

## **INSPECTION REPORT**

### **WESTWOOD FARM JUNIOR SCHOOL**

Tilehurst, Reading

LEA area: West Berkshire

Unique reference number: 109845

Headteacher: Mr P M Booth

Reporting inspector: Harold Galley  
21313

Dates of inspection: 24<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> March 2003

Inspection number: 246943  
Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Fullbrook Crescent Tilehurst Reading
Postcode:	RG31 6RY
Telephone number:	0118 942 5182
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs J Clark
Date of previous inspection:	November 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21313	Harold Galley Registered inspector	English.	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
9030	Bob Love Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
22058	Christine Richardson Team inspector	Mathematics; Art and design; Music; Special educational needs including consideration of the Hearing Impaired Resource; Educational inclusion.	
13307	Ian Hancock Team inspector	Information and communication technology, Design and technology; Religious education.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
22942	Jackie Cousins Team inspector	Science; Physical education.	How well is the school led and managed?
32349	John Horrell Team inspector	History; Geography.	

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Westwood Farm Junior School is situated in Tilehurst to the west of Reading. Nearly all the 246 pupils live in private housing. There is an even mix of boys and girls, although slightly more girls in Year 6 in 2002 and 2003. Almost all pupils, well over 90 per cent are white, with very small groups of pupils who are Asian or British Asian and Black or Black British-Caribbean. A significant feature of the school is the Hearing Impaired Resource (HIR), for a group of ten pupils, all with statements of special educational needs who travel from various parts of Berkshire to the school. In addition there are two other pupils in the school with statements of special educational needs. Overall, 18 per cent of pupils are on the school's special educational needs register, which is about average. Eight pupils speak English as an additional language, but none are at the early stages of English acquisition and no special provision is required for this group. Attainment on entry is slightly above average. Pupil mobility is low, although school records show that those joining the school other than in Year 3 have lower attainments than the school average. There has been a high turnover of teachers since the last inspection. Along with many other schools in the area, the school has found it hard to recruit teachers and there is presently one 0.3 vacancy. Only 5.3 per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, well below the national average.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

This is an effective school in many ways that has worked hard and with considerable success to ensure that pupils are fully involved in all aspects of school life. In the 2002 National Curriculum tests, standards were well above average in mathematics, above average in English and average in science. The standards observed during the inspection in Year 6 were above average in mathematics, average in English and below average in science. The main reason for the differences in standards between these three subjects is the quality of teaching and, in particular, the extent to which more able pupils are challenged. In mathematics, more able pupils are challenged effectively, but in science the work presented to pupils is not well matched to their differing needs and the proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 in science is unsatisfactory. There are outstanding features throughout the school in the provision for pupils with statements of special educational needs. Teaching is good, with examples of very good teaching in mathematics and physical education, as well as for pupils with special educational needs. The headteacher and key staff have been very successful in creating a positive and happy learning environment where pupils can thrive, but weaknesses in the setting of the school's priorities mean that the leadership and management of the school are satisfactory overall. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

### **What the school does well**

- The school is very successful in the way it includes pupils in every aspect of school life.
- Standards in Year 6 are above average in mathematics, physical education and history.
- Attitudes to learning are good throughout the school.
- Relationships are very good and underpin the positive atmosphere in all classes.
- The provision for all pupils with statements of special educational needs including those in the Hearing Impaired Resource (HIR) is very good with some excellent features.

## What could be improved

- The way in which more able pupils are challenged in science.
- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT), which are below the expected level.
- The school development plan does not sufficiently identify the school's priorities.
- The way in which teachers use assessment information to plan work for pupils of differing prior attainment.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection in November 1997. Standards in English, mathematics and science have risen in line with national trends between 1998 and 2002, although standards observed during the inspection were lower than last year. Teaching has improved, with more good or better teaching, and the elimination of unsatisfactory teaching. Most of the key issues from the last inspection have been addressed satisfactorily. In particular, standards in physical education have been transformed from below average to above. However, the key issue relating to better provision for more able pupils has not been fully addressed. Although the proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 is above average in mathematics, the proportion reaching the higher level in science remains unsatisfactory. In ICT the school has not kept abreast of the rapid changes in this subject since the last inspection.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores<sup>1</sup> in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools <sup>2</sup>
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	A	C	B	D
Mathematics	B	D	A	C
Science	C	E	C	D

**Key**

well above average    A

above average        B

average                C

below average        D

well below average    E

The table shows that, in the 2002 National Curriculum tests, standards were well above the national average in mathematics, above average in English and average in science. When compared to other similar schools, standards were average in mathematics, just below average in English and below average in science. In evaluating the similar schools comparisons it is important to take into account the impact on the school's results of the Hearing Impaired Resource. Although the proportion of pupils is small, around 4 per cent of each year group, this can have the result of slightly depressing the school's overall results. Pupils achieve well in mathematics, satisfactorily in English, but unsatisfactorily in science.

<sup>1</sup> Average points scores refers to the average of pupils' scores weighted by Ofsted for each level attained in each subject.

<sup>2</sup> Schools with less than 8 per cent of pupils entitled to free school meals.

Since 1998, standards have risen in line with the national trend. Standards observed during the inspection were lower in English, mathematics and science. In English and mathematics this is largely due to a lower attainment on entry of this year group. In science, standards are lower because more able pupils are not challenged well enough and not enough pupils reach the higher Level 5. Standards in physical education and history are above the expected level and standards in ICT are below national expectations. Overall standards in other subjects are broadly in line with national expectations. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and make very good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. The school has set realistic targets for pupils in Year 6 and is on course to meet these targets in English and mathematics, but is some way short of them in science.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are enthusiastic about their work and show good levels of interest in the work they do.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils behave well in class, at playtimes and around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Relationships are very good and there is a good range of opportunities for pupils to show initiative and take responsibility.
Attendance	Average.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	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.*

During the inspection, nearly two-thirds of teaching was judged to be good or better and the rest was satisfactory. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. A strong feature of teaching is the consistency of teaching in each year group, with a very similar balance of satisfactory and good teaching throughout. The best teaching takes careful account of pupils' differing needs. Thus, teaching is particularly good in mathematics, where there is good provision for all ability groups, and in teaching for pupils with special educational needs where teachers plan to ensure that the work presented to pupils closely matches the targets in pupils' individual education plans. The teaching of pupils with statements of special educational needs is outstanding. Lessons are well organised and teachers are successful in creating a calm, purposeful learning atmosphere. Teachers make effective use of the National Literacy Strategy and very good use of the National Numeracy Strategy. A scrutiny of pupils' work over the course of the school year reveals some weaknesses in teaching that were not always apparent in lessons seen during the inspection. Although assessment is used well to provide appropriate work for pupils of differing prior attainments in mathematics and for pupils with special educational needs, this is not done well enough in other subjects. Teachers' marking makes good use of praise and encouragement, but rarely gives pupils a clear idea of their own strengths and weaknesses, nor what they need to do to improve further.



## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The school provides an overall broad and balanced curriculum with satisfactory use of homework. The curriculum is enriched by a range of visits and visitors.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. There is early identification of pupils' needs and regular reviews of pupils' progress towards the targets set for them.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Although eight pupils speak English as an additional language, none are at the early stages of acquisition and they require no special provision.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall, with a strong and effective emphasis on pupils' social and moral development. Spiritual and cultural development are satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	This is a caring school, with particularly effective procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. However, procedures for using assessment information are unsatisfactory.

Parents have positive views about the school. The school has worked hard to involve parents in the life of the school but has only been partially successful in this respect.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory overall. The headteacher provides clear and supportive leadership. However, there are some weaknesses in the school development plan which does not specifically focus on the school's priorities.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors have a good awareness of the school's needs, but carry out only limited monitoring of the curriculum.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The school monitors teaching and pupils' achievements satisfactorily.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. The school makes good use of resources, especially with regard to special educational needs, but has not maintained a satisfactory level of resourcing in ICT.

Staffing is good. Learning resources and accommodation are satisfactory overall, although provision for ICT is unsatisfactory. The school applies the principles of best value satisfactorily, but does not always make enough use of comparing its performance with other similar schools.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children enjoy coming to school and make good progress.</li> <li>• Teaching is good and all staff are approachable.</li> <li>• Behaviour is good.</li> <li>• Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.</li> <li>• The Hearing Impaired Resource is exceptional and makes a very positive contribution to the life of the school.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The quality of information provided to parents.</li> <li>• The range of activities outside the school day.</li> <li>• The level of support that parents give the school.</li> </ul>

Inspectors broadly agree with parents' views of the school. Parents' positive views are certainly justified, particularly those relating to the Hearing Impaired Resource and provision for pupils with special educational needs. The quality of information provided to parents is good. The range of activities outside the school day is satisfactory overall. Although the range is rather limited the quality of such provision is very good. The level of support that parents give the school, whilst satisfactory, could certainly be improved.

## PART B: COMMENTARY

### HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

#### The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Attainment on entry to the school is slightly above average. At the end of Year 6, standards in the 2002 National Curriculum tests and assessments were well above average in mathematics, above average in English and average in science. When compared to similar schools, standards were average in mathematics, but below average in English and science. When compared to their prior attainment, pupils achieved well in mathematics and satisfactorily in English and science. In evaluating the school's results it is important to take into account the fact that the school hosts a resource for hearing impaired pupils who travel to the school from various parts of Berkshire. Although the proportion of pupils is small, around 4 per cent of each year group, this can impact on the school's results. Pupils in the resource make very good progress but many are still unlikely to achieve results at the national average by the age of eleven. There are no significant differences in the attainments of boys and girls, nor between different ethnic groups. Boys did better than girls in the 2002 National Curriculum tests, but over a period of years, the attainment of boys and girls has not been significantly different.

2. Between 1998 and 2002, standards in mathematics and science rose above the national trend, whilst in English standards rose exactly in line with this trend. In 2002, the school's overall results owed much to the good performance of boys who attained results above the national average in English, mathematics and science. However, an analysis of pupils' results indicate that this was largely due to boys having higher attainment on entry to the school rather than as a response to the type of provision in the school.

3. The proportion of pupils at the end of Year 6 reaching the expected Level 4 was well above average in mathematics and above average in English and science. However, levels of

achievement were only satisfactory overall because of the disappointing proportion of pupils who reached the higher Level 5. When compared to similar schools, the proportion of pupils reaching Level 5 in 2002 was average in mathematics, but below average in English and science.

4. The standards observed during the inspection were lower than the previous year in English, mathematics and science being average in English, above average in mathematics and below average in science. This is due to two factors: school records show that, although pupil mobility overall is quite low, pupils joining the present Year 6 after the start of Year 3 had much lower attainments than their peers already in the school. In addition, there is a slightly higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs in this year group.

5. In other subjects, pupils in Year 6 attain the expected standards, apart from physical education and history, where standards are above the expected level, and ICT where standards are below the expected level.

6. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets of their individual education plans and in the development of self esteem and confidence. This is due to the good teaching they receive and the opportunities to work in small groups in literacy and numeracy. The school makes good use of assessment information to identify pupils' needs at an early stage in their learning and for target setting in individual education plans. The school makes good use of information from assessments to work out booster and support groups. As a result, pupils with special educational needs often achieve well in national tests. Provision for pupils with statements of special educational needs has outstanding features throughout the school. Such pupils achieve very well indeed in relation to the targets in their individual education plans.

7. The structures of the National Literacy and National Numeracy Strategies have been successfully implemented and make a positive contribution to the progress pupils make in English and mathematics. There is a satisfactory range of opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. However, pupils do not get enough chances to use ICT to support their learning in subjects across the curriculum.

8. The school has set itself realistic targets to raise attainment at the end of Year 6. These relate to the proportion of pupils expected to reach the average Level 4. The school is on course to meet these targets, but has not done enough in terms of comparing its performance with similar schools. Overall, despite a dip this year, standards are rising and the school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

9. The great majority of parents are pleased with their children's attitudes and personal development and with the values the school teaches their children. The evidence from this inspection showed that they have every right to be pleased. Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are good.

10. The last inspection report noted that pupils had good attitudes to learning and responded well in lessons. This continues to be true. Pupils know that they are expected to learn and participate as much as they can. They enjoy their lessons. They work hard and show considerable determination, effort and perseverance. A good example of this was seen in a physical education lesson in which all pupils, regardless of their physical limitations took part and enjoyed the experience. Another example was seen in the after school dance club when the enthusiasm and achievement of all 30 pupils was excellent. Across the school pupils work well together and are co-operative and supportive of each other in classes.

11. Behaviour is good both in classes and around the school. Pupils behave sensibly when moving around the school. They are polite and helpful to each other and to visitors. The quality of all relationships is very good. Staff share a commitment to ensuring that each pupil is able to achieve his or her academic and personal goals. There is a mutual respect between staff and pupils with each wanting to do their best for each other. Pupils, including those in the Hearing Impaired Resource, those with special needs and those from minority ethnic backgrounds, have very good relationships, and these latter groups are fully integrated into school life. Pupils care for each other. They mix together well in lessons and at play but there is a tendency for groups to be composed of all girls or all boys. This tendency is more pronounced amongst the older pupils.

12. The majority of pupils are tolerant and understanding of others' difficulties. There is good social harmony and the school has not had to exclude any pupil for several years. Racial incidents and bullying are almost entirely absent.

13. Pupils' personal and social development is given very high priority by staff and is fostered through the general ethos of the school, promoted by the provision for personal and social education. Older pupils are given a wide range of opportunities to take responsibility. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. Pupils are, for example, responsible for the distribution and return of playground equipment at lunchtimes, for helping to supervise the dining hall, and acting as play leaders for the adjacent infant school. They enjoy carrying out these duties and do so in a mature way. Younger pupils have fewer opportunities for taking responsibility, but when they are given opportunities, such as helping to keep their classrooms tidy or taking registers to the office, they enjoy doing so.

14. Attendance and unauthorised absence in the last completed year before the inspection were broadly in line with the national averages for primary schools. Absence is most frequently caused by sickness or medical reasons. The majority of pupils arrive on time.

15. The good attitudes and good behaviour make a positive contribution to pupils' learning and the school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection.

### **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?**

16. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. During the inspection, nearly two-thirds of lessons were judged to be good or better and the remainder were satisfactory. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. Sixteen per cent of lessons were judged to be very good including one excellent session.

17. A notable feature of teaching across the school is its consistency throughout. The range of satisfactory and good or better teaching is very similar in each year group.

18. There are a number of common features to teaching across the school. Lessons are well organised and presented in an interesting manner. Teachers' clear speech enables pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, to take a full part in all aspects of lessons. Learning objectives are made explicit in teachers' planning and shared with pupils at the start of lessons. Relationships between teachers and pupils are consistently very good. Teachers have been very successful in creating a calm, purposeful learning environment in which pupils feel comfortable, relaxed and confident. This atmosphere enables pupils to make good progress in developing their speaking and listening skills and, during the inspection, there were several good examples of discussions that effectively supported pupils' moral and social development. The management of pupils' behaviour is very good and ensures an industrious working atmosphere throughout lessons.

19. Teachers have been successful in implementing both the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy, although teachers are more confident with the latter. These ensure lessons are well structured and proceed at a good pace. The school was informally involved in the piloting of the numeracy strategy and had it established even before it became commonplace nationally. As a result, teachers are particularly confident in this subject and the best teaching across the school was in mathematics. A feature of this better teaching was the care taken in providing challenging work for more able pupils. This is done effectively in mathematics with planning often referring to the needs of different groups of pupils and explains why the school has attained better results in this subject. In English, more able pupils are challenged well in some lessons but this is not a consistent feature of teaching in this subject. In science, teachers' planning frequently makes insufficient demands on more able pupils. One aspect of lessons that is variable is the manner in which teachers end the sessions, usually known as 'the plenary'. In the best lessons this is used to evaluate the extent to which pupils have achieved the learning objectives set for that lesson. In some less effective lessons, teachers merely summarise content. Overall satisfactory use is made of homework to enhance the curriculum.

20. Teaching and learning throughout the school for pupils with special educational needs are good. Teachers and support staff plan thoughtfully together for pupils with these specific needs. Targets in individual education plans are clear and achievable. They are taken into account in teachers' planning. Pupils are grouped according to their prior attainment in literacy and numeracy. This ensures that tasks are matched well to pupils' abilities, but still have some level of challenge. Some pupils have support on an individual basis as well as receiving additional attention in small groups or whilst working with the rest of the class. Staff maintain good records and there is regular sharing of information with the special needs co-ordinator.

21. A scrutiny of pupils' work over the course of the year reveals some weaknesses in teaching that were not apparent in lessons observed during the inspection. Marking is consistently weak throughout the school and across the subjects. Teachers use marking to give praise and offer encouragement, but rarely to evaluate pupils' work. There are few examples of pupils being told the strengths and weaknesses of their work, nor are pupils given an indication of exactly what they need to do to improve further. As a result, pupils' knowledge of their own learning is underdeveloped.

22. Teaching is good overall, with strengths in physical education and history. Physical education lessons are lively and the teachers' very good subject knowledge, especially in Year 6, is used to good effect. In these lessons, pupils are given very clear feedback about the strengths and weaknesses of their performance and thus they know exactly what is required to improve. Teachers' extensive subject knowledge and obvious enthusiasm brings history to life and leads to good levels of achievement in this subject. However, teaching in ICT is unsatisfactory. This reflects gaps in teachers' subject knowledge and confidence, not helped by shortcomings in the school's resources for this subject. The weaknesses in ICT are recognised by the school and the new subject co-ordinator has already begun some positive initiatives to improve teaching and learning.

23. Although the school has a satisfactory range of strategies for monitoring the progress of pupils, data is not used well enough by teachers. For example, the school has accurately identified pupils who are likely to reach the higher Level 5 by the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science but teachers are not using this information sufficiently in science to stretch more able pupils. The use of this data in English is variable and only adequate overall. In other subjects, apart from physical education and history, assessment information is not used well to provide challenging work for more able pupils.

24. The school has made good progress since the last inspection. The proportion of good or better teaching has increased slightly and unsatisfactory teaching has been eliminated.

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

25. The overall curriculum is broad and balanced and includes all relevant subjects of the National Curriculum as well as religious education. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum including those with special educational needs. Pupils in the Hearing Impaired Resource are very well integrated and accepted into all curriculum activities. A large proportion of time has been appropriately allocated to the teaching of literacy and numeracy where most teachers use the national strategies well to support pupils' learning. The use of literacy and numeracy to support learning in other subjects is satisfactory. However, insufficient time and opportunities are provided for pupils to learn and develop their information and communication technology skills. During the inspection many classes did not include this aspect of the curriculum in their timetables. Consequently standards are below those expected by the time pupils leave the school in Year 6.

26. High priority has been given to the provision of pupils' personal, social and health education since the last inspection. A detailed policy has been written and the whole staff have worked hard to improve pupils' behaviour and personal development skills. Personal, social and health education lessons have successfully been introduced into the school timetable, with new 'circle times'<sup>3</sup> recently introduced. Sex education is taught as part of the science curriculum with help from the school nurse speaking to older pupils. The dangers of drug misuse are taught effectively throughout the school. The school curriculum is enriched by visits to local places of interest related to topics studied such as Wyld Court in Newbury to see the rainforest, the Victorian classroom at Katesgrove and 'The Lookout' at Bracknell to support science activities. Older pupils enjoy the residential trip to Osmington Bay for outdoor activities and successfully developed their ICT skills. Visitors include groups who effectively re-enact periods in the past to bring history alive to pupils. Art, music, dance and science workshops are successful in capturing pupils' imagination and supporting their learning. Several parents expressed concern about the limited range of extracurricular activities but inspection findings indicate that although there is a limited range, very high quality activities were seen in dance. Music activities are of good quality. Both these aspects effectively support the curriculum.

27. A few links have been established with the local community to support curricular opportunities including the parish council and church. Curricular links are well established with the local infant school including joint training sessions and co-ordinators' meetings to help pupils transfer easily between schools. The very strong links with Denefield Secondary School makes a positive contribution to many aspects of the curriculum such as through 'Kids College' activities and the science and technology course.

28. Curriculum provision for pupils with special educational needs is good because of the level of inclusion in lessons and the life of the school. The good standards of the last inspection have been maintained. Pupils receive well planned specialist help in literacy and numeracy lessons. Teachers prepare individual education plans with the special needs co-ordinator so that planning takes into account pupils' individual targets.

29. In the last report the school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development was judged to be good. Overall this standard has been maintained although the

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<sup>3</sup> In these lessons, pupils sit in a circle and through agreed rules, have the opportunity to speak and listen to each other talking about issues, which touch them all.

development of provision in spiritual and cultural education has not kept pace with other areas.

30. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. Statutory requirements are met in the regular pattern of collective worship. Most assemblies observed were of a mainly Christian character and made a contribution to the spiritual and moral development of pupils. Opportunities for prayer and reflection were observed and music, song and poetry are used regularly in assemblies. In a Year 3 and 4 assembly on the theme of 'God the Creator' pupils experienced moments of awe and wonder as the teacher displayed images of the natural world using a computer presentation. The final song 'God is great' was sung with considerable enthusiasm and accompanied by the teacher on guitar and this added well to pupils' spiritual development. Pupils' responses and behaviour in assemblies were satisfactory and in some cases good. Opportunities for reflection were observed in some lessons. For example a particularly good physical education lesson involved pupils in working co-operatively with time to reflect on their chosen routines and choice of apparatus. Overall, opportunities for raising pupils' spiritual awareness are limited. The school has a helpful policy on collective worship which, if more consistently applied, would ensure that pupils were given a better chance to experience situations where spiritual awareness can be encouraged.

31. The provision for pupils' moral development is good. In the last report it was observed how adults set a good example and how pupils were taught effectively to distinguish between right and wrong. This is still the case. The school actively promotes moral values which embrace responsible personal conduct. Parental confidence in the school's efforts to help their child become more mature and responsible is high. The prospectus states clearly the school's desire to see pupils develop as 'well rounded young people, understanding and sharing the attitudes and values of a civilised society'. Moral values are reinforced by a caring staff who use good strategies to maintain discipline and a positive working atmosphere. There is a well established reward system for responsible and positive behaviour. Pupils receive stamps on a page in their 'passport' which when full entitles them to an entry in the book of achievement and a certificate presented in assembly. Every classroom displays the playground code and caring rules. Moral and social values are explored in circle time. Good provision for moral development was observed in lessons where teachers used discussion to explore a range of issues. Pupils were encouraged to consider both arguments for and against the war in Iraq in a Year 6 lesson, and deforestation in a talk by a Year 4 pupil. Equal opportunities are respected and pupils with disabilities and special educational needs are accepted as part of the school community.

32. The provision for pupils' social development is good. In the last report it stated that positive relationships were actively encouraged and were good throughout the school. This standard has been maintained and new initiatives have increased provision in this area. Attitudes and behaviour in lessons were nearly always good and often very good. Parental confidence in the school is high and a large majority agrees that behaviour is good and that children likes school. Pupils' personal and social development is promoted through a well structured and embedded programme for personal, social and health education covering a wide range of attitudes and values. The school has successfully encouraged pupils to take on responsibilities around the school. Year 6 pupils in particular have responded positively to helping at the adjacent infant school by organising lunchtime games. In addition, they help with assembly music as well as operating the overhead projector. Good provision for pupils' social development was observed in lessons where teachers encouraged group or pair work which required co-operation and creative thinking. Examples of this were history lessons involving enquiry, and physical education lessons involving performing sequenced movements. Although the full inclusion of all pupils is a strength of the school, a number of situations observed indicated a tendency for older boys and girls to divide into same gender groups whenever given the choice.

33. The provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Progress in this area has not kept pace with that in moral and social development. Provision for multicultural awareness is made through the personal, social and health education and religious education curriculum and is in evidence in other subjects such as history, music and art and design. The extracurricular activities undertaken by pupils contribute to their cultural development. At the moment there is a limited number of school clubs including mathematics, recorders, judo, netball and dance. Some of the creative abilities of pupils are catered for when the school enters the Tilehust Eisteddfod each year. Small group instrumental tuition is available from the Berkshire Young Musicians Trust. A number of off-site visits are made in connection with the curriculum and the school receives visiting speakers, drama groups and storytellers particularly in history. In connection with their topic on the Aztecs Year 4 received a visit from a Mexican couple who explained the details of another culture. In music African instruments are used and in art, and design pupils are introduced to the Aboriginal culture. There have been developments in the dance curriculum recently and the after school club is very popular. However, this is not part of a planned provision for raising cultural awareness which at the moment does not feature as a development priority.

### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

34. The provision for the support, guidance and welfare of pupils was described in the previous report as being good. The school continues to make good provision for the care of its pupils. The vast majority of parents are happy with this aspect of the school.

35. The general atmosphere of the school makes a valuable contribution to the provision of the safe and caring environment in which every pupil is well supported and valued. Staff know pupils very well and they work well as a team to promote pupils' personal welfare and to make them feel safe and secure. Pupils from the Hearing Impaired Resource, those with special educational needs and the small number from minority ethnic groups, are well integrated into the school and receive the same care and support. Relationships are very good and the staff provide good role models. The school's programme of personal and social education provides a good framework for raising pupils' awareness of healthy and safe living. The guidance pupils receive, for example, in the form of sex education, helps prepare them for later life.

36. The school's health and safety policy forms a good basis for ensuring the safety and welfare of pupils and staff. The governing body takes an appropriate interest in monitoring health and safety matters. Regular risk assessments are carried out and the advice of the local education authority advisers is taken. Electrical appliances, fire extinguishers and physical education equipment are regularly checked for safety. There are good procedures for fire safety and regular fire drills are held. One major area of concern is the potential for accidents on the service roads shared with the neighbouring infant school. The school is aware of the problem and is exploring possible solutions.

37. There are trained first aiders on the staff. The child protection practices are good overall and are based on the locally agreed procedures. The headteacher is the designated teacher and this is known to all. Staff are made aware of the child protection procedures and new members of staff are made aware of these as part of their induction.

38. Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are good and result in attendance levels that are broadly in line with national averages. Absences are followed up and the majority are for medical reasons. External agencies are involved as necessary.

39. The policies and procedures for promoting acceptable behaviour are good and application of them results in behaviour, both in lessons and elsewhere that is generally good



and sometimes even better. Neither pupils nor staff see bullying as a problem but on the few occasions it does happen there are good procedures for dealing with it. The prevention of bullying and racism and the promotion of good behaviour are underpinned by the ethos of the school and promoted through a variety of means such as personal and social education and assemblies.

40. The caring and supportive ethos of the school makes a significant contribution to pupils' learning.

41. Staff working with pupils with special educational needs know their pupils very well. Assessments of pupils with special educational needs are carried out carefully and staff are aware of any pupils' targets, programmes or additional medical needs. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good so that learning takes place in a purposeful, inclusive atmosphere. The school complies well with the Code of Practice<sup>4</sup> for special educational needs. It liaises effectively with external agencies.

42. The monitoring of pupils' academic performance is satisfactory. The school tracks the progress of all pupils in English and mathematics and makes good use of a range of optional as well as statutory tests to monitor how well pupils are progressing as they move through the school. However, this useful data is not used effectively by teachers to set appropriate targets for pupils of differing prior attainments. There was little evidence in teachers' planning in subjects other than mathematics of teachers planning work for pupils of above average ability. This is a particular weakness in science and explains why the proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 is below the average of similar schools.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

43. The partnership with parents is satisfactory. The great majority of parents say that their children like school, behave well, are expected to work hard and are helped to make good progress and to mature. They think that the school is well led, staff are approachable and teaching is good. The judgements of the inspection team support these positive views of the school. However, a significant number of parents are not satisfied with the homework set, the information they receive, the extracurricular provision, and the way the school works with parents.

44. The inspection team does not share the concerns about the homework provision. Homework is generally satisfactory. However, the school's homework policy does not specify the amount of time pupils are expected to spend on homework and there is thus the opportunity for a mismatch between the expectations of the parents and those of the school.

45. The inspection team does not share the concerns of the minority of parents about the quality of information provided. The information for parents in the form of newsletters, the prospectus, and review statements is good. The annual end of year reports contain information about the curriculum topics covered during the year and about pupils' attainment and progress as well as an assessment of the amount of effort each pupil has put into his or her work during the year. The reports contain a provision for parents and pupils to add their own comments. Many pupils respond but only a few parents do so. Parents have the opportunity to meet with teachers, if they wish, to discuss the annual reports and most take the opportunity.

46. The school values the involvement of parents in their children's education. The prospectus refers to the school's expectation that there should be a close relationship with

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<sup>4</sup> Code of Practice: This gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act.

parents based on mutual trust and co-operation and gives details of staff availability to see parents on occasions other than on the formal interview evenings. There is a home-school agreement in place and most parents have signed this.

47. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept fully informed and have regular opportunities to discuss targets and reviews with the school. They contribute to the discussion about the progress their child has made and what they need to do to improve further. Pupils contribute their own ideas of what they should improve when individual education plans are prepared.

48. Parents are welcomed as helpers into the school and a small number of parents respond by helping out in various ways and in the running of an after school club. Parents run the Westwood Farm Schools Association, which raises considerable funds for the school jointly with parents from the adjacent infant school and teachers from both schools.

49. A significant number of parents think that the school does not provide an interesting range of activities outside lessons. The range of activities is limited but satisfactory in number. Pupils make visits into the community, visitors come to the school to talk to them and there is a Year 6 residential school journey. The range of after school clubs is limited but the quality is good as was evidenced by the excellent dance club.

50. The school tries hard to fulfil its stated wish for there to be a close relationship between the school and parents, but has only been moderately successful for not all parents are able to make the effort necessary for the home-school partnership to work. As a consequence the impact of the partnership on the work of the school is only satisfactory. The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

51. Overall, the leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff are satisfactory. The headteacher provides clear and supportive leadership. Over the many years he has been in post, he has had a noticeable impact on the life and work of the school. His awareness of the need to develop standards in mathematics and English whilst maintaining a broad curriculum has had a significant impact. The headteacher embodies many of the school's aims well. For instance, he works hard 'to help each pupil realise his or her full potential irrespective of gender, race, religion or special need'. The deputy headteacher works diligently to promote the school's aims including the wish 'to ensure the optimum well being of pupils by taking into consideration the wishes of parents and the view of the governing body'. The staff work effectively to achieve harmony within the school and make pupils welcome. Good teamwork and commitment to improvement that exists across the staff has enabled the school to make satisfactory developments and maintain the many strong aspects found at the last inspection. The school monitors and evaluates its performance satisfactorily and has managed suitable actions to work on the key issues from the last inspection. It has been particularly successful in raising standards in physical education which were below average and are now above average.

52. The teachers responsible for specific subjects lead and manage their areas of the curriculum satisfactorily as a result of appropriate monitoring and evaluation of standards. They analyse teachers' planning, and resources for each subject. The majority of co-ordinators produce effective action plans to develop their subjects. However, the science co-ordinator does not identify specific targets or success criteria for development. Furthermore, the subject leadership for information and communication technology and science does not monitor effectively enough the standards or progress of pupils. Significant strengths are the very good management and leadership of special educational needs. Good teamwork

amongst staff extends and reinforces the school's commitment to a positive atmosphere for learning and to developing positive relationships and equal opportunities for all pupils.

53. The management of provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The special needs co-ordinator is experienced and knowledgeable. She manages the provision well. There are good records of progress made by pupils with special educational needs. Special educational needs matters are discussed at governing body meetings and governors are aware of the progress made by pupils with special educational needs. Additional funding is used effectively to maintain good staffing levels and provide resources.

54. The monitoring of teaching is satisfactory. The headteacher has established a structured programme incorporating formal observations of teaching for some subject areas. Subject leaders in English, mathematics and science monitor the quality of teaching in their subjects regularly. Findings from these observations in mathematics and English inform the subject action plans effectively. There is a good system for appraising teachers, which underpins the school's performance management system. Teachers have individual targets, which are linked to their subject management roles, their own professional development and the school's main areas for improvement. The headteacher and staff carry out an effective induction training programme for new staff.

55. The school development plan is satisfactory. This judgement reflects a range of strengths and weaknesses. Although it identifies appropriate priorities in most subject areas, for the Hearing Impaired Resource as well as personnel, premises and the library, it has some weaknesses. The school development plan does not explain specifically what the main priorities are in the present year and includes action plans for subject areas which are not for whole school improvement. Nor does it contain a three year long term plan for the school. However, it does contain the targets for percentages of pupils the school hopes will achieve higher Level 5 grades but these are not particularly challenging for English or science this year. Satisfactory action has been taken to meet the school's targets.

56. Governors have a good level of awareness of the strengths and areas for development in the school. There is an organised system of committees to oversee various aspects of school life. However, some of the present governors are new to their posts and have yet to develop their roles and responsibilities fully. The governors shape the direction of the school satisfactorily but they carry out little monitoring of the curriculum.

57. The school's finance officer and the governing body satisfactorily manage the school's finances. A significant strength is the use of money for pupils with special and physical educational needs to support their progress which is very effective. The school's finance officer keeps good records of spending and provides the governors and headteacher with high quality information to enable them to manage the school's budget appropriately. The school office makes satisfactory use of information and communication technology. Governors agree any large purchases with the headteacher. Best value for money is achieved satisfactorily through careful analysis of prices and estimates. However, the school does not regularly investigate ways that other schools are developing standards. The governors have found it difficult to resolve the conflict of prudent saving with the immediate needs of the present pupils within the school. Currently it has a substantial budget 'underspend' brought forward from the previous financial year. The governing body is well aware of this and has an acceptable rationale for the present 'underspend'. The school had put aside money for a building project and needed to save money to cover a short fall due to a small number of pupils in one year group. The school plans to spend this money on improving the school's office and to purchase a class set of laptop computers in the near future.

58. There is a good range and quality of teachers and teaching assistants with appropriate qualifications and expertise to teach pupils of primary age. The school has had considerable difficulties in recruiting and retaining staff in recent years due to the price of property and has an unfilled part-time vacancy for a teaching post. There are co-ordinators for all subjects and aspects of responsibility. A significant strength of the staffing is the employment and development of well qualified teaching assistants, who are deployed effectively to give extra support to pupils in a variety of learning situations, but particularly for those pupils who have hearing impairment.

59. The accommodation is satisfactory. The building is welcoming and provides a pleasant and stimulating environment for learning. Attractive displays of pupils' work make the school cheerful and demonstrate how the teachers value all pupils' achievements. The school has satisfactory sized classrooms and useful shared areas outside each set of classrooms. Extra classrooms for pupils with special educational needs and those with hearing impairments are effectively used so that they can experience additional language activities. The playgrounds are of a satisfactory size and quality. The field offers good opportunities to develop games skills and science knowledge and understanding. The hall offers satisfactory opportunities for pupils to develop physical education skills.

60. Resources for learning are satisfactory overall, with particularly good resources available for the teaching of mathematics, art and design, and history, although resources for ICT are unsatisfactory. Very good resources for special educational needs mean that pupils have rich opportunities to develop language and communication skills. Resources for other subjects are satisfactory. The library contains a satisfactory range and quality of books, but there are few books about other faiths and life in a multicultural society. The physical education equipment is satisfactory and has been improved since the last inspection. Whilst there is a good range of resources for games and dance, the apparatus in the hall for gymnastics is rather basic. The school has spent a considerable amount of money on computers and each class has two up to date personal computers. However, it does not have the resources to allow whole classes of pupils to be taught at the same time which would enable pupils to make faster progress in their learning. Provision for ICT is constrained by the limited range of resources for this subject.

61. Overall, the school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection in terms of leadership and management and offers satisfactory value for money.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

62. To further improve standards, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- **Improve** standards in science by:
  - Ensuring more able pupils are set specific challenges in lessons;
  - Tracking pupils' progress;
  - Increasing the co-ordinator's monitoring of pupils' work;
  - Developing pupils' knowledge of the National Curriculum levels of attainment.

Paragraphs: 3, 4, 21, 19, 23, 42, 52, 55, 88, 90, 93, 94, 95.

- **Improve** standards in information and communication technology by:
  - Improving teachers' subject knowledge;
  - Improving teachers' use of assessment information to ensure work presented to pupils takes account of their differing prior attainments;
  - Increasing the range of resources available to teachers and pupils;
  - Providing opportunities for the subject co-ordinator to monitor the quality of teaching and learning across the school. Thus sharing the pockets of good teaching that does exist;
  - Reviewing class timetables to ensure all pupils have regular ICT lessons.

Paragraphs: 5, 7, 21, 22, 23, 25, 42, 52, 57, 60, 75, 87, 91, 101, 105, 106, 117, 119, 120.

- **Improve** the quality of the school development plan by:
  - Including a three year long term plan;
  - Explaining what the main priorities are for the present year;
  - Only including subject action plans which are for whole school development in the near future;
  - Including resourcing identified priorities and costings linked to the school's budget.

Paragraphs: 22, 55, 56, 57, 60, 116, 130.

- **Improve** the way in which teachers use assessment information to provide challenging work for pupils of differing prior attainment by:
  - Making better use of teachers' assessments to ensure that work is well matched to pupils' differing needs;
  - Ensuring that assessment data is used to set challenging individual targets for pupils;
  - Introducing more detailed assessment procedures in subjects other than English and mathematics;
  - Ensuring teachers' marking gives pupils a clear idea of the strengths and weaknesses of their work and identifies what pupils need to do to improve further.

Paragraphs: 3, 4, 8, 19, 21, 23, 42, 72, 74, 75, 78, 89, 93, 94, 101, 105, 106, 107, 108, 126, 130, 133.

## Hearing Impaired Resource (HIR)

63. The provision for pupils in the Hearing Impaired Resource (HIR) is very good and has some excellent features. These are seen particularly in the ways in which pupils are fully included in all aspects of the school's life and the exemplary way in which pupils' specific needs are met. There is a firm commitment from the headteacher, staff in the school and the HIR, parents and pupils to ensure that the school strongly promotes the inclusion of all pupils in every aspect of school life. Pupils are fully involved in assemblies, lunchtimes and playtimes. The high quality of the provision has been maintained since the last inspection.

64. Pupils make very good progress towards the targets on their individual education plans, especially with regard to literacy and numeracy. Self esteem and confidence develop well because of the suitability of the targets and meticulous adaptation of units of work. Careful attention is given to the formation of groups when pupils work with other classes. Staff in the HIR make very good use of assessment information for target setting and for preparing pupils to work with groups of their own age in the school. Although attainment of pupils from the HIR is usually slightly below the national average as a result of the difficulties presented by hearing impairment, most perform well in national tests.

65. Skilled, experienced and committed staff from the HIR provide support of high quality for pupils in lessons. Pupils work alongside other pupils and usually stay in for the whole lesson. On other occasions they complete their tasks in the HIR. Teachers prepare pupils well for literacy lessons because they rehearse what they will be learning in the lesson before they join the class group. This is extremely beneficial and enables them to maximise their participation in the lesson and achieve at a higher level. Pupils have daily language sessions, with a strong emphasis on developing good speaking and listening skills in the HIR. These meet their needs very well. Staff in the school are very supportive of the hearing impaired pupils and ensure that they are positioned well in the classroom and that their individual needs are met well. For example, in music, hearing impaired pupils go outside the classroom with their group to prepare their composition and then return for the performance. Liaison between all staff is very good so there is high quality sharing of information between teachers and support staff: for example after a numeracy lesson when the pupils left after the introductory activity. Staff work very effectively as a team with speech and language therapists, technicians and other therapists.

66. Teachers and support assistants in the HIR know the pupils very well. Relationships between pupils and staff are very good. Assessments are carried out very purposefully and targets, which are chosen carefully to be achievable and manageable, are reviewed regularly and effectively. Parents and pupils are included well in the discussion of targets and preparation of individual education plans. There is a very good focus on developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. The HIR complies fully with the Code of Practice and liaison with external agencies is extensive and very productive.

67. The involvement of parents is of the highest quality. Home-school diaries are used very well to support pupils' learning and maintain an effective dialogue between parents and school. Pupils show pleasure when something mentioned in the diary is discussed with them. Parents, and their children, are included well in reviews and value the support and recommendations given to them.

68. The management of the HIR is exemplary because the systems established ensure the highest quality of preparation for reviews and meeting pupils' needs. Funding for pupils is spent very effectively to support the high standards of provision. All staff have received high quality training and the technical and academic resources are maintained very well. Staff

make very good use of the building, which is physically part of the school and ensures that everyone feels included in life at Westwood Farm.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	55
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	24

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	8	26	20	0	0	0
Percentage	2	14	47	36	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	246
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	13

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Y3– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	12
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	45

#### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	8

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	3
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	8

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.1

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2

National comparative data	5.4
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	33	40	73

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	27	30	32
	Girls	34	34	37
	Total	61	64	69
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	84 (72)	88 (61)	95 (79)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	28	30	28
	Girls	35	33	33
	Total	63	63	61
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	86 (72)	86 (69)	84 (76)
	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
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British – Indian
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background

No of pupils on roll
227
1
2
2
0
0
3
0
2
2
0

Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0



lack or Black British – Caribbean	2	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	1	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	2	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	1	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: Y3 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	12.65
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.45
Average class size	30.75

##### Education support staff: Y3 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	177

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
	£
Total income	682,961
Total expenditure	650,289
Expenditure per pupil	2501
Balance brought forward from previous year	88,236
Balance carried forward to next year	120,908

#### Recruitment of teachers

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

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0.3
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0.52
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

**Results of the survey of parents and carers**

**Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	246
Number of questionnaires returned	64

**Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	55	39	3	3	0
My child is making good progress in school.	50	47	2	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	30	66	2	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	23	61	11	3	2
The teaching is good.	52	45	2	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	34	48	14	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	58	38	3	0	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	61	38	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	22	56	17	2	3
The school is well led and managed.	45	47	6	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	47	45	0	0	8
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	22	41	23	8	6

*Due to rounding percentages may not total 100.*

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

### **ENGLISH**

69. In the 2002 National Curriculum tests for pupils in Year 6, standards were above the national average, but slightly below the average of similar schools. When compared to their attainment on entry to the school at the start of Year 3, levels of achievement were satisfactory. Standards observed during the inspection were slightly lower in the present Year 6. There are two reasons for this slight drop in standards. Although pupil mobility at the school is low, it has affected the present Year 6 and school records show that the standards attained by pupils joining the school after Year 3 are significantly lower than the school's average. Unlike last year, this year's results will be affected by pupils from the Hearing Impaired Resource who are not expected to reach the expected Level 4. Between 1998 and 2002, standards in English rose exactly in line with the national trend. In the 2002 tests, the results of boys and girls were almost exactly the same. This is in contrast to the national picture, where girls usually do significantly better than boys and is due mainly to differences in attainment on entry rather than any features of the school's provision.

70. Standards in speaking and listening are above average by the end of Year 6 and pupils achieve well in this aspect. Underpinning the good progress that pupils make is the calm, respectful atmosphere in every class. Teachers have created a learning environment in which pupils feel confident to express their own ideas in the knowledge that other pupils will listen in a courteous and understanding manner. When speaking in front of the class or in assembly, pupils know how to adjust the tone of their voice to match what they are saying. In a Year 4 lesson, pupils developed their speaking skills very well when asked to prepare and deliver a three minute talk on a controversial issue. Presentations on deforestation and pocket money were delivered with considerable skills and panache whilst other pupils demonstrated their listening skills by asking searching and often very perceptive questions to the speaker.

71. Standards in reading are slightly above average by the end of Year 6 and pupils make satisfactory progress in this aspect of English. Pupils talk about a range of authors with enthusiasm and can give examples of reading a range of different texts including poetry. Pupils across the ability range read with commitment and expression. The school uses guided reading within the literacy hour to promote effectively reading for understanding, although the emphasis on reading declines somewhat as pupils move through the school. This pattern reflects a concern expressed by parents at the pre-inspection meeting with the registered inspector. A scrutiny of pupils' reading diaries indicates that such parental concerns are justified. In Year 3, pupils' individual diaries are kept up to date and parents are invited to make relevant comments. Although the proportion doing so is small, this nevertheless creates a useful dialogue between teachers and parents and contributes significantly to the progress that pupils make. The quality of this useful dialogue declines in Years 4 and 5 and disappears entirely in Year 6 where pupils merely keep a record of what books they have read, without any comment from parents or teachers. Despite this, many pupils in Year 6 do read avidly and with considerable skill.

72. Standards in writing are average. The school has recently focused on improving standards in writing and this emphasis is beginning to pay off. A strength of pupils' written work is the wide range of genres that they attempt including reports, news, plays, stories and poems. Many poems written by Year 6 pupils as part of their study of the Second World War were thought provoking and poignant. Basic punctuation is used accurately and most pupils structure their work well, showing a good grasp of grammar. Pupils develop their writing skills well in other subjects, especially history, often supporting their work with lengthy and

interesting accounts. In English lessons, pupils present their work neatly with well formed, joined handwriting, although the presentation of written work in other subjects does not always match these high standards. A weakness in pupils' writing is the extent to which older, more able pupils are challenged to write longer, more complex stories. Examples of work showing imaginative ideas are rare.

73. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well throughout the school. In all lessons these pupils are supported well by learning support assistants and the use of small group work is very effective in ensuring pupils make very good progress in all aspects of English. Pupils' individual education plans have clear targets relating to reading and writing and these are used well by teaching and non teaching staff to present work to pupils that is very closely matched to their differing needs.

74. The quality of teaching and learning in English is good throughout the school. During the inspection, two-thirds of lessons observed were judged to be good and the remainder were satisfactory. There are a number of common, positive features to all lessons. Teachers' speech is a good role model for pupils and the clear manner in which lessons are presented enables pupils, and especially those with special educational needs, to take a full part in all activities. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils and have created a calm, purposeful atmosphere in lessons that significantly enhances the quality of learning. The National Literacy Strategy has given shape and direction to teachers' practice, and lesson objectives are shared with pupils. However, there are some variations as to how teachers end their literacy lessons. This part of the lesson, known as 'the plenary', is sometimes used very effectively to evaluate the extent to which pupils have managed the objectives of the lesson, but in some less effective lessons, teachers merely summarise the content of the lesson. A weakness in teaching, which meant that many otherwise good lessons were only judged to be satisfactory, is the way in which teachers plan work for more able pupils. In some lessons this is done well, but often the work presented to different groups is too similar and more able pupils are not always stretched enough.

75. A scrutiny of pupils' work in all classes revealed some weaknesses in teaching that were not always apparent in the lessons observed. Marking, for example, is consistently weak. Teachers use praise and encouragement well to motivate and reward pupils although such comments are nearly always related to effort and presentation rather than the quality of pupils' work. Teachers' marking rarely gives pupils clear feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of their work. The impact of this is that, over a period of time, pupils' knowledge of their own learning is sketchy and few pupils can outline what they need to do to improve further. Teachers' use of ICT to support learning in English is unsatisfactory. The school recognises this as an area needing development. There are some good examples of pupils using word processing, but only occasional use of software such as 'publisher' to extend pupils' writing and presentational skills.

76. A strength of teaching is the very good provision made for pupils with special educational needs, including pupils from the Hearing Impaired Resource. Small group work is planned very carefully by teachers who work in close co-operation with their teaching assistants. Presentations are very well prepared and delivered in an interesting and stimulating manner that engages the attention of pupils.

77. Attitudes to learning are good in Years 3, 4 and 5 and satisfactory in Year 6. Most pupils are keen to learn, listen attentively and sustain concentration well throughout lessons. Pupils co-operate well when working in groups. In several lessons, pupils undertook mature discussions on issues such as 'should dogs be banned from parks?' showing empathy with other pupils' points of view. Many lessons make a positive contribution to pupils' moral development. In Year 6, attitudes are variable. Where teaching is lively and enthusiastic,

pupils respond positively, but where teaching is competent but dull, they prefer to listen rather than make a positive contribution to the lesson.

78. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has successfully led the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy and has monitored teaching, giving useful feedback to other teachers. Professional development has focused on improving standards in writing and inspection evidence indicates that this is beginning to pay dividends. Although the school does track the progress of each pupil as they move through the school, this data is not used sufficiently by teachers to provide challenging work for more able pupils. Although the school does evaluate the results of pupils in the Year 6 National Curriculum tests, not enough attention has been given to analysing why standards are below those of other similar schools.

79. Overall, the school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection.

## **MATHEMATICS**

80. The school provides well for learning in mathematics. The good quality of provision has been maintained since the last inspection. A review of previous work and lesson observations indicate that the attainment of the majority of pupils currently in Year 6 is above national averages. Approximately one-third of pupils attain standards well above national averages. In 2002 National Curriculum tests pupils in Year 6 achieved results that were well above average and above those of similar schools. There has been an upward trend in test results since the last inspection, but results vary because in some year groups there are more pupils with special educational needs or who came into the school after Year 3. The high standards are due to a number of factors:

- Good implementation of the numeracy strategy;
- Very good use of information from school and national tests to check pupils' attainment and progress and identify areas for improvement;
- Consistently good teaching;
- Consideration of assessment information to form groups to help pupils raise their level of attainment;
- A good emphasis on problem solving and investigative activities.

81. Achievement in mathematics is good and the majority of pupils make good progress. There are no significant differences between the achievements of boys and girls or between different ethnic groups. Less able pupils, those with special educational needs or from the Hearing Impaired Resource, make good progress because of the teaching and carefully planned work. They have additional support, individually and in groups, practical tasks that are matched well to their abilities and needs. As a result, pupils work hard and gain confidence. More able pupils are given challenging work in most lessons. Teachers enable them to achieve at a higher level and extend their thinking skills.

82. Pupils in Year 3 recognise the different properties of solid and flat shapes. More able pupils work out how to estimate the addition of three numbers under a hundred and find different ways to add them. Others in the group successfully add two of these numbers. Pupils are very confident about the value of each digit in a two or three figure number and relish using terms such as 'inverse operations' when they add and subtract numbers to work out the same answer. Almost all pupils round numbers to 100 and solve problems accurately. More able pupils solve money problems with words confidently and less able pupils identify coins in purses adding up to 20p. Pupils with special educational needs create sums to show how much two items cost when they use money to buy items in a shop. Pupils in Year 4 consolidate their understanding and use of tables in brisk mental sessions. They know compass directions and work out how many degrees there are in a right angle

and the angles in some triangles very quickly because of the practical nature of the lesson. Less able pupils have support to do this but complete a simple grid correctly during the lesson. Pupils understand that patterns are made when you count on in twos, fives and tens. They complete simple graphs neatly and most understand that each part of a graph has a special name and purpose. Pupils know how to find information quickly from graphs.

83. Pupils in Year 5 speed up their use of doubling and mentally adding numbers together by using a number square and methods demonstrated by the teacher. They said that it was fun and they enjoyed the activity. More able pupils have a good understanding of division and use of tables. They solve measuring problems for area, perimeter, and use decimals confidently. Pupils become increasingly accurate in calculating probability of events and the use of fractions. They have a thorough understanding of large numbers. By the time they are in Year 6 more able pupils calculate percentages using strategies they have learned and use addition, subtraction, multiplication and division to solve interesting problems. They know that they have to read problems carefully and decide which are the important pieces of information. The teacher tells them, "This is your mission, if you choose to accept it," and pupils immediately rise to the challenge of solving as many problems as possible in a given time. Some do not use all the available evidence and know that this is an aspect that needs improvement. Less able pupils solve problems involving time and understand that making decisions about the method they use is important because this will help them with other work. Pupils with special educational needs increase their understanding that, if you can multiply by ten, you are able to work out a pattern to multiply by 20 and 30.

84. Teaching and learning are good. Most pupils enjoy the work planned by teachers because activities are interesting and challenging. Lessons usually proceed at a brisk pace and questioning extends pupils' answers and thinking. Planning is good so there are activities to match the wide range of abilities in each year group. Teachers plan further advanced activities for more able pupils. There are opportunities for consolidation and progress for middle ability pupils, and less able pupils have more practical activities to involve them actively in their learning. Work is marked regularly and there are good examples of comments to help pupils improve their work. There are very good relationships between pupils and adults because of the humour in lessons and the ways in which teachers and support staff work well together. Assessment is used well. As a result, teachers see quickly where pupils have found aspects of lessons difficult or too easy. This enables them to amend their planning for future lessons and consolidate new work. Teachers are very careful to emphasise the need for pupils to check their work and to think through the strategies they used in their calculations. This enables pupils to build on their learning well. Satisfactory use is made of homework.

85. Most pupils enjoy the challenge in numeracy because teachers plan and prepare interesting lessons thoughtfully. The younger pupils are keen to contribute but a few older pupils need encouragement to make comments and become involved in discussion. When they do contribute, they usually show good understanding of the work being done. Pupils settle to work well because they know teachers expect them to organise themselves quickly. Work is usually presented neatly, with a high degree of accuracy.

86. The structure of the daily mathematics lesson is used very effectively. The initial mental mathematics sessions are used well to sharpen pupils' thinking and prepare them for the main activities of the lesson. Teachers use mathematical terms precisely and challenge pupils' thinking. For example, pupils in Year 3 describe quicker ways to make 15p accurately and Year 5 pupils plan relevant questions to ask others about the information in a graph.

87. The subject is led and managed very well. As a result the numeracy strategy has been implemented effectively and group and class lessons organised thoughtfully. There are some interesting uses of mathematics in art and design and history. There is planned use of ICT in

most lessons but the co-ordinators are aware that this is an area for further development. The weekly Year 4 'Maths Club' at lunchtime is extremely popular because pupils have opportunities to develop their numeracy skills in exciting and enjoyable ways.

## SCIENCE

88. In Year 6 standards were average in 2002 National Curriculum tests in science. Average numbers of pupils achieved higher Level 5 grades. However, inspection evidence indicates that standards for the present Year 6 group are below average overall. Standards in Year 6 are lower than last year's test results for the following reasons:

- A considerable number of pupils have joined this year group late and have lower levels of science understanding;
- Changes in staff have caused some inconsistencies in teaching;
- A significant number of pupils have special educational needs.

89. However, standards are lower than they could be mainly because teachers are not using assessment activities productively and are not setting specific challenges for more able pupils in lessons. Standards could be considerably higher. Boys' and girls' achievements and those of different ethnic groups demonstrate no significant differences. Pupils who have special educational needs are well included in all activities and make satisfactory progress.

90. In Year 6 pupils have below average investigational skills, knowledge of materials and physical processes. Although most pupils work on average Level 4 activities, below average numbers of pupils work at higher Level 5 tasks. The majority of Year 6 pupils write predictions and conclusions, but they do not consistently record their reasons and apply their scientific knowledge. A few more able pupils write effective conclusions such as 'The 10 cm spinner took longest to fall to the ground because it had the largest area. This meant more air got trapped underneath it, causing air resistance'. Most pupils investigate satisfactorily the time taken for spinners to fall to Earth. A significant strength in pupils' knowledge and understanding is on life and living processes. Most pupils effectively name the parts of a flowering plant, for instance stamen, sepal and carpel. The majority of Year 6 pupils can draw food chains using arrows accurately. Some more able pupils know that microbes decay dead animals and plants, and of the sun's importance in producing green plants. Most Year 6 pupils know about changes of state where water freezes, melts and evaporates. Some more able pupils explain whether changes are reversible or not but this is only work at a level expected for most eleven year olds. Most pupils can record the properties of materials such as 'plastic is good for moulding into shapes when it's hot'. More able pupils know that copper and aluminium are metals that are not magnetic. In Year 6 the majority of pupils incorporate scientific vocabulary satisfactorily, but more able pupils do not often use specific vocabulary such as 'photosynthesis'.

91. Some pupils with special educational needs achieve average levels of attainment due to appropriate provision by teachers and classroom assistants. Numeracy skills are satisfactorily developed through scientific studies. For instance, Year 4 pupils record the temperature changes accurately that result from the use of different insulation materials. Literacy skills are satisfactorily used: for example when pupils recorded methods for the testing of materials' absorbency. However, there is little evidence of pupils using information and communication technology to support their learning in science.

92. Standards in Year 3 to 5 are average for all aspects of science but could be considerably higher. The standards in these year groups are higher because they have fewer pupils who have joined late and who have not benefited from being in the school for more of their school career. Furthermore, they have fewer pupils with special educational needs. The

majority of Year 4 pupils have an average level of understanding of the human skeleton's purposes. They have an average understanding of how to carry out a fair test. This is demonstrated when pupils record ways to find out which materials will keep water warm. Most Year 5 pupils show an average level of understanding of physical processes. For instance, pupils record many ways that sound travels in a stimulating display. They create satisfactory posters to show ways to keep healthy.

93. Although all lessons seen were satisfactory, taking into account an analysis of pupils' work the quality of teaching over time is less than satisfactory. It enables most pupils to achieve satisfactorily, but more able pupils make insufficient progress. The best features of teaching seen included effective use of learning methods where teachers used challenging questioning skills. For example, a Year 5 teacher asked pupils, "How might you carry out a test to find out how sound travels through materials?" Basic skills are taught well when Year 4 pupils learn to make careful observations of materials' reactions with water. Good social provision in lessons means that pupils work effectively together in pairs or groups. Teachers' effective management skills ensure that pupils behave well and concentrate on tasks. However, teaching is less effective in other aspects. For instance, lesson planning does not identify how many more able pupils there are, or set specific extensions for them at higher levels. Whilst classroom assistants are satisfactorily used in the main part of lessons they are not always used effectively at the beginning of sessions. The ends of lessons are not consistently used to assess pupils' understanding or offer pupils a time for self evaluation. Teachers' marking does not regularly explain to pupils what they have done well or say how they could improve. Spiritual provision is satisfactory and pupils have opportunities to reflect about their thoughts when teachers ask them to draw conclusions from their experiments.

94. The leadership and management of science are underdeveloped overall. The new subject leader has a good vision for the ways science could be improved. Since the previous inspection, the school is judged to have made unsatisfactory improvements, as standards are lower. Whilst the quality of teaching has been monitored regularly since the last inspection it has not been effective in raising standards. The subject leader does not regularly monitor pupils' books. Teachers' marking does not inform pupils of what they have done well or how they could improve their work nor do teachers develop pupils' understanding of National Curriculum levels of attainment. Pupils' attainment is not tracked and teachers' assessments do not consistently use National Curriculum levels of attainment. However, new teacher guidance material has been purchased recently to develop a more challenging programme of learning. National Curriculum tests have been studied by the co-ordinator and as a result greater teaching of the interpretation of data has been identified as requiring further attention.

95. Overall, the school has made unsatisfactory progress in science since the last inspection.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

96. Attainment is in line with national expectations by the end of Year 6 in art and design. This is a lower standard than at the last inspection but there has not been as much emphasis on art and design until recently. The work of pupils indicates that there is some above average art work in all year groups. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and from the Hearing Impaired Resource, make sound progress.

97. Pupils use sketchbooks to practise their techniques and increase their vocabulary about styles of painting and drawing throughout the school. Pupils in Year 3 use pencils very carefully to add shade and tone to their pictures of shells and look very carefully at photographs to produce sketches of pairs of friends. These are very well detailed. Pupils print patterns of shapes on other patterns to make very effective, colourful repeating and rotating



designs. Pupils in Year 4 develop their pencil skills further and design Viking brooches and Aztec masks. Their observational drawings of flowers are clear and of good quality. These make a good contrast with pupils' 'imaginary' drawings.

98. Pupils in Year 5 commented that 'there are lots of swirls' and 'no straight lines' when they examined the work of Van Gogh. They copied a small portion of one of his paintings using a viewfinder. They were amazed to see that there was red and green in some hair. Careful consideration of paintings helps pupils understand how different artists use their brushes. Pupils produce very bold geometric designs in the style of Clarice Cliff pottery. Pupils in Year 6 work together to produce a large scale collage based on a painting by Seurat. They know he painted in a 'dabbing, stabbing' style and the majority of pupils work intently to copy it, using the colours and style of the piece of the painting they are given. They design a mural in a similar collaborative effort, using a work by Picasso for their starting point.

99. Many pupils say that art is their favourite subject and they concentrate well in these lessons. They are proud to see their work on display and are happy to talk about it. Pupils work thoughtfully on the planning, designing, making and evaluating of their work. They appreciate the work of others and are quick to praise good features in it.

100. Teaching is at least satisfactory and there is some good teaching of observational skills throughout the school. Planning is good and pupils work regularly with clay and a wide range of materials and textures. Pupils consider the work of artists from around the world and teachers use opportunities to link art and design with other subjects, such as history and mathematics, effectively.

101. The co-ordinator is relatively new to the post and has developed the guidelines well so that pupils build on their skills and use techniques more widely as they move through the school. She plans to develop assessment in the subject and reintroduce the annual sketching task of the same object so that pupils may see how their skills develop as they move through the school. Each year pupils participate in the Tilehurst Eisteddfod and enter good quality still life drawings. Plans for an Arts Week involving a local secondary school are well advanced. ICT is used to produce patterns and designs and the Internet is used for research, but it could be used more extensively. Art and design makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development through the many opportunities for working in pairs and large groups and for reflecting upon the world around them.

102. Overall, progress since the last inspection in art and design is satisfactory.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

103. Standards in design and technology are in line with national expectations by the end of Year 6 and have been maintained since the last inspection. During the inspection it was only possible to see two lessons due to the school's timetabling arrangements. Observations are based on other sources including previous work, displays and discussion with staff and pupils. The progress of all pupils including those with special needs is satisfactory.

104. Pupils are given a variety of design and technology tasks where there are often good cross-curricular links with other subjects. Pupils develop an understanding of food safety and hygiene by designing and making their own sandwich and yogurt where good links are made with mathematics to measure and record results. Younger pupils in Year 3 use their knowledge of nets to design, make and decorate Christmas boxes. In Year 4 good links are made with literacy to design covers for pupils' poems, stories and writing books. Older pupils' skills are developed to make moving toys using cams and simple torches where science skills are put to good use. By Year 6 pupils can use a template to design and make their own slippers where they appreciate that several different materials are needed to design a slipper

for comfort, safety and appearance. However, inspection evidence indicates that pupils have too limited opportunities to use a range of tools including saws to support their learning and as a result many pupils have problems measuring and cutting out accurately.

105. The quality of teaching in the limited lessons observed was satisfactory. Teachers use resources well and provide a wide range of activities to stimulate pupils. As a result most pupils listen carefully, follow instructions well and show a pride in their finished products. Pupils with special educational needs, including those from the Hearing Impaired Resource, are well integrated into lessons as seen during the inspection where they were fully involved in making their own slippers. Teachers' planning is often detailed and identifies what pupils will do, but does not always identify the skills and knowledge pupils are required to learn. The new co-ordinator is enthusiastic but has no opportunity to monitor teaching and learning across the school. She has identified the need for more training to increase the subject knowledge and confidence of teachers to teach more advanced skills. No effective assessment procedures are in place and as a consequence many pupils including higher attainers are not sufficiently challenged. Marking is minimal and rarely identifies how work can be improved. Although there are good cross-curricular links established in many subjects, insufficient use is made of the potential of ICT to support pupils' learning.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

106. A scrutiny of work involving pupils of different ability levels shows that statutory requirements are met and standards at the end of Year 6 are in line with national expectations. In Year 6 pupils have a knowledge of where places are and what they are like through work on the United Kingdom, France and Europe. They have an understanding of patterns and processes in physical and human geography through, for example, work on the earth and space, the seasons, the rain cycle and rivers. Understanding environmental change and sustainable development is introduced in Year 3 and reinforced in the Year 5 topic on saving the rainforests. In Year 4 pupils demonstrated an application of geography to environmental, social and political issues when they held a sensible debate on deforestation. This was evident in Year 6 work on the changes over time to a Mediterranean coastal village. However, overall the work seen lacked opportunities for pupils to apply their skills to a geographical enquiry and consequently the more able pupils were not extended. There was little evidence of the use of ICT in the work observed.

107. The last report judged teaching to be satisfactory overall with examples of good practice. The limited amount of teaching observed was satisfactory and from the evidence of pupils' work teaching remains satisfactory overall. Pupils exhibited good behaviour and attitudes to learning. Pupils with special educational needs were fully integrated and made satisfactory progress. Good use was made of learning support assistants. Pupils' understanding of environmental change is positively encouraged. This was observed in a Year 3 class when pupils were invited to compare the view from their classroom window with the same in thirty years time. Pupils were able to appreciate that landscape can change and that it is not always possible to predict the changes. Geographical themes are delivered in blocked units of work. During the inspection Year 4 and Year 6 were not involved in any geographical study. However the scheme of work indicates a satisfactory coverage of the required attainment targets and contains planning guidance, learning outcomes and an inventory of resources. It does not contain any advice on methods of assessment. The displays in Year 5 on the rain cycle and rivers were interesting and informative. Pupils benefit from field trips such as the recent visit to a local hothouse to experience a rainforest environment. There was limited evidence of assessment at the end of units of work and this is an area of weakness. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is weak. Some comments on pupils' work were helpful but overall teachers did not use the opportunity to extend pupils' learning.

108. In the last report it was recorded that the co-ordinator was new to the role. A new co-ordinator has again recently taken over and a review of policy and planning with governors is to take place soon. There is an appropriate action plan for geography included in the school development plan. It identifies the need to ensure progression from Year 3 to Year 6 which is to be reflected in pupils' work. However, it does not identify assessment as an area for action. The co-ordinator has planned a scrutiny of pupils' work for the summer term. She does not have the opportunity to monitor teaching, but is clear about her role in organising resources and supporting colleagues. At the moment subject management lacks continuity and a clear direction. This affects the school's capacity to focus on the areas it should, in particular with regard to assessment and stretching the more able pupils.

109. Overall, the school has made satisfactory progress in geography since the last inspection.

## **HISTORY**

110. In the last report attainment in history was judged to be above national expectations. Pupils continue to make good progress and attainment by the age of eleven is still above what is expected nationally.

111. It was observed in the last report that pupils showed a keen interest in the past and enjoyed reading stories and studying the good quality artefacts provided by the school. In lessons observed this was still seen to be the case and every year group featured their current history theme with high quality displays that prompted questions and engaged pupils in historical enquiry. Pupils show an enthusiasm for history which is inspired by the involvement of outside experts. For example, Year 3 are visited by groups giving demonstrations of Ancient Greek storytelling and life in Anglo Saxon Britain. Similar visits are made in the other year groups in connection with units of work on the Aztecs, the Vikings and Second World War evacuees. As part of a local study Year 5 visit a Victorian schoolroom and spend a day in role as pupils. Good use is made of ICT with every year group receiving guidance on the links with their units of work from the subject co-ordinator. In one lesson observed pupils were using ICT to find out about the clothes worn by a Roman soldier.

112. In the last report the quality of the teaching was judged to be good. This standard has been maintained. In the majority of lessons observed teachers used effective planning with clear expectations. The management of pupils was good and this contributed to the good behaviour and attitudes which featured in most lessons. Pupils with special educational needs were always included and good use was made of additional adult help. The enthusiastic teaching motivates pupils who engage well in discussions and tasks involving research and enquiry. This was well illustrated in a Year 4 lesson when the teacher initiated a discussion on the reliability of different historical sources. Pupils were able to suggest many including a visitor who had been invited to speak to them about the Vikings, CD-Roms, computers and the Internet. This in turn prompted further discussion on how reliable the Internet is in providing accurate data. Pupils presented sensible conclusions, listening carefully to each other and using appropriate historical vocabulary. In a subsequent small group discussion using photographs of an Aztec ball court pupils were able to make deductions about the rules of the game and this led to the introduction of primary and secondary sources.

113. Examples of good assessment strategies were observed. The Year 4 lesson which ended in a discussion about the Aztec ball game indicated to the class teacher that pupils were ready to explore the difference between primary and secondary sources. As a consequence planning and delivery of the next lesson was changed very successfully to capitalise on the understanding displayed by the majority of pupils. Staff have recently been asked to assess pupils at the end of each unit of work and the co-ordinator reports that this

has begun in some year groups. The standard of the work observed in all year groups was above average with constructive teacher comments in evidence.

114. The subject is well led. The history co-ordinator has a clear understanding of his responsibilities. The good level of support and encouragement for staff which was evident in the last report has been maintained and extended. The scheme of work produced in consultation with staff provides a clear structure that teachers find very helpful in their planning. The range and organisation of resources is very good and has a direct impact on the quality of teaching and learning. Artefacts feature in most history displays which are very good. The co-ordinator is aware of the need to refine systems of assessment and this is addressed in the current subject action plan. However, at the moment there is little time available for monitoring teaching but given this opportunity it would be possible to raise standards even further.

115. Overall, the school has made good progress in history since the last inspection.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

116. Standards of attainment in information and communication technology (ICT) are below nationally expected levels by the end of Year 6. Standards have significantly improved in the last year but the school has not kept up with the pace of change in this subject since the last inspection. Standards are currently below expectations because resources are unsatisfactory, pupils' experiences are too narrow and insufficient time is given to use computers and develop skills. It was only possible to see a limited amount of timetabled direct teaching of ICT during the inspection where many classes did not include the subject in their timetables. During the inspection many teachers planned to use ICT in their lessons but failed to give pupils this opportunity. This indicates that insufficient opportunities are given to teach ICT skills, which has a negative impact on pupils' learning. Evidence of standards of achievement and provision for the subject was largely gained from a scrutiny of pupils' work, displays and discussions with teachers and pupils.

117. Attainment is higher throughout the school in communicating information and in handling data. Attainment is unsatisfactory in the use of adventure games in modelling, in control and in monitoring due to the lack of appropriate resources.

118. By the end of Year 6 most pupils' skills in communicating and handling information have developed appropriately. Many pupils are able to change colour, size and font confidently and combine graphics with a text such as for their Haiku poems. Higher attainers can use a spell check and are refining cut and paste skills from the Internet to create their own graphic text and composite pages, such as finding out about evacuees in the Second World War. Pupils with special educational needs, including those from the Hearing Impaired Resource, are given good support from teaching assistants. Pupils have recently begun to develop the use of e-mail by sending and receiving information to each other. Higher attainers can confidently use spreadsheets to record information such as setting out expenditure for an alien's tea party. Pupils select the most appropriate graph to present their results such as in science to record the temperature changes in an insulation experiment.

119. The quality of teaching in the small number of lessons seen was satisfactory and has been maintained since the last inspection. However, it is clear from a scrutiny of pupils' work that there are significant weaknesses in the teaching of ICT. Although teachers' subject knowledge has increased since the last inspection through training opportunities many teachers do not have the necessary subject knowledge and lack the skills to provide pupils with suitably challenging activities. This is compounded by the lack of necessary resources. Many lessons have an insufficient range of tasks, where all pupils are learning the same skills, which has a negative impact especially on the learning of higher attainers. Although the

school has recently invested in new computers, many of the old computers and hardware are outdated and unreliable. This severely restricts pupils' learning where there is limited opportunity for hands-on experiences to practise and develop new skills. The new co-ordinator is very committed to improving the provision of information and communication technology throughout the school. He has received good support from the local education authority advisor and has produced a useful development plan to identify key priorities to improve provision for the subject. This includes purchasing new laptop computers to give more opportunities to develop skills. However, there are no effective procedures for the systematic assessment of pupils' skills knowledge and understanding. Currently the co-ordinator has no opportunity to monitor teaching and support colleagues in the classroom. The school has rightly identified in the school development plan the need for the subject to be developed and provision improved.

120. Overall, the school has not made enough progress since the last inspection and improving provision for ICT is a key issue for the school to address.

## **MUSIC**

121. Attainment in music is in line with national expectations by the end of Year 6. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and from the Hearing Impaired Resource, make at least satisfactory progress in lessons and over time.

122. In assemblies and lessons pupils sing sweetly and with clear diction. They enjoy songs with interesting rhythms and learn these quickly. Pupils in Year 3 sing enthusiastically and enjoy practising for their performance at the end of term. Pupils in Year 4 explore an exciting range of instruments and kitchen tools to make metallic sounds for wintry music. Their exploration gradually becomes more purposeful before they work in groups to compose a piece of music. Some make sensitive sounds, others play hard, bright, clear sounds, but they combine very well to produce an atmospheric journey across an icy landscape.

123. Pupils in Year 5 work out a series of symbols for eight beat patterns. They hold the score for each other, take turns on instruments well and concentrate hard to play their pattern of rests and notes. When they play together, some count on fingers to ensure that they have included all eight beats and keep time well because the teacher has shown them how to improve their performance. They sing African songs confidently, although the complex rhythm is not easy to follow, and look forward to adding instruments to the songs. In another class, pupils listen thoughtfully to three pieces of music before working in groups to make 'sound pictures' of fast and slow movements of a spider. Pupils in Year 6 select instruments to add mood and atmosphere to the reading of poems. Boys and girls work very purposefully together in groups in and out of the classroom. The final effects when the poems are read to the accompaniment are of very high quality. Pupils are rightly proud of their achievements.

124. Pupils enjoy the variety of activities in lessons and are carried along by the enthusiasm of the teachers. Levels of concentration are mostly good. As a result pupils are improving their skills and knowledge of music. They are very appreciative of the efforts of others and praise them for the quality of their performance.

125. Teaching was good in lessons seen in the inspection and is at least satisfactory over time because teachers are using the recommended guidelines with increasing confidence. Teachers plan opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own performance and that of other groups. Some pupils attend a lunchtime recorder club, where they learn good practice in holding and playing the recorder and in working out rhythms. The club is popular and oversubscribed. A few pupils learn to play the keyboard and violin with skilled visiting teachers.

126. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school has a useful scheme of work that guides teachers effectively in their planning, but there are no opportunities for the subject co-ordinator to monitor teaching and learning across the school. The school has a good range of musical instruments, including some from other cultures. It is possible for three classes to have music on the same afternoon because of the good organisation of the timetable and sensible assistance from pupils to move instruments from one area to another. Pupils look forward to playing their instruments in assemblies and at performances. There are regular links between music and history. For example, pupils learn Tudor dances. There are clear plans for the use of ICT in lessons next term. Music makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development through working together and developing creative ideas.

127. The school has made satisfactory progress in music since the last inspection.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

128. The school presented a good range of evidence for physical education and seven lessons were observed during the inspection. In Year 6 and throughout the school, standards are above average in dance, games, gymnastics and swimming for those expected nationally of eleven-year-olds. Pupils make good progress and achieve well in lessons. Those pupils with special and physical educational needs are supported effectively by teachers and support assistants and as a result make good progress in their learning. Standards have significantly improved since the previous inspection when they were below average. From Year 4 to Year 6, most pupils know the importance of regular exercise in keeping fit and healthy. Year 6 pupils show a good awareness of space when moving around the hall and are confident in dancing at different levels. They use well controlled movements to create dances to music from the Second World War to Indian tunes. In gymnastics, Year 6 pupils learn to create sequences using a range of movements. Most Year 4 pupils learn to combine movements effectively when they compose Aztec dances. Year 3 pupils demonstrate above average levels of ball control when they learn to pass large and small balls accurately. Standards are above those expected nationally in swimming as nearly all of Year 4 pupils can swim twenty-five metres unaided. There is no significant difference between the standard achieved by boys and girls and all pupils are well included in lessons and after school activities.

129. Teaching is good, with examples of very good and excellent teaching seen in Year 6 during the inspection. The best lessons begin with warm up activities which mean that pupils learn to stretch their muscles gently when starting exercise. In Year 6 the teacher's very good subject knowledge allows pupils to learn how to combine movements with a twist and use the beat of the music very effectively. Basic skills are very well taught when pupils learn to create balances at different levels. Teachers have high expectations of pupils when they ask them to produce group sequences incorporating all pupils' ideas. Excellent teacher feedback ensures that pupils know what they are doing well. This is seen when pupils are told about how they should hold a balance with straight legs and curved arms. Effective use of pupils' demonstrations of their Aztec dances means that pupils learn to evaluate others' work. This type of evaluation makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' spiritual awareness when pupils learn to reflect on how to use music in creative ways. Pupils identify the strengths of each others' activities. Good social provision allows pupils to work particularly well together in groups and value others' contributions. Pupils concentrate effectively on all activities due to the good management skills of the teacher. However, teachers do not always use the ends of lessons to assess pupils' attainment in dance, gymnastics and games sessions.

130. The subject is led and managed effectively. Improvement since the last inspection is very good. Standards of all aspects of physical education have been improved and are above average. Teachers' planning is monitored and evaluated effectively. There are detailed schemes of work for all aspects of the subject. Pupils benefit from very high quality

extracurricular activities for dance and netball as well as Christmas productions in Year 3 and Year 4 incorporating the performance of creative dance. Furthermore, pupils in Year 6 benefit from taking part in a summer show and enjoy adventurous activities on the school journey. Many teachers are aware of gifted and talented pupils, but there is no formal way to identify them. Whilst there are satisfactory arrangements to assess swimming, assessment activities are underdeveloped for most aspects of the subject. Literacy and numeracy skills are satisfactorily used to develop physical education skills, however information and communication technology is rarely used. Resources are satisfactory overall, but with only basic apparatus available for gymnastics.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

131. Standards in religious education are in line with those expected in the locally agreed syllabus. Standards were reported to be above expectation in the last report but little explanation was given for this judgement. In addition to lessons seen, evidence is drawn from teachers' planning, pupils' work and discussions with staff.

132. Pupils in Year 3 develop a good awareness of Christianity and learn about the events in the life of Jesus and the stories he told, such as 'The Lost Coin'. In Year 4 pupils' knowledge of Christianity is extended by learning about Christian symbols and those associated with Easter. Pupils realise that Easter is a Christian festival and compare Sikh symbols, ceremonies and festivals. Pupils in Year 5 extend their knowledge of world religions by studying Hinduism where they learn about the spring festival of Holi and how it links to Hindu stories. In Year 6 pupils learn about the significance of the Passover and the customs of Bar Mitzvah as part of their work on Judaism.

133. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, although a number of good lessons were seen during the inspection. In the most successful lessons teachers' subject knowledge, good relationships, well structured planning and the valuing of pupils' ideas has a positive impact on learning. In such lessons pupils have positive attitudes. They are interested and eager to contribute their ideas as in a role play situation seen during the inspection where all pupils including those with special educational needs enthusiastically re-enacted the story of Jesus entering Jerusalem. Higher attaining pupils are able to compare effectively the feelings of Jesus' followers with those of his enemies. In less effective lessons teaching fails to maintain pupils' concentration due to a slow pace and inappropriate activities to capture the imagination of pupils. This is often due to the lack of teachers' subject knowledge, which has a negative impact on pupils' learning. Religious education makes a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development but there are limited opportunities for extended writing in the subject. The presentation of pupils' work often suffers by using loose-leaf sheets rather than exercise books where marking is minimal and rarely identifies how work can be improved. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and has produced a good detailed scheme of work to help teachers plan their work effectively in each year group. She acknowledges that assessment opportunities need to be developed to ensure work is well matched to the needs of different ability groups. She currently has no opportunity to monitor teaching and learning to support colleagues in the classroom. Resources including artefacts are well used to support pupils' learning together with visits to the local church. However, insufficient use is currently made of the potential of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning. Overall, the school has made adequate progress in religious education since the last inspection.