made good progress. In the national tests in 2002, the school's results show a similar pattern to that found now. At the time of the school's previous inspection, standards were judged to be above average at the end of Years 2 and 6. Therefore, standards have remained the same in Years 1 and 2. The changes in the nature of the school's population have had an impact on standards at the end of Year 6 but all pupils are still making good progress in Years 3 to 6. This is because of the introduction of the numeracy strategy and the improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection.
85. At the end of Year 2, pupils successfully carry out a range of practical and problem solving activities and, although a small number of pupils find it difficult, many confidently try to discover their own ways to find solutions. Pupils have a clear understanding of addition and subtraction. Most know the multiplication facts relating to two, five and ten and undertake a range of multiplication and division exercises accordingly. They have a clear understanding of place value to three figures and they recognise odd and even numbers. The pupils successfully identify halves and quarters and more capable pupils find a fraction of a whole number. Pupils confidently carry out addition and subtraction of money in the context of shopping bills. Most pupils correctly identify two and three-dimensional shapes and have a good understanding of time on the hour and half-hour. In measuring activities pupils confidently use non-standard units of measure and most readily use standard measures as well. Pupils successfully collect data, such as on their favourite comic characters and they carefully represent their findings in bar graphs.
86. At the end of Year 6, pupils successfully undertake a variety of practical work. However, a minority have difficulties in tackling problem solving activities because of some limitations in their understanding of mathematical language. In particular, they often find it difficult to identify the correct form of mathematics required to solve a problem. Most pupils are confident in undertaking work in addition and subtraction and they have a clear knowledge of place value to seven figures. However, a number of pupils lack confidence in saying the times-tables and this has an adverse effect on their

ability to successfully undertake tasks in multiplication and division. Pupils have been introduced to decimals to two places and many are able to use them accurately in the context of measurement and money. Most pupils have a clear understanding of fractions and, whilst a small number find it difficult, many can identify equivalent fractions. The vast majority of pupils calculate the area and perimeter of simple shapes. Pupils successfully identify a variety of angles, such as acute and obtuse angles. Pupils collect data on a variety of issues. For example, Year 4 pupils have found out information about ways of travelling to school. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have found out information on the opinions of local shoppers and have successfully produced a range of suitable graphs to illustrate their findings. Most pupils understand the concept of probability and they confidently use the appropriate language in their work.

87. The quality of teaching and learning is good. This is an overall improvement since the previous report. Lessons are carefully planned, based on the pattern of the National Numeracy framework. In particular, teachers make most careful allowance for the provision of practical and problem solving activities and care is also taken to ensure that pupils receive work that is suited to their differing needs. More challenge is now provided in the work. All teachers make good use of mental activities at the beginning of lessons. For example, in a good lesson in Year 2 the teacher started the session with a practical activity that focused on number bonds. They are also aware of the need to continue to extend pupils' mathematical vocabulary and are careful to address this issue during lessons. Teachers have good subject knowledge, provide clear instruction and give much well directed support throughout. Just occasionally, the introduction to a lesson is overlong, with the result that some pupils become inattentive. However, lessons are usually brisk in pace, expectations are generally appropriate and much help and guidance are provided. As a result, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good gains in their overall mathematical ability. Pupils clearly enjoy the work, particularly the mental activities. They settle to their written and practical tasks with interest and enthusiasm; they work well with other pupils when required; they know what they are expected to do and most make considerable efforts to accomplish their tasks. Pupils are usually well behaved. In Years 1 and 2 they are very well behaved and this enables them to concentrate well and make suitable progress. Whilst a small number of pupils are less careful, most take pride in the appearance of their work. Teachers mark pupils' work promptly, but, although some teachers provide regular comments of advice or praise, others do not carry out the practice consistently. The current provision of homework is inadequate to significantly support pupils' learning.
88. The school utilises the National Numeracy Strategy document as its scheme of work. Staff make appropriate additions where they believe they are needed. Teachers use the scheme well to produce good quality planning. The strategy itself has been implemented effectively. The subject co-ordinator is enthusiastic and knowledgeable, as well as being a good practitioner. She carefully monitors work being undertaken in the school and regularly supports her colleagues in their classrooms. Assessment procedures have improved since the time of the last report and are now good. They are being used most effectively to identify pupils' current attainment, the progress they have made and to provide work that is suited to their particular needs. Suitable use is also made of this information to plot the progress that individual pupils make as they move through the school and to provide them with targets for improving their work. The school has also identified pupils with a particular aptitude for mathematics and most suitable provision is being made for them. Many pupils find mathematics an exciting subject. The excitement generated, for example when identifying solutions to problems, helps develop pupils' spiritual awareness. Mathematics is used appropriately in other subjects, such as science and design and technology and suitable use is now made of information and communication technology, to further develop pupils' mathematical skills, especially in relation to data handling.

SCIENCE

89. The 2002 teacher assessments showed that standards achieved by seven year olds were average when compared with nationally and with similar schools. The 2002 statutory test results for 11 year olds show that standards achieved were above average when compared nationally and with similar schools. Inspection findings indicate that good standards have been maintained in Year 6 and standards have improved in Year 2, as consequence of a whole school focus on science. At the time of the last inspection science was a strength of the school and this has been well maintained.

All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. There are no differences between the attainment of boys and girls.

90. By the end of Year 2, pupils are developing a good understanding of the scientific process through both experimental and fieldwork. They know that the bodies and the abilities of both humans and other animals change as they grow older. The pupils explain the differences between plants and animals clearly. They understand the need for a healthy diet and exercise. Pupils make a simple electrical circuit and say what would make it stop working. They know that different materials have different properties and that some, like water, can change and some cannot. Pupils collect evidence, through visiting the various habitats of field, woodland and hedgerow in the school grounds, about the plant and animal life. Sensible suggestions are made to support the reasons for their findings. They record their work neatly in a variety of ways.
91. By the end of Year 6, their knowledge of plant life is extensive and they are secure in their understanding of the needs of plants. For example, one pupil explained that his diagram *'shows that plants need light to grow healthily'*. Pupils study the topic of forces in depth, conducting several experiments to evaluate their predictions. For instance as another pupil explained, *'The more weight on the spinner, the faster it will fall. This is because the weight pulling it down has increased'*. When learning that new materials are made when one is burnt, pupils understand that the lack of oxygen will extinguish the candle and suggest that they time the experiment using stopwatches and a quickly constructed table of results. Pupils record their findings well using good subject specific vocabulary and employ a range of recording methods such as drawings, diagrams, tables and text.
92. The quality of teaching is good overall and has been well maintained since the last inspection. One of the main reasons for this is because teachers are enthusiastic about the subject. Consequently, interesting and appropriate investigations are developed very well. Teachers are well organised and ensure that a good range of resources are available. This was evident in a good Year 6 lesson where pupils were learning about different gases. Prior to the lesson the teacher had organised the resources well and this enabled full participation by all pupils. Questioning is of a high standard, open-ended and the correct scientific vocabulary is used. Lessons are well planned with teachers giving frequent prompts and showing examples to extend ideas and encourage slow learners. Timing is well judged, allowing pupils to try things for themselves. The amount of coverage given to each unit of work is impressive. The pupils are enthusiastic, work with a high degree of interest and concentration and show pride in what they have achieved. Good progress is made in their lessons. They work well in groups, supporting each other and recording their findings. For example, when Year 2 pupils were looking at plants in the environment all pupils behaved well, worked hard, helped each other with spellings and were still talking excitedly about their work after they had returned to the classroom. This had a positive impact on their spiritual and social development.
93. The subject is well led and managed by the knowledgeable co-ordinator who is able to support teachers well. At present the development of assessment is rightly a priority. The school uses the national published guidelines well to plan the curriculum in a two-year cycle. This is supported well by textbooks. However, although the purchase of more specialist books is planned, when pupils are required to share them, the pace of learning slows. Good opportunities are provided in lessons to develop information and communication technology skills. For instance, pupils record their findings using spreadsheets. The attractive school grounds are well used to enhance the learning opportunities for pupils.

ART AND DESIGN

94. At the time of the last inspection, attainment at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6 was in line with national standards. Teaching was satisfactory with some good features. However, there was a need to implement a scheme of work and to set in place strategies for monitoring and evaluating the school's performance in the subject. The use of information technology in art was weak. Improvement since that time is good. The implementation of a secure scheme of work ensures that pupils develop their knowledge and skills systematically. Good teaching has brought about improved standards in art and design. Year 2 pupils now attain standards well above what is usually found and standards in Year 6 are above average. The use of information and communication technology to support learning is now satisfactory, as is the monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance.

Teachers value pupils' work highly and this is reflected in the high quality displays around the school. Art and design makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development and its use enriches all subjects in the curriculum.

95. In Year 2, standards of work are well above what is found nationally. This reflects a good level of learning throughout Years 1 and 2, successfully extending and refining what has been introduced in the Foundation Stage. Pupils use a wide range of materials and techniques. In Year 2, having studied the work of Lowry, pupils know they use rich 'sunset colours' for background, adding 'stick people and stick dogs'. Having studied the Japanese artist, Hokusai, they select toning colours to recreate his picture representing a big wave extremely well. More capable pupils identify the work of other artists, such as Vincent Van Gogh and can describe differences between his figures and those of Lowry. All pupils show great confidence when observing and sketching shells and their finished pieces in pastel show very good attention to detail and shading. They prepare clay well and have a good idea of proportion when making figures, paying due attention to the size of their hand in relation to the size of their body. Pupils with specific learning difficulties make the same good progress as others. They are fully included in all discussions and tasks and show the same very high level of enthusiasm when working. This very high level of involvement is also evident in Year 1, where pupils use primary and secondary colours very well. They mix colours carefully, selecting and using a range of brushes for fine and coarser work, so that their self-portraits very accurately reflect their own skin and hair colouring. These young pupils produce very good work when making sculptures in clay using their own designs from several viewpoints. They pay great attention to detail such as pinching out the snout of a hedgehog or an owl's beak and join clay carefully by scratching and wetting it so that the pieces stick together successfully.
96. By the end of Year 6, the high incidence of pupils aged seven to 11 leaving and joining the school has caused these very high standards to dip slightly, though attainment is still above average. Year 6 pupils can describe a wide range of techniques for using materials like pencil, paints, printing inks, stencils, chalk, charcoal and fabric. This term's work on 'People in Action' has been successfully linked with other subject areas and has made an appropriate contribution to pupils' personal development. Their work shows a lively interest in design and layout. In their sketchbooks, Year 6 pupils successfully create images of three-dimensional objects, shading carefully to enhance their pictures of backpacks or shoes. However, there is little difference in the tasks set for more capable pupils and those set for others and no evidence of researching or extending work at home. The range of observational drawings on the theme 'The Sense of Place', which includes St Mark's Church, a dry-stone wall and the church window, makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development. Watercolour pictures of seaside and woodland scenes, designs for masks and illustrations from legends are all carefully worked and show fine attention to detail. Work is sometimes linked to professional artists' work though this is not so evident as in Years 1 and 2. Pupils make good progress between Year 3 and Year 6 and cover a wide range of work. From the age of seven, all pupils have their own sketchbook and these demonstrate good progress in drawing. More capable pupils in Years 3 and 4 have a good sense of perspective. Average pupils discuss different media like chalk and oil pastels confidently, describing the effects that can be achieved. Year 4 and 5 pupils use their imagination well and demonstrate a good awareness and use of colour, shape and pattern. Their printing, portraits and designs, for example their coat of arms, are very carefully executed. All, including the less capable pupils, produce neat and careful work.
97. An analysis of plans, pupils' work and the displays in school indicate good teaching throughout the school. This judgement is reinforced in the small number of lessons seen and there were instances of very good teaching in Year 1. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils now make good progress in their learning due to the systematic development of knowledge and skills backed up by teachers' good subject knowledge. A high level of pupil involvement, as a result of careful preparation, good intervention from teachers and the provision of high quality materials ensures that pupils enjoy art and design and experience a high level of satisfaction in completing tasks. The design process is well-developed using sketchbooks and teachers sometimes give appropriate opportunities for pupils to explain their designs and comment on them. However, sketchbooks are not used consistently in all classes and opportunities to evaluate their work are not usually given.
98. The co-ordinator is experienced and knowledgeable. Her very good subject knowledge makes a significant contribution to the quality of artwork within the school. Training has been provided for all

teachers and the co-ordinator shares her expertise well. This is particularly so in Year 1 and 2, where the co-ordinator has a high level of influence and involvement in planning. The adopted scheme of work ensures that there is coverage in each strand of the subject. Pupils' work, although sometimes monitored, is not regularly assessed so that opportunities to improve standards further are missed. The range of resources is good and the curriculum is suitably enhanced by visits, like that to Bristol Museum to investigate the theme *'If pictures could speak'*. Visitors to the school to discuss and share their artwork are rare but the school has contributed to a local schools' exhibition and the co-ordinator meets with colleagues from other schools to compare work, establishing appropriate links with them.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

99. Standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with national expectations. No difference was noted in the performance of boys and girls. Pupils are making satisfactory progress. Standards are similar to those reported at the time of the school's previous inspection.
100. By the end of Year 2, pupils successfully clarify their ideas for making a product through class discussion and they produce suitable pictures and plans of the item they intend to make. Pupils are confident in identifying the items they need to help make that product. They choose from a range of suitable materials such as paper, card, felt and food items and tools, such as scissors and knives, to help them make their product. Pupils cut their components accurately and join them together carefully, using items such as sticky tape and thread. For instance, pupils successfully make wheeled-vehicles, homes, playground equipment, cards with moving features, fruit salads and coats for Joseph. By the end of Year 6, pupils draw up appropriate plans, or produce preliminary models, to help make an item, sometimes generating their own ideas. Having produced their plans pupils choose from a range of materials including wood, plastic, fabric and food and tools, including saws and drills. They successfully measure, cut and shape the materials and join them with items such as glue and split-pins. Pupils provide appropriate finishing techniques, such as painting where required and they evaluate their work when they are provided with the opportunity. For example, younger pupils have produced and evaluated moving monsters, picture-frames, packaging and sandwiches with a variety of fillings. Older pupils have made slippers, biscuits, purses, toys with moving parts and a variety of model structures.
101. An examination of teachers' planning, discussions with pupils and observations of finished work show that, overall, both teaching and learning are satisfactory. This has been maintained satisfactorily since the last inspection. In the one lesson seen in the Year 6 class the teaching and learning were good. Teachers' planning is now satisfactory. Suitable opportunities are provided for both planning and making. However, there are still limited opportunities for pupils to fully evaluate their work and to identify ways in which it could be improved. Wherever possible, teachers are keen to link the work with that in other subjects. For example, in Years 1 and 2, pupils made model homes to support similar work in history and geography. Pupils clearly enjoy the subject and they readily discuss the work they have produced and the tools and materials they have used. The range of activities provided, the instruction received and the enthusiasm displayed clearly help pupils, including those with special educational needs, to make satisfactory gains in a range of skills. Where teaching is good, teachers provide commercially produced items for pupils to examine and pupils are given extended opportunities to experiment with their work and decide how they want to proceed. Pupils' behaviour is good, their attention is particularly engaged, they talk thoughtfully and enthusiastically and they are helped to make good progress during the lesson. Pupils work well together and they are also fully aware of the need to take care with all the items provided.
102. There is now a suitable scheme of work in place, based on the government's curriculum guidelines. All aspects of work are suitably covered, with the exception of the more limited opportunities provided for evaluating work. The co-ordinators are enthusiastic and although they have limited opportunities to observe lessons, they have a clear understanding of the work that is being done in the school through their collection of photographs. As at the time of the previous inspection, few assessment procedures are in place and little information is available to identify pupils' current attainment or their skill levels. The writing activities undertaken in planning and, to a lesser extent, evaluating work give some support to the school's initiative in literacy. Measuring activities, such as cutting card and fabric accurately, support the work in numeracy. Better use is now made of information and

communication technology, to enhance the work in the subject, such as when plans are word-processed and designs for Joseph's coat were drawn-up on the computer.

GEOGRAPHY

103. Standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 are as expected. In relation to prior attainment all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make appropriate progress. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
104. In Years 1 and 2 pupils have made a good start in their understanding of the differences between human and physical features. They have studied the fictitious Isle of Struary in Scotland and discussed features of an island. For example, they understand that islands are surrounded by water. The pupils have also confidently drawn a simple map of the Isle of Struary and identified how the different buildings are used. More capable pupils accurately identify methods of travel over land and sea. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 also know where they live and understand that this is near Bristol. They are also able to discuss how different people such as doctors, nurses and an ambulance driver can help us. Pupils in Year 3 are secure in their knowledge about the differences between a village, town and city. They name the capital cities of major European countries and have satisfactorily compared life in their village to one in India. Year 4 pupils have an appropriate understanding of the impact of rubbish and pollution on our lives and confidently discuss how they could be improved. In Years 5 and 6 pupils are developing an understanding of how changes in the environment made by man can affect the activities and lives of inhabitants. For instance, they have consulted both residents and those involved in commerce in the town centre on the plans for a traffic free zone in this area.
105. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Teachers have good subject knowledge and understand how to make the subject interesting and meaningful to their pupils. Lessons are planned well and identify the specific skills to be learnt. This ensures that the pupils make good progress in their learning and remain on focus during the sessions. Good use is made of field study trips to ensure that skills taught are meaningful. For example, the Year 6 pupils make an annual visit to a field study centre in the Forest of Dean and very good use is made of Willsbridge Mill for river work. A particular strength of the teaching is the way in which the subject is used to promote other curricular skills such as literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. This was evident in the work produced by Years 5 and 6 when they made their recent trip to Thornbury High Street. Pupils were required to design a questionnaire and this stimulated their literacy skills. They were then required to analyse their results which involved both numeracy and information and communication technology skills. However, there are no procedures in place to check what the pupils have learnt and this means that at times pupils' work is not suitably matched to meet their needs. Pupil management is satisfactory overall but there are weaknesses in teacher expectations of behaviour. Homework is not used sufficiently well to develop their geographical knowledge and skills.
106. Despite the lack of specific planning, the subject makes a satisfactory contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils. Geographical skills encourage the pupils to ask questions relating to 'why', 'how' and 'where' and this develops their spirituality. They learn about different codes of behaviour in the wider community and this stimulates their moral development. They participate in community life when undertaking field study work and this helps promote their social skills. Cultural awareness is also developed through the extension of pupils' knowledge of other cultures, such as life in the village of Chembakoli in India.
107. The co-ordinator is very knowledgeable in geography skills and is extremely enthusiastic about this subject. She maintains high levels of professional development in this subject and this is extremely beneficial to the whole school. Teachers' planning is checked and samples of pupils' work gathered. Consequently, she has a good overview of standards throughout the school. The co-ordinator keeps her colleagues up to date with new initiatives through informal discussions and by recommending publications. She successfully manages a very small budget to buy resources. A number of geography books are outdated but she successfully supplements resources through the school library service.

HISTORY

108. Standards in history at the end of Years 2 and 6 are as expected for this age group. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in relation to their prior attainment. At the time of the last inspection standards were judged to be above expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6. Since the last inspection the implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies and the necessary improvements required for information and communication technology skills, have been high priorities for the school. Coupled with the changing nature of the population of the school, this explains why standards appear to have declined since the last inspection.
109. In Year 1, pupils have a simple understanding of the concept of a timeline and categorise their own stages of development into *'baby'*, *'toddler'* and *'infant'*. By the end of Year 2 pupils are able to talk about important historical events, which are remembered each year. For instance, they know that *'Bonfire Night'* is a time to recall the *'Gunpowder Plot'* organised by *'Guy Fawkes'*. They also understand that soldiers who died in the wars are remembered at an annual *'Poppy Day'*. Pupils in Year 3 have successfully created their own *'family tree'* and have traced that of the Tudor monarchy. They are developing their knowledge of the six wives of Henry the Eighth and have noted the many differences between rich and poor families during Tudor times. Pupils in Year 5 have studied life as an ancient Egyptian and have developed an understanding of how information about the past is gained. For example, they know that archaeologists use photographic evidence to interpret events in the past and have found out a great deal about ancient Egyptian mummies by using modern technology such as x-rays. By Year 6 the pupils demonstrate a satisfactory understanding of characteristics from past periods in history. For instance, they describe what people wore in Ancient Greece and confidently explain the importance of the two states of Athens and Sparta during this period in history. They also link the information they gain about the past with features of society today. For example, they know that the Olympic games have originated from this time in history.
110. No history lessons were observed during the inspection so it is not possible to make an overall judgement on the quality. However, it is evident that the teaching of basic historical skills is planned well and linked carefully to the nationally recommended scheme of work. Teaching for pupils with special education is ensured through targeted support from classroom assistants and individual tasks that are planned to meet their specific needs. Pupils are provided with good opportunities to develop their literacy skills. For example, pupils in Year 6 have written an account of the battle of Marathon from the point of view of a Persian soldier. Teachers make very good use of history to develop other skills within the curriculum. For instance, pupils have been taught to locate Greece on a map of Europe and this has a good impact on their geography skills. They have used their mathematical skills to create graphs of the temperature in Greece at different times of the year and develop their art techniques well when required to sketch Greek buildings such as the pillars and theatres. Good use is made of their information and communication technology skills when the pupils are required to seek out historical information. Effective use is made of local resources to motivate and stimulate the interest of pupils and help them in their acquisition of skills. For example, Year 3 pupils have visited a Tudor Lodge where they were able to handle artefacts such as clay watering cans and wooden bowls. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have made good use of the well-acclaimed section at Bristol Museum to find out about life in ancient Egypt. However, the quality of marking is inconsistent and is not adequately used to assess the acquisition of skills achieved by the pupils. Homework is not used sufficiently well to develop their historical knowledge and skills.
111. Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in history is not planned. However, the subject makes a satisfactory contribution to the spiritual development of the pupils by providing opportunities for them to develop an awareness and understanding of their own and others' beliefs. Cultural awareness is developed through trips to the museum and other places of historical interest.
112. Subject management is in the early stages of development. The previous co-ordinator worked hard establishing a policy and devised a list of resources. The current subject manager has collected a sample of work to illustrate the progression of historical skills but is still developing an awareness of standards throughout the school. She has checked the coverage of learning by looking at lesson plans and analysing pupils' work. However, the use of classroom observations to judge the quality of teaching is underdeveloped.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

113. At the end of Years 2 and 6, most pupils attain standards that are broadly typical of those expected. A few attain higher standards for their respective ages. This is better than at the time of the previous inspection when attainment was unsatisfactory. All pupils have opportunities to become familiar with computers through specific lessons in the information and communication technology suite and this has had a positive impact on learning.
114. In Year 2 pupils confidently use the keyboard and mouse. They use their word-processing skills to write sentences and insert graphics. They access a website and use the program to research information through games. For example, pupils learnt about the rules for safety at the seaside through looking at beach activities with Barnaby Bear.
115. In Year 6 pupils understand and use subject-specific vocabulary well. Pupils were able to access web sites using the term '*favourites*' and to use a specific site to access models. They make good use of the site and move quickly between sources. They have good mouse and keyboard skills. A few, who regularly use a computer at home, have excellent keyboard skills, typing using all their fingers.
116. Teaching is good overall and this is an improvement since the last inspection. Lessons are well planned, proceed at a productive pace and so good progress is made within them. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' learning and they respond well and work hard. Teachers have good subject knowledge and pass this on to their pupils. This is the result of extensive training throughout the school. Teachers make good links with other subjects. For example, in Year 6 the teacher reinforced work from literacy when she asked, '*What does 'copy write' mean?*' and '*What does 'trial an idea' mean?*'
117. Pupils enjoy their lessons. They are eager to learn, listen well and co-operate when sharing a computer. Resources are now satisfactory, though a few pupils have to share a computer when working in the suite. This promotes their social development well. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to practise their skills because they do not all have access to computers in their classrooms.
118. The subject is ably led by the new co-ordinator who has good subject knowledge and interest and supports other staff well. The school uses the national published guidelines but is looking at other schemes that will help to support teachers who are less secure in the subject. The school is piloting new local education authority assessment sheets that record the development of skills but it is too early to evaluate its effectiveness.

MUSIC

119. Discussions with pupils and observations of a range of music lessons and assemblies indicate that standards in music are average in both Year 2 and in Year 6. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection; the standard of performing in Year 6 continues to be good due to the high quality work of those who benefit from teaching by specialist instrumental teachers. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress, with pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 and those receiving specialist music teaching making good progress.
120. Standards in Year 2 are average. Year 2 pupils concentrate well and keep time accurately when accompanying tunes. When singing '*The Teatime Shout*' and '*Mi Caballo*' pupils pay reasonable attention to tempo and dynamics. Pupils clearly enjoy singing. They sing tunefully and clearly, phrasing their singing pleasantly and picking up a new tune quickly. They have developed good listening skills and try hard to copy the good models given by teachers. When accompanying their songs with un-pitched instruments, either from the '*rubbish collection*', the '*kitchen collection*' or using commercially produced instruments they show a reasonable grasp of rhythm. Standards in Year 1 are above what is expected. Pupils have a good grasp of the basic skills in music and teaching successfully builds on the good standards at the end of the Foundation Stage. These pupils confidently accompany their songs by making rhythmic actions using different parts of their bodies. They can transfer these rhythmic patterns to '*instruments*' like saucepans, chopsticks and containers

of rice, accurately identifying them as 'shakers', 'scrapers' or 'tappers' so that the chorus of their song is accompanied gleefully and with great involvement. Opportunities for pupils to appraise their own work are somewhat limited but are beginning to be used to develop their performance.

121. Many Year 6 pupils have good performance skills due to their additional instrumental lessons with specialist teachers. When playing together, the orchestra is excellent, accompanying the singing in assembly at just the right tempo for singing, playing accurately in time and keeping to their own parts extremely well. Standards in singing, as demonstrated in assembly are good overall though timetabling did not allow for standards in Year 6 to be judged. Year 6 pupils reach average standards in composing and can use two-, three- or four-beat rhythms reasonably, changing the tempo appropriately when beginning to work on compositions stimulated by the sound track for a silent film. In class lessons, teaching is well supported by the plans from the newly introduced scheme, which are now used by all teachers. However, the expertise of those pupils having specialist music lessons is not consistently considered when planning. Opportunities to experiment and compose in Years 4 and 5 include composing to create an atmosphere, with pupils using sustained notes on a range of instruments and describing how these sounds are made. Year 3 pupils use a music program on the computer to compose simple tunes using a selection of instruments and this work is extended in Year 4 and Year 5 to support the learning of musical notation. Opportunities to listen to the music of well-known composers are introduced in assembly. However, several Year 6 pupils could not discuss the work of well-known composers and generally their level of musical knowledge in this area is below average.
122. Individual instrumental tuition is provided for pupils in Years 3 to 6 on a range of instruments such as woodwind, string and brass instruments, drums and the recorder. This provision is of a high quality. Skilled and patient teaching ensures that pupils who choose to participate develop a good range of skills and a good understanding of the rudiments of music and their progress is carefully tracked. The provision supports pupils' cultural development well.
123. Teaching in Year 1 and Year 2 is good. The management of pupils in lessons is good and this has a good impact on pupils' response so that they sing and play confidently. Teachers prepare lessons well, paying attention to details like the provision and distribution of instruments and ensure that they understand key vocabulary. Good eye contact and a reasonable level of competence in both singing and performing, together with a warm, encouraging approach, ensure that pupils are very enthusiastic. Teaching through Year 3 to Year 6 is invariably satisfactory with good teaching in Year 4 and Year 5, as evidenced by pupils' music books and in the computer suite. Teachers follow the recently introduced scheme of work carefully and this is supportive in enhancing teachers' knowledge and understanding of what to teach and how to teach it. However, opportunities to challenge different groups of pupils with different tasks, appropriate to their skill level, are often missed and in lessons, the lack of a clear set of rules for behaviour with instruments hampers the pace of learning. Consequently some pupils show less enthusiasm for their tasks than is seen amongst the younger pupils.
124. The co-ordinator for music has a high involvement in monitoring provision and extra tuition, though has had little opportunity to monitor class music lessons as yet. Resources are regularly audited and are well stored and well used. The music room is well laid out so that the pupils can compose and perform here. The recently introduced and very clear scheme of work gives good support for non-specialist teaching in class lessons and this is having a positive impact on teachers' planning so that the capacity for further improvement in the subject is good.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

125. Standards by the end of both Year 2 and Year 6 are higher than expected. In swimming, standards are very high. No difference was noted in the performance of boys and girls. Pupils are making very good progress in swimming and good progress overall. Standards in swimming have improved significantly since the time of the school's previous inspection.
126. By the end of Year 2 pupils move confidently around the hall, showing clear awareness of space and other pupils. In dance, in Year 2, pupils successfully control their movements. They show most appropriate changes in speed, direction and level and confidently introduce gesture and stillness into

their movements, especially when responding imaginatively to music. For example, the pupils readily imitate a variety of movements and feelings when imagining a visit to the seaside. They successfully demonstrate such things as packing and making sandcastles and they most happily copy the movements of gulls and crabs. Pupils in Year 1 confidently develop the gymnastics skills of climbing, jumping and rolling, using both the floor and suitable apparatus and introducing good quality balances into their work. Pupils in Year 2 are confident when undertaking swimming activities. All are able to move well in the water, some occasionally using floats, with the majority of pupils being able to swim some distance, often in excess of 25 metres. Pupils understand and explain the need to warm up for and recover from, exercise.

127. By the end of Year 6, in games, pupils successfully develop their throwing, hitting, kicking and fielding skills and they show good levels of performance, in catching. They also control balls well. For example, they use either their feet or a bat to strike the ball accurately. Pupils further develop their skills when taking part in small-sided team games, such as cricket and football. Pupils in a number of classes readily develop their athletic skills of running, throwing and jumping. They show higher than expected skills, showing good techniques and control in all areas. By the end of Year 6, most pupils are swimming very significant distances, often in excess of 500 metres. They show well-developed swimming techniques in a range of strokes. A significant number of pupils are also confident in displaying survival skills. Pupils recognise some of the effects that exercise has on their bodies. Older pupils develop their outdoor skills during an annual visit to the Forest of Dean.
128. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good and very good practice was also observed during the inspection in relation to swimming. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Teachers provide good planning, clear instructions and enthusiasm, together with a good and varied range of resources. This allows all pupils, including those with special educational needs, to make good gains in their physical skills. All members of staff change appropriately for lessons and they join in and demonstrate for pupils, which helps them identify areas where they might improve themselves. Teachers have good subject knowledge and have most suitable expectations of the pupils' performance. Where the teaching is very good, where the teachers are very confident, provide particularly good instruction and coaching and have especially high expectations, pupils make very good gains in their skills and techniques. In all lessons, pupils join in appropriately, enjoying themselves, making a good physical and creative effort and taking pleasure in the quality of their performance. Lessons are conducted at a brisk pace, with teachers showing good control and management skills. Teachers usually take the opportunity to use pupils to demonstrate good practice, but opportunities are often missed for the pupils to discuss the quality of the work seen and to identify ways in which they might develop their own work further. Teachers and learning support assistants provide help and support to pupils in all aspects of their work and in particular they emphasise the need for safety. In turn, pupils show good attitudes, behave very well in swimming in particular, work well alone and with a partner or group and carry equipment carefully and safely when necessary.
129. The school has a suitable scheme of work, based on the government's curriculum guidelines and all appropriate aspects of work are well covered. The provision for swimming goes well beyond that expected, using the school's own very good facilities. The resources to support all aspects of work are now much improved. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and knowledgeable and through seeing plans and keeping photographs she is fully aware of the work being tackled. As yet, she has little opportunity to observe lessons taking place to see for herself the standards being achieved. Assessment procedures are still very limited, with little information being recorded about individual pupils to identify their current attainment or the progress they are making. Activities involving counting and measuring, in various aspects of physical education, especially in relation to athletic activities, give appropriate support to the school's initiative in numeracy. The school makes good provision for extra-curricular sporting activities and the school has a number of successful sports teams. The school has also identified particularly talented pupils and these have been helped to gain recognition in various representative teams, for example in swimming, cricket and athletics.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

130. Standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 are in line with those expected for the national guidelines combined with the locally agreed syllabus. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
131. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a good knowledge of the most important stories in the Old Testament, such as those of Jacob and Esau and the life of Moses. They are gaining an understanding of the main events in the life of Jesus and have good recall of the stories of Christmas and Easter. The pupils know that the stories Jesus told often had special meanings and explained in simple terms what they understood the Parables of the Sower, the Good Samaritan and the Prodigal Son meant to them. *'The Good Samaritan is about being friends with people that you don't know'*. They know that all people have places, times and books that are special to them.
132. By the end of Year 6, pupils have built upon their previous understanding and deepened their knowledge of religions other than Christianity, such as Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism and Judaism. They have continued to explore Christian beliefs and practices, especially those relating to Christmas such as Advent and the Christingle Service. The pupils know that peoples such as North American Indians have very different beliefs and that these are valid beliefs to hold. They know that many people, such as Muslims, make special journeys to sacred places. Pupils are beginning to understand that life is a journey in which choices have to be made and that the beliefs that they have help them make these choices. This has a positive impact on their spiritual development.
133. Teaching is good overall. It is of particularly very good quality in Years 1 and 2. Teachers use a variety of methods, such as drama and story-bag characters, to help pupils empathise with the story. For example, the story of the Prodigal Son was enhanced by the appearance, in turn, from the story bag, of a pig, pig food, a purse with money and a teardrop. Pupils sat entranced as the story unfolded and they were asked to empathise with the characters. When recording the feelings of the son and his father, pupils showed mature insight and wrote: *'Wow! I never knew they missed me so much'*, and *'Why did he take so long to come home?'* This had a good impact on their social development. Teachers support the pupils by asking them to explain their remarks and giving appropriate praise for well thought out answers. Teaching is good in Years 3 to 6. Teachers build on pupils' prior knowledge of the Islamic faith to elicit the reasons Muslims make a sacred journey to Mecca. Good links are made with geography when pupils use an atlas to find Mecca and plan a journey there. They are led to understand that there are Muslims all over the world. However, opportunities are missed to promote the pupils' information and communication technology skills to gain information from the Internet. All teachers have good subject knowledge, explain tasks clearly and are sympathetic to the content of lessons.
134. Work is planned in a two-year cycle to take account of the mixed-age classes. The new co-ordinator is developing assessment as a priority. She is aware of the need to discard outdated resources and understands the importance of visitors from a variety of faiths to promote pupils' learning of different cultures. Resources within school are adequate and good use is made of the local religious education centre loan service.