

INSPECTION REPORT

MICKLANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Caversham

LEA area: Reading

Unique reference number: 109926

Headteacher: Mrs. Jenny Fry

Reporting inspector: Carol Worthington
20609

Dates of inspection: 30th September – 3rd October 2002

Inspection number: 246952

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

© Crown copyright 2002

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

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Micklands Road Caversham Reading
Postcode:	RG4 6LU
Telephone number:	0118 901 5500
Fax number:	0118 901 5499
Email address:	Head.micklands@reading.gov.uk
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Chairman of governors:	Mrs. Liz Turvey
Date of previous inspection:	26 th January 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
20609	Carol Worthington	Registered inspector	Music	How high are standards How well pupils are taught How well the school is led and managed
9708	Sylvia Daintrey	Lay inspector		Attitudes, behaviour and personal development How well the school cares for its pupils Partnership with parents
23744	Peter Howlett	Team inspector	Special educational needs Mathematics Information and communication technology Physical education	
14732	Enid Korn	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage of learning Design and technology Religious education	
23058	Teresa Manzi	Team inspector	English as an additional language Science Geography History	
7813	Kevin Wood	Team inspector	English Art	How good are curricular and other opportunities

The inspection contractor was:

Bedford Primary Inspections
2 Grange Lane
Cople
Bedford
MK44 3TT

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

The Complaints Manager
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS	10
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL PUPILS ARE TAUGHT	12
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS	14
HOW WELL THE SCHOOL CARES FOR ITS PUPILS	16
HOW WELL THE SCHOOL WORKS IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	17
HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED	18
WHAT THE SCHOOL SHOULD DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER	20
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	22
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	25

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Micklands Primary is set in spacious grounds on the edge of Reading; it has 292 pupils on roll, most of whom are white, with about five percent from ethnic minorities. There are more girls than boys; three children come from traveller families, but they were not present during the inspection. Twenty-one per cent have special educational needs for a variety of learning and behavioural difficulties, which is average; two per cent have statements. Eighteen per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is below average. This figure has decreased this current year, having been average for the past three. Nearly all children speak English at home; three are at an early stage of acquiring the language. Attainment on entry is below average; it was average at the last inspection but since then, the catchment area has changed. Recently, there has been considerable turnover of staff.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This school provides a sound education for all its pupils. Due to the good management skills of its headteacher, it has effectively coped with an alteration to its catchment area and the associated falling roll. She has worked hard to ensure that successful management systems are in place to cushion the impact of change. Pupils achieve well, particularly in English, in both infants and juniors, and attain average standards. The new teachers this term have settled well as a team and teaching is satisfactory. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in music in the upper juniors and in art in Years 1 to 6 are above average.
- Good teaching in the literacy hour enables pupils to make good progress in English.
- There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs who achieve well in English.
- Teachers' good assessment of pupils' work in Years 1 to 6 enables them to plan well for all ages and abilities.
- The curriculum is enriched by a good range of extracurricular activities.
- There is good provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.
- The headteacher has good educational vision and leads the evaluation of the school's performance well.
- It has very good accommodation.

What could be improved

- Provision for the Foundation Stage of learning.
- Standards in science, information and communication technology and physical education in the juniors.
- Attendance.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in January 1998, since when it has made satisfactory improvement overall. All the improvements in the accommodation, which were key issues at the last inspection, have been carried out well. A purpose-designed new building has replaced the HORSIA block and the library has now been more centrally situated so that it is easily accessible. Further improvements have been made with the addition of a music room and improvement to the playground space with a secure play area for reception. There have been good improvements in the quality of information and communication technology (ICT) resources with the provision of a computer room and staff training. This is not yet complete, however, as there are aspects of the curriculum still not in place, though planned for. Provision for children with special educational needs has improved. Standards in English have remained much the same as they were at the last inspection, but the change in catchment area has brought about a lowering of attainment of entry. There is now evidence that standards are improving again, but science standards are still below average. The standard of physical education has fallen; music has improved. There are still statutory requirements not met in the prospectus. The school is in a good position to improve further because of the commitment of the new staff under the headteacher's leadership.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
English	C	C	C	C	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
mathematics	D	C	B	B	
science	C	C	E	E	

In the 2001 National Curriculum tests, pupils' performance in English at the age of 11 met the national average. In mathematics it was above average but in science well below. When compared with similar schools, this was exactly the same. Results achieved by seven year-olds in 2001 in reading and writing were average and in mathematics above average, both nationally and when compared with similar schools. Taking into account the lower attainment on entry, the school did well by these pupils; they were at the bottom of the local group of schools on entry and rose to become well above the local authority average in English in reading and writing, and above the average in mathematics. Similarly in Key Stage 2, the school added significant value to pupils' education. All those pupils who spent the full four junior years at Micklands, and many who came in during the key stage made better than average progress between infants and juniors, as shown by their respective test scores. There was considerable mobility during that time in the juniors in particular, as the new catchment area was becoming established and accepted by parents, so the Year 6 results cannot be directly compared with those pupils achieved in Year 2.

In 2002, the school exceeded its targets for 11 year-olds in English and achieved above the local authority average, but it was below in mathematics and science. There are no national comparisons for this year yet, but the school did particularly well by its lower ability pupils; some went from below average standards in the infants to achieve the higher level 5 in English. In all three subjects the percentage of pupils achieving level 5 was around average showing that the school provides satisfactorily for higher ability pupils as well. Currently, pupils are making good progress in English and mathematics where standards are average in both infants and juniors. Science is also average in the infants but below average in the juniors. Targets for English were met in 2001 and 2002, but not in mathematics in either year. Standards of children under five are below average, and some early learning goals are unlikely to be met by the time these children enter Year 1.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Satisfactory. Pupils enjoy coming to school and most are keen and interested to learn. A small number of older pupils, however, have a poor attitude and are selfishly demanding. They therefore deny themselves the joy of school life.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is satisfactory. Most pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. The conduct of a small minority of older boys is sometimes below the school's expectations.
Personal development and relationships	Personal development and relationships are satisfactory. Pupils work well in pairs and small groups. Some older pupils lack sufficient maturity and respect for others, and do not always respond to the school's clear expectations and routines.
Attendance	Poor. The attendance rate over the last academic year was well below the national average; unauthorised absence was above average. Some parents are not exercising their legal responsibility to bring their children to school regularly, and a significant number of pupils do not arrive promptly at the start of the school day. Some children have a long and awkward journey to school with no pedestrian crossing over the main road, which makes them late and causes anxiety.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The standard of teaching seen at this inspection was satisfactory overall; a few lessons seen were unsatisfactory, but half the teaching was good or better. Approximately one in eight lessons were very good and two lessons were excellent. Children correspondingly made satisfactory progress overall in their acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding. Teaching of English is good and literacy is well developed in the curriculum. The teaching of mathematics is satisfactory, as is the development of numeracy in subjects such as science and design and technology. Information and communication technology skills develop well through teachers' increasing knowledge and understanding, but need to be developed in all curriculum areas. Despite many teachers being new this year, they are all coping satisfactorily with the new classroom arrangements where two years are being taught in one class in the juniors. The good support given by classroom assistants is a considerable aid to this. Teachers in Years 1 to 6 all have sufficient knowledge and expertise in the primary curriculum, but there are shortcomings in this in the Foundation Stage and in science and ICT in the juniors, which adversely affect learning and standards achieved.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall but unsatisfactory in the Foundation Stage. Good provision is made for extracurricular activities,
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and has improved since the last inspection. The school meets the requirements of the revised Code of Practice. Pupils receive appropriate support to ensure they have full access to all areas of the curriculum, and good support in English and mathematics.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. The very few who are at an early stage of learning English receive satisfactory support from their teachers and classroom assistants. One-to-one support is good.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The school provides well for spiritual development in collective worship and the wider curriculum. It makes every effort to ensure that children know right from wrong and mix amicably with each other; cultural education is enhanced well through visits.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory pastoral care; good assessment of children's academic progress.

The school works satisfactorily in partnership with parents; the school provides good information. Parents are interested in their children's education and are well represented on the governing body.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The headteacher gives good leadership and is well supported by the senior management team. Subject co-ordinators are mostly newly in post, however, and some need training in this position. Management of English is very good, and of special educational needs good; in the Foundation Stage, management is unsatisfactory.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors support the school well, particularly in financial management, and in bringing about improvements to the school environment. There are a few statutory requirements not met concerning the governors' annual report to parents.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school development plan is a good working document for improvement. The school makes good use of the analysis of pupils' assessment records to enable them to progress.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The principles of best value are well applied in all aspects of the school's work. All funds are directed well towards the raising of standards.

Staffing is satisfactory, accommodation is very good and learning resources are good

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The standards the school achieves • The school is well led and managed • Their children like school • Personnel at the school are easy to approach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class sizes • Reports • Extracurricular sport • The amount of homework children are given

Inspectors agree with the positive comments parents made. The class sizes in the lower juniors are quite large – some over 30. Though not an ideal situation, the school copes with this adequately by grouping children according to ability for mathematics and making good use of teaching assistants in English who support different ability groups. Reports are good but should be more consistent between teachers and proof read more rigorously. Inspectors found a good range of extracurricular sport, though no competing teams. The amount of homework teachers give is appropriate, and follows government guidelines.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children enter the school in the term in which they are five; most come from local nursery provision. In personal and social skills they score average to above average in the local authority baseline assessments carried out after about half a term at school. In literacy and numeracy, however, they are well below the borough average. Over the past two years the attainment in early reading and writing on entry has been the lowest of the local group of similar schools, and in mathematics, close to the lowest. The current year's baseline assessment has not yet been made for reception children, but the inspection evidence points to them being below average in literacy and average in numeracy. Not all early learning goals are likely to be met.
2. At the time of the last inspection, attainment on entry was average, with some aspects being above average; children were said to be well into Year 1 work at the age of five. Since then, the catchment area of the school has changed and the school roll has fallen. Children entering the school at all ages have generally been of lower ability than those who have left, as shown by their assessment records. Despite this downward trend on entry, the school has maintained standards close to average by the end of the juniors in English and mathematics, but in science has not maintained average standards recently.
3. In the 2001 National Curriculum tests, pupils' performance in English at the age of 11 met the national average. In mathematics it was above average but in science well below. When compared with similar schools, this was exactly the same. Results achieved by seven year-olds in 2001 in reading and writing were average and in mathematics above average, both nationally and when compared with similar schools. Taking into account the lower attainment on entry, the school did well by these pupils; they were at the bottom of the local group of schools on entry and rose to become well above the local authority average in English in reading and writing, and above the average in mathematics. Similarly, in Key Stage 2, the school added considerable value to pupils' education. All those pupils who spent the full four junior years at Micklands, and many who came in during the key stage made better than average progress between infants and juniors, as shown by their respective test scores. There was considerable mobility during that time in the juniors in particular, as the new catchment area was becoming established and accepted by parents, so the Year 6 results cannot be directly compared with those pupils achieved in Year 2.
4. In the 2001 National Curriculum tests, girls did better at English at the end of the juniors, whereas boys did better in mathematics. There was no significant gender difference in the infants over the last three years, though girls did better than boys in science in 2001. The school met its targets for English in 2001 but not for mathematics.
5. In 2002, boys did better than girls in English. The school exceeded its targets in English and achieved above the local authority average but was below in mathematics and science. There are no national comparisons for this year yet, but the school did particularly well by its lower ability pupils; some went from below average standards in the infants to achieve the higher level 5 in English. In all three subjects the percentage of pupils achieving level 5 was around average, showing that the school provides satisfactorily for higher ability pupils as well.
6. Standards seen during the inspection are very similar to those shown by National Curriculum testing. In English, pupils make good and sometimes very good progress from their low attainment on entry because of the quality of teaching they receive and the positive impact of the

literacy hour. By the time they leave school, they are able to discuss their work well in pairs, small groups and in the whole class. They read competently. Their writing is well formed and they have a good grasp of subject vocabulary which promotes a sound basis for further study in their secondary schools. In mathematics, pupils have a sound grasp of the four rules of number but need to work harder at problem solving and data handling. In science, the standards seen were below average, particularly in the development of investigative skills. Teachers' insecure knowledge of where to pitch the level of work hampers pupils' progression through the National Curriculum. In the infants, standards of English, mathematics and science are about average for pupils this age. They make good and often very good progress, particularly in Year 2.

7. Standards in other subjects are as expected for the age of the infants, though barely so in information and communication technology (ICT). In the juniors, standards are as expected for art, design and technology, history and geography; in music they are above average, particularly in singing. In ICT, they meet expectations in some aspects, such as word-processing, but skills in controlling devices, data handling and experience of simulations is limited. In physical education, standards are below average for 11 year-olds. In religious education, the requirements of the agreed syllabus are met satisfactorily.
8. Pupils identified as having special educational needs make satisfactory progress overall. They make good progress when learning takes place in small groups with specialist teaching from the co-ordinator. They are well supported in English and mathematics and often make good progress, especially in English. Pupils with individual education plans, including those with statements, make steady progress towards achieving the targets identified in their plans. The few pupils who have English as their second language are given satisfactory guidance and help from teachers and classroom assistants. When they are withdrawn for one-to-one sessions, support is good and they make corresponding progress.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Pupils' response to their experiences at school is satisfactory overall. The attitudes, behaviour and values of the majority of pupils remain positive. However, those of a small minority of pupils, mainly junior boys, are sometimes unsatisfactory and can impede learning. This represents a decline since the last inspection.
10. Examples of very good attitudes and behaviour were seen in most classes during the inspection. The part-time reception children thoroughly enjoyed their joint singing session with the nearby pre-school. Pupils throughout the school respond very well in lessons that draw on their own experiences, use practical examples demonstrated by the teacher and excite them in their learning. Upper juniors, for example, were highly motivated and concentrated hard in a lesson where they were required to design a presentation, using computers, about their recent residential trip to North Wales. After a brisk start, when the task and purpose were explained very clearly, the pupils watched intently as the teacher demonstrated a piece of work. They moved smoothly to the ICT suite and settled straight to work with a great level of interest, helping each other or seeking help from the teacher as appropriate.
11. A strength in relationships is the way in which, in many lessons, pupils learn by working in pairs and small groups. In a different Year 5/6 class, for example, pupils developed speaking and listening well by discussing in pairs what they knew about rabbits and then made notes by one pupil dictating and the other writing. In a Year 3/4 mathematics lesson for pupils of higher ability, the groups settled enthusiastically and confidently to their task of measuring and calculating lengths of wallpaper. Pupils of lower ability relate well to the teaching assistants who guide their learning in small groups.

12. Outside lessons, pupils move in an orderly manner around the school. They listen well in assemblies and show respect for the occasion. Older pupils take part enthusiastically in after-school activities such as orienteering and football.
13. Alongside these good features, there are some unsatisfactory elements. Children join the reception class with personal and social skills that are about average but they are not able to make sufficient progress in developing them because of the unsatisfactory provision in the Foundation Stage. When they reach Year 1, pupils sometimes become bored and restless and do not always show respect for the teacher and each other. This improves in Year 2 because of the consistently good teaching. In Years 3 and 4 pupils are sometimes slow to become engaged at the beginning of the lesson and do not always respond well to their teacher. Year 6 pupils are generally immature for their age and a small number can be very challenging and selfishly demanding for their teachers. As a year group, they have experienced a high turnover in pupil numbers and in the staff teaching them. A significant minority have not responded well to these changes and at the start of their final year had not yet settled into secure relationships with their class-mates nor were they able to act as role models for the rest of the school. A small minority of junior boys sometimes behave in a disruptive and insolent manner. Their lack of self-discipline hinders their learning, and sometimes that of other pupils, especially in physical education and science. There were two fixed period exclusions last year, both involving boys who have now moved on to secondary school.
14. Attendance is poor. Rates have been well below the national average for the last two years, following a two-year period when they were above average. There has been no overall improvement in the first few weeks of the new school year, although the part-time reception children have made a good start in attending regularly. During the inspection, there was a significantly number of absences in most classes. The rate of authorised absence was high, partly because a large number of holidays were being taken at the start of term and because the traveller children were travelling. The rate of unauthorised absence is reducing slightly from a high level. Two families have been prosecuted for the non-attendance of their children which has resulted in some limited improvement. A significant number of pupils come from families where regular attendance at school is not seen as a high priority, and where making arrangements to get their children to school can be difficult. Many of these children have a two-mile walk to school, along an awkward route with no pedestrian crossings over a busy road. They are often late. The effect of irregular attendance on these pupils is that they do not have access to the full curriculum and cannot achieve their highest possible level of attainment. Punctuality is unsatisfactory. A considerable number of pupils do not arrive promptly at the start of the school day, sometimes due to problems with bus transport. The school has appropriately re-arranged the timetable so that late pupils do not miss the start of the first lesson.
15. The behaviour of pupils with special educational needs is similar to that of other pupils. When supported in class or in small groups they often display good attitudes to learning.

HOW WELL PUPILS ARE TAUGHT

16. The school has faced difficulties in continuity of teaching for the last few years, mainly due to maternity leave. At the time of the inspection, there was a high proportion of new teachers, several only in their second or third year of teaching; two were newly qualified.
17. The standard of teaching seen at this inspection was satisfactory overall; a few lessons seen were unsatisfactory, but over half the teaching was good or better. Approximately one in eight lessons was very good and two were excellent. Children correspondingly made satisfactory progress overall in their acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding. Teachers' subject knowledge is variable but all have secure understanding of how to teach English, which is good. There is

good provision for the literacy hour and the development of reading, writing and spoken English. There is also sound development of numeracy through teachers' satisfactory interpretation of the National Numeracy Strategy. These skills are also developed in other areas of the curriculum, such as in the structured writing up of scientific experiments, accounts of life in Victorian times, and taking measurements in design and technology.

18. There is good teacher expertise in some aspects of ICT and this subject is developing well through application in several curriculum areas, such as geography, where pupils used multi-media software to make a slideshow presentation illustrating their studies of their own locality. At present, however, the entire curriculum is not taught; there is not enough provision for the control and monitoring aspects of the subject. Whilst pupils' standards are as expected or better in the parts of the taught programme of study, they are below average overall because of the missing elements of the curriculum.
19. In science, some teachers' knowledge of the subject is not good enough to enable them to pitch work to the right level in Key Stage 2. Lower juniors, for example, were seen to working on conductors and insulators at a level more suited to Key Stage 1. Standards are therefore lower in science than they are in English and mathematics. Another area where teachers lack expertise is in the Foundation Stage, where knowledge of the 'stepping stones' to the achievement of early learning goals and teaching methods to encourage learning in very young children is insecure; teaching here is unsatisfactory.
20. Teachers' planning is a strength in both infants and juniors; the reason that even new and temporary teachers are able to plan lessons to the required standard is the solid foundation provided by the Curriculum 2000 planning framework, which is present in every classroom. This was devised by the headteacher and senior management team over the past two years when the school had a number of temporary teachers. All teachers use these well to plan lessons. They produce work to match the age and ability of their pupils. Many teachers plan extension work for the higher ability and identify gifted and talented pupils, for example in ICT in Year 6 where a gifted boy was given extension work to challenge him to take his knowledge further in special effects whilst his classmates were continuing work he had already completed.
21. Teachers have appropriate expectations of their pupils, who achieve accordingly. Some teachers have high expectations, however, as very well demonstrated in a Year 5/6 music lesson where pupils successfully rose to the demanding challenge set by the teacher to produce a performance of songs and accompaniment in three parts.
22. Teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good in English. Teachers and support staff provide good levels of support for the pupils' learning. The quality of the teaching of pupils withdrawn for additional literacy and numeracy support is good. The lessons are well planned with learning intentions appropriately guided by pupils' individual education plans. The experienced and knowledgeable teacher provides good challenge and keeps the pupils well focused on their tasks. Teachers generally are well aware of their pupils' learning needs, and in English, mathematics and ICT provide work at appropriate levels. In literacy and numeracy lessons, experienced learning support assistants provide effective support.
23. The teaching of pupils with English as an additional language is satisfactory when pupils are supported in class and good when pupils are withdrawn for small group work. Teachers and teaching assistants include these pupils in activities and use pictures and gestures to help them understand.
24. Teachers in reception and infant classes manage pupils well with the result that there is good behaviour. The variety of teaching methods used in Years 1 and 2 enables pupils to maintain

their keenness to learn and provides challenge, as seen in the use of ICT in the plenary session of a Year 1 literacy lesson. Lesson objectives were reinforced in a way which provided interest and challenge for all pupils. They consolidated learning in sentence formation as the teacher made deliberate mistakes which they were delighted to identify. However, in reception, children sit for too long on the carpet and do not learn to take responsibility for choosing activities to enable them to learn through play.

25. In the juniors, all teachers apply the school behaviour code consistently and in the majority of lessons, this results in good behaviour so that all pupils' learning is unimpeded. However, there is a core of badly behaved pupils in Years 5 and 6 – mostly boys – who do not get on with each other and try very hard to disrupt each other's learning. Their teachers are all well aware of this, and as well as strictly applying the behaviour code, do their best to motivate them with challenging work, which is often very successful in ICT and music, for example. However, these pupils, even when apparently working well in an English lesson were seen surreptitiously trapping each others' hands under dictionaries in order to disrupt learning.
26. Teachers' assessment of pupils' work is a strength in Years 1 to 6; marking is good and gives pupils useful guidance on how to improve their work, so they know how well they are learning. Teachers' assessment of all subjects is good; they keep detailed records of the National Curriculum levels achieved by their pupils, which ensures that their progress is kept on track. Learning is also effectively consolidated by the use of appropriate homework. In the Foundation Stage, assessment is not used well enough to identify where children enter the reception year on the 'stepping stones' to the early learning goals. Consequently, work is not planned to match their current position on the stepping stones so that children may progress at their particular rate; instead it is planned, regardless of their attainment, directly to the early learning goals. Progress is therefore unsatisfactory.

HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS

27. The school provides a satisfactory curriculum, which is broad, balanced and relevant for pupils in Years 1 to 6. It meets the statutory requirements in all aspects. The curriculum takes account of previous learning and the school builds on this through its improvement planning. The school generally provides equality of access to a wide range of opportunities. Its particular strength is its provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. Subjects such as music, art, and history and geography, and other cultural opportunities enhance the curriculum provision. The curriculum planned for children in the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory. It is planned from that for Year 1, directed towards the early learning goals of the Foundation Stage, but with insufficient emphasis on the stepping stones that lead children to these goals.
28. The curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6 satisfactorily meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. The school responds to its particular circumstances by placing considerable emphasis on the teaching of literacy, and this promotes rising standards in this key area. The school makes sound provision for religious education that follows the locally agreed syllabus. The provision for art activities is particularly well supported by having had an artist/illustrator to demonstrate her craft to the children. Similarly, a 'Book Week' is held annually to promote pupils' interest in reading.
29. The school has successfully adopted the National Strategies for teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. The effectiveness of the National Numeracy Strategy is satisfactory; that for the National Literacy Strategy is good and, as a result, the attainment of pupils has improved, though it is still broadly in line with the expected national levels.

30. A large turnover of staff at the end of the last academic year necessitated the appointment of many co-ordinators who are new to their subject responsibilities. The headteacher is the co-ordinator for science. Whilst one might expect all this to have a detrimental effect upon the soundness of the overall planning of the curriculum, the strength of the systems in place, such as 'Curriculum 2000', support all staff, particularly those new to the school.
31. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and has improved since the last inspection. The school meets the requirements of the revised Code of Practice. Pupils receive appropriate support to ensure they have full access to all areas of the curriculum. When pupils with English as an additional language are withdrawn from class, the school is careful to ensure that they do not consistently miss the experiences that their classmates are enjoying. The time of these sessions is changed so they do not always miss the same lesson. Often the work in withdrawal lessons complements that undertaken by the rest of the class. Pupils are withdrawn for extra Literacy after the whole class start to the Literacy hour, for instance.
32. This is a highly inclusive school that takes appropriate account of pupils' ages, attainment, gender, ethnicity and needs. The opportunities provided for pupils with special educational needs are good. The pupils on the register are set appropriate focused targets in their individual education plans. The in-school support for those with statements is good. These pupils, and those for whom English is an additional language, are provided with suitably differentiated work and often the support of an effective Learning Assistant. They receive dual language coaching, for example, through the provision of the Local Education Authority.
33. The programme for extracurricular activities is good at present. The range of activities includes music, and football through the school's partnership with Reading Football Club and many pupils take advantage of this, though there are no competing teams. There is also basketball offered in association with the Reading Rockets. Community groups such as Brownies and the Majorettes use school facilities weekly. From within the school's own community, a parent assists a pupil with English as an additional language several times weekly, translates for him and thus allows him full access to his lessons. The curriculum is enhanced by a programme of visits outside school including an annual residential visit. Comparable activities, such as orienteering, are arranged for those pupils who do not go on the trips. The school has good links with its feeder nurseries and playgroups, and with its secondary partners.
34. A good curriculum has been developed to support pupils' personal, social and health education. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is good, but not as strong as at the last inspection. The headteacher has a clear vision of how the school should be cultivating pupils' personal development. Spiritual awareness is promoted well in assemblies through music, visual presentations, stories and moments of reflection and prayer. Pupils are encouraged to develop a sense of wonder in nature and the environment. This was successfully done, for example, when pupils drew and wrote their responses to the music of 'Morning' from Grieg's Peer Gynt suite. However, opportunities were missed in a science lesson when a class of upper junior pupils visited the copse in the school's grounds.
35. There is good provision for pupils' moral and social development, but at the time of the inspection this was not having a sufficient impact on all the pupils. Pupils are given many opportunities to reflect on their own feelings and those of others. In an excellent Year 2 English lesson, for example, the teacher re-enacted the story of 'Old Bear' so skilfully that the pupils were immediately able to discuss in pairs their feelings about being lost. In timetabled sessions called 'circle-time', pupils were encouraged to develop their understanding about the effects of being kind and unkind to others. The small group of pupils in Years 5 and 6 who were deprived of some of their 'golden time' (a class reward for behaving well) were required to reflect on how they can help themselves and each other to improve. Many of the school's activities support

pupils in developing skills of working with others, both in large and small groups. Older pupils are given some responsibilities, such as helping in the dining room at lunchtime or looking after younger pupils in the playground.

36. The school develops pupils' cultural understanding well. Visits are made to contrasting localities in Britain and a range of different cultural traditions are taught, often by using the experiences of pupils and parents. The school held a Japanese Day, for example, which gave pupils opportunities to make artefacts such as origami, kites and painted screens. Festivals from other religions, such as Jewish and Hindu, are celebrated in assemblies and displays. Stories from Africa are used in class assemblies to challenge assumptions about racial stereotypes.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL CARES FOR ITS PUPILS

37. The school continues to provide satisfactory care, support and guidance for its pupils. Arrangements for child protection are sound. The designated teacher has had recent training and all staff were reminded of the procedures at the start of term. The school has good systems for carrying out risk assessments and health and safety checks. The school secretary makes an important contribution to the care of pupils by managing first aid effectively and knowing pupils and their families well. Many of the midday supervisors are also teaching assistants and so provide effective continuity of care at lunchtime. Arrangements for the induction of children into the reception class, especially those arriving after the start of term, are not consistent.
38. Procedures for monitoring and promoting pupils' behaviour and personal development are satisfactory but not as effective as they were at the last inspection. The school has good arrangements for celebrating and rewarding achievement in both work and behaviour. In the school's weekly 'celebrating' assembly, for example, pupils' pride and self-esteem is boosted when they win their class's 'golden child' award and are applauded by their peers. The school's 'golden rules' are promoted consistently and teachers are inventive in trying out different ways to deal with the small groups of pupils in the junior classes who behave badly. The school uses pastoral support programmes for individual pupils and external behaviour support staff for advice. These measures are often successful in the short term.
39. The school has put in place a number of procedures for monitoring and improving attendance but these are currently ineffective in tackling the reluctance of a significant number of families to send their children to school regularly. The registration of pupils now meets statutory requirements, which is an improvement since the last inspection, and records are now computerised which aids monitoring. The school works closely with the Education Welfare Officer and with some of the other agencies who have contact with the families. An 'attendance challenge' scheme run by the Education Welfare Service rewards the class with the highest attendance each week and is valued by the pupils, but has not had an effect in reducing the overall rates of absence. The school does not deploy its resources so that all day-to-day attendance issues can be administered by one person. It has not been successful in communicating the serious messages about the importance of regular attendance and punctuality sufficiently clearly to parents, despite its best efforts.
40. Support and assessment of pupils with special educational needs are good. There are effective arrangements for the identification of pupils in need of additional support from an early stage. Individual education plans for pupils who receive additional support, including those who have a formal statement, are much improved since the last inspection. They have clear and achievable targets. Pupils' progress is monitored and they are moved up and down the register as their needs change. Visiting specialists assess the progress of pupils who do not speak English at home in their new language. Already one pupil has made such good progress that she been assessed as no longer needing extra support.

41. The school continues to have an effective system for assessing pupils' academic performance. The attainment of pupils from Year 1 onwards is assessed annually against National Curriculum levels, not only in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, but also in all the other subjects. This is very good practice. Another strong feature is the way in which pupils from the youngest age are involved in assessing their own performance and recording it for inclusion in the annual report sent home to parents. The school carefully analyses the progress of each cohort of pupils in English, mathematics and science and identifies areas for improvement such as writing, problem solving and scientific investigation. Assessment procedures are particularly thorough in English and are used to set individual targets which are clearly communicated to pupils and parents and reviewed half termly.
42. Assessment is unsatisfactory for children in the reception year. It is not linked to the 'stepping stones' in the Foundation Stage curriculum. Staff are not, therefore, able to identify rigorously what children already know and can do, and so plan for their progress towards the early learning goals. As a consequence there is no meaningful assessment of children's progress through the curriculum and assessment cannot be used effectively to plan the curriculum to the child's needs.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL WORKS IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

43. Only a small number of parents completed the inspection questionnaire and attended the meeting with the Registered Inspector. These parents were generally satisfied with what the school provides and achieves for their children. Parents attending the meeting were mainly positive and supportive of the school but were anxious about how well the new class arrangements in the juniors are going to work. A substantial minority of those returning the questionnaire were concerned about how to establish better communications with the school so that they can have a clearer idea on what their children are doing. The school is aware that it needs to find ways of engaging with those parents who find it difficult to make a connection with the school.
44. The school's partnership with parents is satisfactory, though not as effective as it was at the last inspection. The quality of the written information provided for parents remains good. The school produces informative newsletters and letters, termly sheets explaining what each class will be doing in all subjects, and more detailed booklets on how parents can support their children in reading and writing. The annual reports give good information on pupils' progress, although occasionally there is a little inconsistency between teachers. Targets in literacy and numeracy are sent out with the reports, which is an improvement since the last inspection, and these are reviewed with parents at the consultation evenings twice a year. The school prospectus has also improved and provides useful and attractively presented information on many aspects of school life, including the curriculum. Staff and the headteacher are available at the end of the school day for parents who wish to speak to them. Nevertheless, a significant proportion of parents do not appear to be able to gain access to the information provided for them. The school has appropriately consulted parents about the information meetings they would like and is starting to become involved in inter-agency projects based at the estate where many parents live.
45. Parents' involvement with the work of the school is satisfactory overall. The home-school association (known as MASH) makes a significant impact by organising and helping at many school events and raising considerable funds towards major projects such as the computer suite and outdoor playground equipment. A small number of parents and ex-parents help in the school and on trips, with some contributing their bilingual skills. Parents have a strong presence on the governing body, although they are not fully representative of the wide range of parents now served by the school. A substantial number of parents do not support the school sufficiently in ensuring that their children attend regularly.

46. Arrangements to involve parents of pupils with special educational needs in their children's learning are satisfactory. Parents are invited to discuss the regular reviews of those pupils with individual education plans and are appropriately involved in the annual reviews of pupils with statements. They do not, however, receive sufficient information on their children's targets and this limits their contribution to supporting their children's learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

47. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher is a strong leader with good vision for the further development of the school. She and the previous senior management team have put secure systems in place to ensure that Curriculum 2000 is firmly established and can be taught by temporary or inexperienced teachers, such as the school had for much of last year, due to permanent staff taking maternity leave. Similarly, assessment and behaviour management methods are firmly embedded. This has enabled the school to ensure pupils' progress never falls below satisfactory and is often good. The value added by the school over the past two years from reception to infants, and infants to juniors has been good, as demonstrated by the results of the National Curriculum tests, despite many changes it has undergone through staff and pupil mobility.
48. This term, however, the school has many new teachers and subject co-ordinators are nearly all new in post, some very inexperienced. The music co-ordinator is a specialist who has held the position in a previous school. She is very knowledgeable, enthusiastic and is already making an impact on the standard of music. There is a lack of subject knowledge in design and technology, and the management of the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is managed effectively. The school responded well to the findings of the last inspection. The new co-ordinator has only taken up her post this term. However, as a result of good liaison with her predecessor and her own teaching experience at the school she was well prepared. In addition, she is supported by the deputy headteacher who has had good experience in the past in this role. The co-ordinator has a clear understanding of what needs to be done and has produced an appropriate action plan. The person responsible for pupils with English as an additional language is new to the post. However, she is given sufficient time to undertake her duties well and has a good knowledge of these pupils and their families.
49. The deputy head fairly recently appointed has good plans for staff development. She is the new Key Stage 1 co-ordinator but has also been recently appointed to co-ordinate the Foundation Stage, of which she has little experience, there being no Foundation Stage specialist in the school. The newly appointed Key Stage 2 co-ordinator is also a member of the senior management team. She has taken on responsibility for the whole key stage after looking after upper junior last year. She ensures that staff work as a team in both upper and lower juniors. This is particularly essential, as there are several inexperienced teachers who benefit from their more experienced colleagues' expertise. During the inspection it was apparent that there is consistency of planning which ensures that all children get the same curriculum entitlement.
50. The governors are very supportive of the school. Several have been on the governing body for some time and there is good representation of parents. The chairman works very closely with the headteacher and visits the school frequently. The vice chairman has been responsible for supervising the building programme, and the governing body has produced a smart and attractive prospectus. Governors support pupils with special educational needs adequately in its responsibility for monitoring provision for these pupils. It is due to approve the newly drafted special educational needs policy which has been rewritten in the light of the revised Code of practice. The governors' annual report to parents still does not include all the information that is legally required. This was a key issue at the last inspection.

51. The school development plan is a very effective tool for school self-evaluation and is used well as a working document. The headteacher, for example, changed the action plan for science during the inspection as a result of inspection findings. There is good communication between the headteacher, senior management team, staff and governors and this enables all views regarding the school's priorities for development to be taken into account.
52. The budget is well managed. Spending is set against the school development plan targets, which are thoroughly costed, making use of governors' expertise and that in the school. All grants are used well. The school puts more into its special educational needs budget than is allocated by the local education authority to ensure that pupils receive good support.
53. The school achieves the best value from its budget by consulting all staff on priorities for development. Subject co-ordinators submit action plans. Children are consulted about playground issues. The governing body seeks several tenders for goods and services, and recently changed the suppliers of its payroll services because it felt the supplier did not go far enough to achieve value for money. The school compares its performance nationally and with similar schools within the local education authority, and challenges itself to do better each year through analysis of standards achieved which prompts the action plans for next year. Satisfactory use is made of ICT to track pupils' progress and produce targets for improvement.
54. Staffing is satisfactory. The school has had difficulties over the past three years, having had temporary teachers to cover maternity leave, but now is fully staffed with a new team of well qualified teachers. The number of support staff is quite generous because the school put its own funds into maintenance of good support for pupils with special educational needs, for whom there is a good number of staff in addition to the part time co-ordinator. Some work specifically with pupils with statements and the rest as general support for pupils in lessons. Although they work closely with individual teachers, arrangements for the overall co-ordination and management of their work are not yet in place.
55. Accommodation has improved significantly since the last inspection and is now very good. The classrooms for pupils in Years 3 and 4 are now located in a new purpose-built block and the library is situated in a central accessible position. There are separate areas for music and special educational needs and these have a positive impact on the educational experiences provided for the pupils. The caretaker makes a significant contribution to the maintenance and security of the large site and involves pupils in improving their environment. The hall is a little small for physical education lessons involving large classes of older pupils.
56. Learning resources are satisfactory. They have improved in English and are now good. This has a positive effect on the development of pupils' literacy skills. Information and communication technology resources have also improved since the last inspection, but the new suite is not used as extensively as it could be to raise standards in the subject.

WHAT THE SCHOOL SHOULD DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER

57. In order to improve further, the headteacher, staff and governors should
 - (1) reconsider provision for the Foundation Stage of learning by
 - improving teaching and management, especially the frequency of assessment and its use to plan for children's progress over the 'stepping stones'. (paragraphs 26, 27, 42, 59)
 - Ensuring that more opportunities are provided for pupils to learn through planned and structured play activities (paragraphs 24, 61, 68)

- (2) raise attainment in science by
 - ensuring that teachers have sufficient knowledge and understanding of the science programme of study - particularly levels of attainment – to pitch work accurately and ensure progression as pupils move up the school (paragraphs 19, 92)
 - ensuring teachers receive training for how to teach investigative skills in context of the knowledge of science and to track children’s progress as they move up the school (paragraphs 6, 84, 91)
 - considering carefully the time allocation for science in the light of objectives to be covered and prevent the pace in lessons becoming so slow that children lose interest (paragraph 92)

- (3) raise attainment in information and communication technology by
 - continuing to improve teachers’ expertise, particularly in the control devices, such as robots, and monitoring of events using sensors and data handling (paragraph 7, 114, 115, 116)
 - planning activities for data-handling in geography and mathematics (paragraphs 6, 7, 114, 116)

- (4) raise attainment in physical education by
 - improving curriculum planning so that pupils’ knowledge and skills are built upon systematically (paragraphs 7, 127)
 - ensuring that the poor behaviour of a minority of pupils does not prevent others from learning. (paragraphs 13, 126)

- (5) raise levels of attendance by
 - making clear to parents and pupils the effects of irregular attendance and term-time holidays on pupils’ attainment and progress (paragraph 14)
 - deploying administrative staff so that the follow-up of absences and contact with parents can be carried out speedily and efficiently (paragraph 14)
 - working closely with other agencies and projects to overcome the barriers faced by some families in getting their children to school regularly and promptly (paragraph 14)

When forming their action plan, the governors should consider the following minor issue

- ensure that the governors’ annual report to parents meet statutory requirements (paragraph 50)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	70
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	45

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	7	26	29	6	0	0
Percentage	3	10	37	41.5	8.5	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	292
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	53

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	7
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	55

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	12
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	33

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	92.9
National comparative data	93.9

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.6
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	29	21	50

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	26	28	28
	Girls	16	15	18
	Total	42	43	46
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (85)	86 (71)	92 (90)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	26	28	27
	Girls	16	18	17
	Total	42	46	44
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (81)	92 (85)	88 (96)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	23	25	48

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	16	18	18
	Girls	22	17	23
	Total	38	35	41
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	79 (78)	73 (66)	85 (92)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	17	16
	Girls	20	19	20
	Total	35	36	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	73 (71)	75 (68)	75 (76)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	6
Black – African heritage	11
Black – other	4
Indian	2
Pakistani	5
Bangladeshi	1
Chinese	0
White	259
Any other minority ethnic group	4

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	2	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25
Average class size	24

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	14
Total aggregate hours worked per week	260.5

--	--

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
----------------	-----------

	£
Total income	680627
Total expenditure	676320
Expenditure per pupil	2100
Balance brought forward from previous year	51433
Balance carried forward to next year	55740

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	11.5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	11.4

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	292
Number of questionnaires returned	48

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	43	50	7	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	43	43	9	0	5
Behaviour in the school is good.	23	59	11	5	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	27	50	11	7	5
The teaching is good.	41	48	5	0	7
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	18	43	27	9	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	36	52	9	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	27	61	7	2	2
The school works closely with parents.	20	55	18	7	0
The school is well led and managed.	25	64	0	5	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	27	64	5	2	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	5	39	32	11	14

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

58. Since the previous inspection a new policy has been adopted, which is to admit children into reception in the term in which they are five and, therefore, to admit new children three times a year. It had been the intention to establish a reception class on its own in September but due to the small numbers it was decided to teach the reception children alongside the younger Year 1 pupils.
59. Provision has declined since the last inspection when teaching was found to be satisfactory and at present there are some aspects of teaching and of the curriculum that are not satisfactory. The curriculum is planned from that for Year 1, directed towards the early learning goals of the Foundation Stage but with insufficient emphasis on the stepping stones that lead children to these goals. Teachers time management is unsatisfactory with too high a proportion of children's time spent sitting on the carpet in a class-sized group listening to adults and too little time actively working in small groups, either with a teacher or independently. As a result there are insufficient opportunities for children to fully develop their ideas and too frequently they are not active participants in their learning. At the previous inspection, the lack of a secure outdoor play area was identified; now children have an interesting outdoor area that leads directly off the reception classroom.
60. At present there are ten children in the reception year who all attend for a half day. No formal assessments of these children have yet taken place as they have only been in school for a short time. Entry assessments in previous years show that overall, children enter the school with average scores in personal, social and emotional development but with below average scores in English and mathematics. School reports and inspection evidence show that many children are only achieving parts of the early learning goals by the end of reception and therefore when children enter Year1, they are below average overall. The current reception children have a wide range of ability but, overall, they are average for their age in their personal, social and emotional development, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and in their physical development. In the areas of communication, language and literacy and in aspects of creative development, they enter full time education below average for their age.

Personal, social and emotional development

61. Most children have satisfactory personal and social skills for their age. They sit quietly and listen, take turns, independently look after their own needs and follow class routines. They relate well to adults and play alongside each other in a co-operative manner, sharing equipment. Teachers have established the socialisation into school process well and the children are confident in the school environment and able to take their own equipment. Children are required to sit for lengthy periods listening to adults and this is having a negative impact on their concentration and on attitudes and involvement with their learning. Teachers do not pay enough attention to children being concerned for others, such as for a new child into the class, and by the end of the reception year many pupils have not developed a caring and considerate attitude to the needs and concerns of others. Teachers plan structured play activities which classroom assistants lead and children work as a group, but these sessions are usually too short to effectively develop concentration and collaborative and communication skills. Resources are stored where they are easily accessible to children, but adults provide too few opportunities for children to develop independence through selecting their own activities or to become involved through taking decisions and solving problems. As a consequence, teaching is unsatisfactory,

and a number of children do not achieve all the goals for this area of learning by the end of the Foundation Stage.

Communication, language and literacy

62. The current reception children speak clearly but most lack confidence to speak in a large group or to unfamiliar people. They use language for a range of purposes in their play and when talking to adults, such as to connect ideas and to negotiate, but they rarely use language to develop imaginative situations. Teachers provide a continuous clear good role model of language but they do not plan opportunities to develop specific aspects of language such as providing models of problem solving language nor do they give themselves time to speak to children as individuals in a continuing conversation. By the end of the reception year children are confident to speak in small group situations where they reflect on past experiences and use language confidently but in whole class situations they find it difficult to express ideas and explanations. Teaching is, therefore, unsatisfactory.
63. Children enjoy listening to stories and this is fostered through the adults selecting appropriate stories, which they read and tell with clarity and expression. Elements of the literacy framework are introduced effectively to help children identify the characters and setting and aspects of the texts such as the rhyming elements. By the end of the reception year all children enjoy books, recognise the direction of print and recognise some key words, but a few are unable to read a simple text. A small minority of children enter the reception year recognising all the letters and the initial sounds of words, and the majority enter recognising a few letters. The teaching of phonics is, as yet, not clearly structured, and planning is to the same learning objective for all the children, irrespective of their ability. Adults work effectively with whole class and small groups of children identifying initial sounds of objects and matching these to letters and at these times there is good learning for most pupils. By the end of the reception year few children know all their letter sounds and many of the more able readers have under developed phonic skills for identifying unfamiliar words.
64. The majority of reception children hold a pencil correctly and form at least some letters of their name. Many do not enjoy writing and so, for example, when the class teacher planned for them to write a shopping list for a picnic they choose not to do so. Too few opportunities are provided for children to develop their writing skills. By the end of the reception year children are able to copy a sentence and letters are usually clearly formed, but children are not writing independently.

Mathematical development

65. The current reception children enter with a wide range of mathematical ability but overall are average. This reflects an improvement from the baseline results from previous years when children entered and left the reception year with below average standards. Nearly half the current reception children are meeting some of the early learning goals. They count reliably with objects to numbers above twenty, and recognise basic flat shapes. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers use the National Numeracy Strategy to develop counting skills and provide satisfactory demonstrations of comparing and measuring lengths. However, their planning provides too few additional opportunities for children to develop their number skills. In the lessons seen, children sat for extended periods and, therefore, there was too little time for them to experience measuring and comparing lengths for themselves.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

66. Children enter the reception class with around average knowledge and understanding of the world and leave having achieved many of the early learning goals. The current reception children enjoy exploring dry sand, which they observe carefully as it runs through sieves and 'water wheels'. They can name the miniature wild animals they play with in the sand and a volunteer adult successfully extended children's learning by explaining the characteristics of the animals. One able child playing with a model polar bear could identify the area, climate and habitat that real polar bears inhabit, but his knowledge expansion was restricted as teachers had not provided globes or maps of the world. Teachers provide satisfactory opportunities for children to observe using their senses, such as the taste of fruits or the smell of herbs. However, teaching and learning are unsatisfactory overall as the planned curriculum is too narrow and teachers are missing opportunities to use the wide range of available equipment. Too little time is provided for children to use tools, to observe materials such as dough or to observe how materials mix such as when cooking. Throughout there was too little use of a computer.

Physical development

67. Reception children enter with an average standard. They make satisfactory progress and at the end of the Foundation Stage are meeting the early learning goal for this aspect of their development. Most children control their bodies well as they stretch and curl to higher and lower sounds. They run with a smooth movement and use pedal vehicles and swings independently but they find hopping difficult. They have a satisfactory understanding of space and roll a large ball with some accuracy and receive it using two hands. Teaching is satisfactory. Teachers make good use of the wide range of outdoor facilities provided by the adjacent pre-school and they also use the school grounds and hall. These sessions are well managed and classroom assistants are used well to assess children's ability. Children's finer movements are around the expectations for their age, but planned opportunities for children to develop their finer muscular control through, for example, manipulating small objects such as puzzles, threading beads, pencils or construction sets, are limited.

Creative development

68. Children enter with below average ability overall. Teachers recognise the need to develop this aspect of learning and provide many role-play situations although, at times, adults restrict the children's development by over-directing the activity. Far too few opportunities are provided for children to use paints, crayons and collage. Children sing in tune and many have a good sense of rhythm. Teachers encourage this and satisfactorily develop children's ability to discriminate between sounds, but opportunities for children to explore and create sounds for themselves or to move freely, interpreting music through movement are missed. Teaching and learning are therefore unsatisfactory.

ENGLISH

69. Standards in English throughout the school are broadly in line with the national average. The good, sometimes very good progress made by pupils is attributable to the quality of teaching - better in the infants than the juniors - and the positive impact of the literacy hour, where pupils demonstrate good behaviour and attitudes. Inspection findings show that standards for speaking and listening are below average in Year 1, but improve well throughout the school and are above average in Year 6. Standards for reading and writing are broadly in line with national averages. Pupils with special educational needs and for those for whom English is an additional language are enabled to make satisfactory progress. No discernible difference in the attainment of boys and girls was observed. Different groups of pupils are fully included and enabled to participate

in literacy lessons. Thus, from a low base on entry, there is good improvement throughout the school. There are good indications that these improvements will continue and that the school is likely to meet its targets for the seven to 11 age group in 2003.

70. Teachers provide good and sometimes very good opportunities for pupils throughout the school to develop speaking and listening. They often invite pupils to chat to a partner, to discuss the teaching point, talk about what they know and have learned, so that they acquire and use the language associated with the topic. A very good example of this was seen in Year 2, where pupils enjoyed a familiar story 'Old Bear' quickly picking up the message that he is lost and talking urgently with a partner about what to do. Similarly, in Year 1 pupils responded well to the language in 'The Bear and the Picnic Lunch', sounding out the strong phonemes in 'lunch', and 'crunch', and 'floor' and 'door'. Pupils in Year 4, recalling the visit of a cat to their classroom, enjoyed the rhythms in their story 'Dog in the Playground'. In Year 6, pupils enjoyed discussions of non-fiction texts relating to rabbits. One pupil wrote whilst the other dictated 'some rabbits are nocturnal', for example, and 'they eat carrots'. Throughout the school, teachers encourage pupils working in pairs or small groups to discuss their work with each other. Often they take each other's views into account. Teachers place an appropriate emphasis on teaching correct terminology, as in a Year 3 science lesson when pupils understood the key vocabulary associated with 'insulator', and 'conductor'. Similarly, pupils in Year 1 focused on the sorting and grouping of animals, naming the young dog and cat – the puppy and the kitten. All pupils enjoy singing, enunciating well. Words of hymns are displayed on the overhead projector, which positively promotes the pupils' oral and listening ability, refines their reading skills and raises their self-esteem.
71. As pupils' reading ability on entry to the school is generally low, they do well to attain average standards. Infants build upon their phonic awareness learned in reception. Pupils have a real joy for reading, quoting their favourite authors, Jane Hissey and Helen Oxenbury. Average and below average pupils, including those with special educational needs, quickly develop their knowledge and understanding of letter sounds due to the quality of the structured teaching that they experience. In this way they tackle new and unfamiliar words. Above average pupils demonstrate enjoyment and interest in reading. In Year 2, for example, they were identifying the phonemes in a favourite story, 'Old Bear'. The standard of juniors' reading is in line with national averages. Above average pupils in Year 6 are on track to achieve even higher levels. Pupils read with increasing fluency and accuracy, and older pupils can speak with first hand knowledge of a range of different authors, including Roald Dahl and J K Rowling. School reading records indicate regular monitoring by teachers, and show moderate to good progress. These could become a good form of communication with parents. The older pupils are adept at using non-fiction books for projects, and understand the access provided through contents, indexes and blurb. Pupils said they used the school library and the local library. The reading skills of the majority of Year 6 pupils are sufficiently well developed to enable them to cope with most texts.
72. The standard of writing seen during the inspection in the juniors is in line with national averages. Above average pupils have made good progress so far this year. A good example of this in Year 6 is the persuasive and argumentative writings such as, 'Our neighbours burn all their extra rubbish in their garden. I get dirty washing when I hang the clothes out and I have to wash them all again'. In Year 3 also, competent re-writing of the classic Cinderella in their own words, as in 'Cinderella never stopped hearing her name called'; or they use character descriptions to develop imaginary conversations such as the sensitive 'Dear Hermione, please may you teach me how to ride a broom'. Above average pupils really know how to produce descriptive sentences that command attention, including, 'Suddenly, on hearing a loud noise and going to investigate, I poked my head past the door when out of the blue I heard a thump very near by'. Pupils of average ability made similar progress in writing in the same period. An example of note in Year

5 is the non-chronological writing 'Slugs and Snails'. Below average pupils in Year 6 learn how a star is formed, 'Did you know stars you see in night-time were not always there because every year a new star is born?'

73. Presentational skills need strengthening throughout the school because pupils do not transfer their handwriting practice skills to the rest of their writing. Standards of spelling and grammar, including punctuation, are varied. Infants' standards of writing are also in line with the national average. The most able seven year-olds re-write with feeling that 'Old Bear' is lost. The average and below average pupils, including those with special educational needs, follow the teacher's modelling of the characters, Bramwell Brown, Duck, Rabbit and Little Bear, to think out their predictions, and write, with help, their own versions of how the story may develop. For the majority of pupils throughout the school, there are a variety of writing tasks in the wider curriculum. However, pupils are not given many opportunities to use computers to improve their writing. Writing standards overall are average, but clearly improving due to good and very good teaching within the literacy strategy. It is presently a school focus and pupils are therefore making good progress.
74. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school, better in the infants than the juniors, since infants' attainment on entry is below average and they do well to achieve average standards by the age of seven. Teachers generally have high expectations of what pupils should achieve. This is particularly so within the literacy hour. The way in which they use questioning to draw out meaning and develop pupils' understanding is thoroughly effective. In a Year 6 lesson on common letter strings, pupils were really forced to think and interrogate their dictionaries to provide suitable examples for 'ight'. They worked hard to produce 'height', 'weight', 'straight' and 'sight'. At this point, the teacher issued a fresh challenge that motivated and engaged the pupils; one way in which teachers establish good relationships in lessons. Generally, where pupils of different attainment are grouped together, teachers plan work that matches pupils' abilities. As a result pupils are challenged to learn and they respond by working hard and productively, making good progress. Below average pupils, including those with special educational needs, are well supported by teaching assistants and pupils learn well as a result.
75. The teaching of spelling is generally good based on a rich diet of familiar stories producing lively, repetitious writing. Teachers, and sometimes teaching assistants, assess pupils' progress closely and effectively in lessons. This helps them to set challenging targets for improvement for individual pupils and groups of pupils. Good planning in Year 2, for example, leads to the level of work being adjusted appropriately week by week. Moreover, where teachers share the learning objectives with their pupils, the latter are clear about what they should know and do.
76. Teachers use pupils' interest in other subjects to develop their skills in reading and writing, for example in science in the writing up of science experiments; in history, in Year 1, pupils have written notes for homework based on buying fabric, measured in the past by ones reach, and accounts of Victorian schools. The school's promotion of literacy across the curriculum is opportunist rather than planned. This aspect of literacy needs to be clearly mapped through the wider curriculum, thus to lighten the heavy percentage labelled 'English'.
77. The co-ordination of English is very good. The co-ordinator has detailed knowledge of the current state of English and the literacy hour. She carries out close supportive monitoring of planning and teaching. As a result, teachers, many of them newly arrived, have competently operated the literacy hour. The co-ordinator brings energy and enthusiasm to the subject, attending update courses and making full use of Internet resources, and then cascading the content to staff in school. Three new staff have still to be trained in the National Literacy Strategy. The co-ordinator has gathered a portfolio of levelled work that gives teachers a secure base for their assessments. Writing assessments are moderated each half term. Reading

assessments are made each term with commercial standardised assessment schemes. Optional standard assessments tests are used in the intervening years between Year 2 and Year 6, the results of which are tabulated and used to make individual targets for every pupil in reading and writing. This target setting guides further work in class.

78. The number and quality of books have improved after profitable liaison with the Schools' Library Service. The new central school library is well appointed and a useful resource. Teaching assistants attached to low ability groups or individuals work well with the class teachers. Visiting theatre groups and a storyteller enhance the subject, so that there is an effective focus on improvement in English throughout the school that is having a strong impact on the raising of standards.

MATHEMATICS

79. Standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 are in line with national expectations. This represents a fall in standards from those at the last inspection because children's attainment on entry to the school is lower than it was at the last inspection. However, pupils make appropriate gains in lessons and satisfactory progress over the time they are in the school.
80. Results in the national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2001 were above the national average and the average for similar schools. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 was above average, although results in the three previous years were in line with national averages. The results for 2002 are similar to those of 2001.
81. Results in the national tests at the end of Year 6 fluctuate. Generally results have been close to the national average and have matched the national trend of improvement. In 2001 the proportion of pupils achieving the expected level 4 was in line with the national average and the average of similar schools. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher level 5 was above the national average and the average of similar schools. The results for 2002 are slightly down on those for 2001. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls in the national tests in both key stages.
82. The analysis of the pupils' work shows that standards of work at the end of Years 2 and Year 6 in the last academic year were average. By the end of Year 2 pupils' understanding of number concepts is sound and most pupils reach expected levels in their written number skills. Pupils can order and sequence numbers to 100, know what each digit represents in two-digit numbers and do simple addition and subtraction. The work in the current Year 2 on the recognition of coins and understanding their relative value is typical for this age group at this time of the year.
83. At the end of Year 6, pupils have a clear understanding of place value and can undertake work in the four rules of number. They understand percentages and recognise their fractional and decimal equivalents. Standards of work in the current Year 6 on developing and refining informal methods of division are broadly similar to those found generally for this age. However, there is a larger than average number of pupils working below expected levels.
84. Pupils' mental skills are sound but their ability to explain the methods they use is underdeveloped. There is a weakness in pupils' ability to use and apply what they have learned in different contexts. They do not get enough opportunities to undertake investigative work at either key stage. Pupils' knowledge of the properties of shape is sound and the work currently being carried out on measurement in lower juniors is average. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement on standards in data handling.

85. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teaching in observed lessons was always at least satisfactory and sometimes good. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy. Planning is generally good. The weekly planning structure provides appropriate learning activities over a sequence of lessons. Individual lessons are well prepared and follow the structure suggested in the National Numeracy Strategy. Lesson planning clearly identifies the learning intentions and specifies activities appropriate to different levels of attainment within the class. Teachers share the objectives for the lesson so that pupils know what they will be expected to do and learn. Good lessons start with a brisk whole-class session on developing pupils' mental arithmetic skills and end with an assessment of whether the objectives of the lesson have been met. The opening part of lessons is not used effectively to develop pupils' mental arithmetic in all lessons.
86. A good feature of many lessons is the use made by teachers of their assessments of what pupils have achieved in planning the next steps in pupils learning. Teachers have a good understanding of pupils' different learning needs and plan appropriately work based on pupils' prior learning. Infants' work is suitably matched to their capabilities, enabling them to make appropriate gains in their learning. Pupils with special education needs make satisfactory progress, partly because teachers make good use of learning support assistants to give additional help during lessons. Teachers cater appropriately for the needs of higher attaining pupils. In both Year 2 classes, for example, teachers ensure that they ask them more challenging questions during whole class sessions. To address the wide spread of ability in the mixed aged junior classes, pupils are partially set in ability groups for mathematics. Within Years 3 and 4 and Years 5 and 6 there is one set of higher ability pupils and two parallel sets of the average and lower abilities. These arrangements work satisfactorily, particularly for the brighter groups. Some special educational needs pupils receive effective one-to-one support but the school needs to evaluate if this is the most efficient way of generally meeting needs of the larger number of lower ability pupils in each teaching set. There were no discernible differences in the performances of boys and girls throughout the school. Infants are well motivated and keen to learn but some upper juniors show a lack of interest and desire to learn.
87. Teachers' questioning is generally effective. There is a high proportion of direct teaching with clear explanations, instructions and demonstrations. This helps most pupils to make satisfactory gains in developing their understanding. Infant teachers use an effective range of methods and resources to develop pupils' understanding. However, they could enhance the learning of lower ability pupils in junior classes by providing more practical activities to reinforce number work. Teachers promote satisfactorily the use of mathematical vocabulary, but a weakness in some lessons is the lack of sufficient opportunities for pupils to explain the methods used. The use of ICT to support pupils' learning is a priority in the school's action plan. Teachers make satisfactory use of it to support the teaching of basic number work. However, although there are some examples of pupils using ICT to produce graphs in geography and science, data handling is not well done. Pupils have insufficient opportunities to use spreadsheet and database programmes. Although teachers mark pupils' work regularly, they do not make sufficient comments to help them further. Teachers use displays effectively to promote pupils' understanding. Assessment procedures are good. The school has effective measures for assessing pupils' attainment and tracking their progress. It makes effective use of assessment in setting targets for pupils. However, these are not consistently communicated to pupils.
88. The subject is effectively managed. The co-ordinator offers clear leadership and has a sound overview of standards and provision through effective analysis of pupils' performance in tests. Pupils' responses in tests are analysed and weaknesses identified, enabling the school to set appropriate individual targets for pupils. There is a regular programme of monitoring of teachers' planning, pupils' work and class observations. Development planning is sound with appropriate priorities and clear action planning. The curriculum is satisfactory but there is an

over-emphasis on number, and insufficient time given to other aspects of mathematics, especially data-handling.

SCIENCE

89. Standards in science were below average in last year's teacher assessments (2001) made at the end of Year 2; those of Year 6 were well below average. They were also well below the average of similar schools. Last year's test results fell, but over the past four years, improvements have broadly followed the national trend. Standards are lower than those reported the last inspection, but a direct comparison cannot be made because of the effect of the school's change of catchment area, which has resulted in a lowering of attainment on entry. Thus the range of experiences, skills and knowledge is now quite different. Inspection evidence, however, shows that the standard of pupils' achievement is improving due to the good co-ordination which takes place across the school. This year, the percentage of pupils attaining the high level 5 has increased significantly. National comparisons are not yet available.
90. Lessons observed and samples of pupils' work indicate that standards of attainment for pupils in Year 2 are average. The oldest pupils' work is likely to be below the national average when they leave the school next year. This is an improvement on last year's test results when they were well below average. In lessons, pupils are generally better at talking about the subject than writing and recording their knowledge.
91. Pupils make satisfactory progress until Year 2, but the progress of juniors is uneven in some areas of the curriculum and therefore unsatisfactory overall. This is particularly noticeable in the development of investigation skills. Pupils talk and write about fair tests and try to plan their experiments in Years 2, 3 and 4, but there is less evidence of this in the older pupil's work. Across the school, pupils often guess what might happen in their experiments. They then undertake the tests and comment on whether their predictions were right or wrong. Sometimes they draw sensible conclusions from their test results. Year 6 pupils use correct vocabulary when talking about science. One Year 6 pupil mentioned variables in tests, for example, but generally their knowledge of experimentation is superficial. Few understand the need to repeat tests to elicit an accurate picture. Pupils cover all aspects of the curriculum and the younger pupils often take delight in questioning, observing and learning more, as seen when Year 2 pupils learned more about materials changing. Pupils with special educational needs and those who do not speak English at home have good support and make satisfactory progress across the school. Class lessons and in withdrawal groups are well managed so that pupils do not regularly miss the work that their classmates are undertaking. They are fully included in all activities.
92. Teaching of science is satisfactory overall. Seven lessons were observed: one was very good, one unsatisfactory and the rest satisfactory. The best lessons link well with previous work and proceed at a good pace. Teaching assistants and specialist teachers are used well to support pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. Teachers question pupils skilfully so that all are involved, interested and challenged. Pupils in Year 2, for example, were animated in discussion and had many ideas on ways to change materials. One weakness is that early in the year, teachers rely upon the assessments made by the previous teacher, and these are sometimes too generous. The new teacher consequently sets work which is too difficult for the class. However, teachers are good at judging the pupils' level of understanding; they question their pupils well and modify lessons to match pupils' needs. Sometimes teachers' subject knowledge is not good enough to maximise opportunities to build upon their pupils' suggestions. When a pupil described apparatus for an experiment as a 'tin container', for instance, the teacher missed the chance to specify the type of material referred to, and improve the other pupils' vocabulary. Lessons for older pupils are often too long. This challenges the teachers to keep the class interested, which sometimes causes time to be

inefficiently used for concentration on scientific activities. One such class spent time collecting leaves when the aim of the lesson was to use a key to classify different plants. A few of pupils behaved badly as a result; despite teachers' use of good behaviour management, they disrupted the class.

93. The head teacher has recently undertaken the co-ordination of this subject and is keen to raise standards. The curriculum and results of tests have been analysed and used to help teachers concentrate upon areas of weakness. Teachers are to be given extra training and so that their subject knowledge is improved and their expectations of pupils' work raised. The timetable is to be reviewed. The curriculum is broad and balanced and enriched by using the good school grounds and by visits. Work is planned to be interesting and to meet pupils' needs, and teachers are helped by a clear scheme of work. Satisfactory arrangements have been made to match work to pupils needs in the mixed age classes in the juniors. Good cross curricular links have been established with English, mathematics and ICT. New equipment has been purchased so that pupils can use sensor equipment to measure temperature and create graphs to record variation. A new digital microscope was used to examine hair and skin during the recent Science Week, which was well supported by parents and local companies.

ART AND DESIGN

94. Pupils' standards of attainment throughout the school are above national expectations in many aspects of work in art seen during the inspection. Pupils in Years 1 and 2, through their study of landscapes after John Constable, effectively transfer their observations through a viewfinder to paper, using painting pencils, pastels, chalk and charcoal. Year 1 pupils used mirrors to enable them to produce self-portraits after the work of Rubens, noting the position of facial features and applying pencil and thick, stubby crayons. Some pupils blended these for light and dark face colours. Pupils in Year 2 experiment with colour wash to fill irregular shapes, one a humorous 'blob' of yellow with an impish grin, but all interesting and effective visually. They paint seaside scenes after seeing the work of Seurat.
95. In the juniors, pupils make observational drawings of Ancient Egyptian artefacts, such as crocodile and tortoise decorations in black pencil. One study of a peacock's feathers is remarkable. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are responsive to the colours and patterns in a brick wall and produce clay tiles for their own wall display. They use wax resist to produce significant still life pictures of fruit in a bowl, or miniature landscapes including field, the sun and birds in flight. Year 5 pupils also use viewfinders to produce still life sketches of boots, or pencil rubbings of beetles. They experiment with perspective in studies of the skyline. Above average pupils review the human figures by Giacometti and compare his work with Modigliani and da Vinci. Average and below average pupils make sketches for a race in a sequence of cartoon boxes. A pencilled study of the 'Javelin Thrower' shows a good stance and an expressive face. In Year 6, the charcoal cat crouched watching birds is visually arresting. Pupils responded to 'watery' music by Smetana and illustrated in chalks and pastels 'green, gentle soft grass, puffy white clouds, smiling shadows and lambs leaping, then the moon shone'. After visiting the church at Blewbury, the charcoal and crayon drawings of the lectern were effective.
96. The overall quality of teaching throughout the school is good. The scrutiny of work in books and on display showed it has been at least satisfactory, with some good features. Indeed, in the two lessons seen in the infants, the teaching was good. Lessons have suitable, sometimes challenging content that encourages pupils to be inventive and to pay careful attention to the decoration of their landscape picture, or portrait studies. The teachers' choice of activities for infants, such as collage, wax crayon work and wool weaving, appeal directly to the pupils and instils in them an enthusiasm and enjoyment for the subject. In Years 3 and 4, the teachers' choice of clay work inspired pupils to create a series of tiles with stencilled decoration. Teachers

in Years 5 and 6 provide good opportunities through music stimuli, or the work of famous artists. Drawings of musical instruments in coloured pencils are marked by bold outline and firm sweeps of colour. These activities and the range of materials promote positive attitudes to art, and systematically develop pupils' skills.

97. Co-ordination of the subject has promoted art in the curriculum effectively and has raised both teachers' expectations and pupils' standards of attainment. Clear targets for the development of art have been identified in the School Development Plan. Knowledgeable and enthusiastic advice and encouragement are available to staff. This will be particularly important for the many new members of staff. Assessment procedures are in place, used at the end of each unit of work. Resources are good. Accommodation, especially the grounds, is a source of inspiration for the subject. There are good cross-curricular links, especially history and music, but those with information and communication technology need strengthening. No discernible difference in the attainment of boys and girls was observed. Different groups of pupils are fully included and enabled to participate in artwork.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

98. The school has maintained the satisfactory standards identified in the previous report. Since then, national planning guidelines have been successfully implemented and a good assessment system has been established. These structures are providing a good framework to teach the subject and are supporting teachers well.
99. By the end of Year 6, pupils have been introduced to the full design process through making a range of products. Year 6 pupils are currently designing a slipper; as part of the process they have disassembled a range of slippers and evaluated the purpose of the various parts. They have a sound understanding of how to design their own product taking into account function and purpose. Their previous experiences have included using pneumatic mechanisms and making picture frames.
100. No design and technology teaching was planned to take place in Year 2 during the inspection period, but other evidence shows that by the end of the infants, pupils are developing a sound understanding of the design process. They have made paper replicas of 'Joseph's coat', for example, for which preparatory work included evaluating colours and patterns. In Year 1, pupils are working towards making a fruit salad and as preparation for this they have observed many fruits.
101. Teaching throughout the school is satisfactory overall, though the lesson seen in the infants was unsatisfactory due to the very limited quantity of learning that took place, but the work sample shows that overall teaching for this age group is satisfactory. Most teachers have a sound knowledge of the subject and through careful planning and good questioning they develop their pupils' understanding, knowledge and skills. Pupils with special needs are well supported and in one upper junior class, they were seen making very good progress, at times achieving better than their peers. Pupils who are not fluent in English are given personal support and make good progress. Pupils' attitudes are generally satisfactory. They work co-operatively and at times with enthusiasm, but their pace of work could be quicker.
102. Until this year the subject was well led and the co-ordinator had a good vision for development built upon a secure knowledge of the provision throughout the school. The new co-ordinators are not familiar with their role or with the subject and its body of knowledge. At present the use of ICT in Design and Technology is underdeveloped. The subject remains adequately resourced.

GEOGRAPHY

103. Standards in geography of pupils aged seven and 11 meet national expectations. Pupils make satisfactory progress across the school, as was reported at the last inspection.
104. Due to timetable arrangements only two geography lessons were observed, both were in Year 2. Pupils were very interested as they talked knowledgeably about hot and cold places. They used the correct vocabulary such as 'equator' and 'volcanoes', and quickly used brochures and books to find out about different countries. The more able used atlases. Most understand that different clothes need to be worn in different conditions. In last year's exercise books, pupils had labelled different countries in the world and marked different parts of the British Isles. Mapping skills are developing well as seen in pupils' plan of the school playground. They speak about the subject better than they write.
105. By the end of Year 6, pupils have covered a good deal of work. They complete a traffic survey of the local area and compare this with their visit to Wales. Information is entered onto the computer so that comparisons are easily made. Pupils are beginning to understand the characteristics of the area that they are visiting, such as the buildings, landscape, leisure facilities and economics. They use the correct terms, such as 'geologist' and compare graphs showing world weather changes.
106. Work in the books of the older pupils shows that their 'field trip' and visit to another area are beneficial. There are good links with other curriculum areas such as mathematics and ICT with bar charts and line graphs used to represent temperature and rainfall in different parts of the world. Pupils have also contacted other countries via the internet.
107. In the lessons seen, the younger pupils responded with obvious interest. Overall teaching for the youngest pupils is good and on occasion teaching is very good, with high expectations and a brisk pace that stimulates pupil's learning well. As a result, learning was also good. Pupils are pleased with the new things that they are learning and they behave well. Teachers' subject knowledge is very good. They use a good scheme of work, which covers all aspects of the curriculum and is planned to interest pupils.
108. The curriculum leader for this subject is new but she has very good subject knowledge and already understands the strengths and weaknesses within the school. She has plans to take the school forward and has the backing of the headteacher. Assessment of pupils' work is good. It is a practical, efficient system for tracking progress and the acquisition of new skills.

HISTORY

109. Standards in history at age seven and 11 meet national expectations. Pupils make satisfactory progress across the school. This is below the standard noted during the last inspection which was above expectations. During the inspection, four history lessons were observed, all with older pupils. Three were good and one satisfactory. From these and an examination of pupils' work across the school, it is evident that the oldest pupils have a good recall of facts and dates. They also understand that times in the past were very different from today, and they place dates in order. They discuss and question whether evidence is a primary or secondary source of information. They are used to examining artefacts in order to gain information. Younger pupils compare their lives with times past, such as that of Grace Darling.
110. In lessons, pupils respond with obvious interest. Teachers go to considerable trouble to give them good resources, such as dolls dressed in Victorian costumes. Overall teaching is satisfactory, and good in the upper juniors. Generally teachers here have high expectations,

question pupils well and conduct their lessons at a brisk pace. This stimulates learning well. Pupils are pleased with the new things that they discover and generally behave well. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and they are well prepared for lessons. Teachers use a good scheme of work, which covers all aspects of the curriculum and is planned to interest pupils. Time is used well to maintain their concentration, for instance by using a short session before lunch to prepare pupils for a longer lesson afterwards.

111. The curriculum leader for this subject is new. She has good subject knowledge and already understands the strengths and weaknesses within the school. The good cross-curricular links with English, mathematics and ICT are intended to be maintained, as are visits to encourage pupils' interest and first hand experiences. The curriculum is to be re-checked so that areas are not repeated for pupils in the mixed age classes. Assessment of pupils' work is good and the scheme of work gives teachers sufficient help when planning their lessons. However, in Years 1 and 2, it is difficult to track pupils' progress. In topic books, it is easy to lose the historical content of recorded work; marking of work is better in one year than the other.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

112. Standards have improved since the last inspection when they were judged to be below expected levels across the school. Pupils' achievement is in line with expected standards in Year 2 but barely so. In Year 6 standards in some aspects of ICT meet expected levels but overall standards are still below those typically found nationally.
113. Year 1 pupils use mouse techniques appropriately and by Year 2, both these and their keyboard skills are satisfactory. Pupils are familiar with the basic functions of a keyboard, including the shift key, space bar and return key. However, they work slowly finding the letters on the keyboard and this limits the range and quantity of work produced They can open a word processing programme and use a number of keys on the keyboard to write sentences. Some understand how to change the way the text looks by highlighting their work. By the age of seven, pupils are well aware that information can be presented in a variety of forms and that computers may use words, pictures and sounds to convey that information.
114. By Year 6, pupils' word processing skills are similar to those expected. They experiment with the layout of poems, stories and history topic work by changing fonts, size, colour, type text with appropriate accuracy and insert pictures from a clipart library into text. The standard of pupils' work using 'Power Point' (combining text, graphics, animation and sound effects) to create a presentation for a specific audience is sound. Pupils' understanding of the use and benefits of ICT in the world beyond school and comparing ICT with alternative methods is sound. They compare the merits of a Power Point presentation with that of books, for example. However, there are aspects not covered in sufficient depth. Although pupils collect information and represent their results in a variety of forms, such as graphs and pie charts, and enter data into spreadsheets, they have insufficient experience in using spreadsheets and databases. Consequently their skills in data handling are below those typically found nationally. In addition opportunities for control and monitoring activities are limited.
115. The quality of teaching and learning has improved since the last inspection and is satisfactory overall. There is some good and very good teaching, but there is also some unsatisfactory teaching. Lessons in the ICT suite are generally well planned and organised. Teaching in Years 5 and 6 is good; lessons are effective because they build upon pupils' prior work. Teachers provide stimulating and exciting learning opportunities to which pupils respond with enthusiasm. Upper juniors made good progress in planning a multi-media presentation about their recent residential trip. Most teachers have good subject knowledge, give appropriate demonstrations and explain the purpose of the lesson and the requirements of the tasks very clearly. Sometimes,

they introduce the lesson in the classroom before taking the pupils to the suite. When this is done well and pupils are clear on what is expected of them they settle to work quickly and productively. However, in one lesson, the lack of clear direction and focus to pupils' learning and poor time management resulted in pupils having insufficient practical time and they, therefore, made unsatisfactory progress. In most lessons, pupils with special educational needs are generally well supported and make appropriate gains in their learning. Pupils who do not speak English at home receive additional support where needed.

116. The school has improved its use of ICT to support pupils' learning in other subjects since the last inspection, but more needs to be done. Teachers make satisfactory use of ICT to help pupils' writing. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, use ICT effectively in drafting and redrafting their work. Good use is made of ICT in developing pupils' basic literacy skills, for example in Years 1 and 2 to reinforce aspects of sentence writing. In mathematics, computers are used satisfactorily to support basic numbers skills and to a limited extent in graphical representation. However the use of data handling programmes is limited. In history and geography, pupils have used the Internet and CD-ROMs for research, and their word processing skills to present work in interesting ways. In science, upper juniors have used web sites to find out more about healthy eating. Teachers miss opportunities in science and geography to use data handling programmes. There is limited use of ICT to support pupils' learning in music, art and design and in design technology.
117. Good progress has been made in developing the subject since the last inspection. The range and quality of learning experiences are better, and the curriculum now meets statutory requirements. There is a newly equipped ICT suite and computers in all classes are networked. Improvements in resources, teachers' expertise and curriculum planning are leading to improvements in pupil achievement but they have not been in place for a sufficient length of time to compensate fully for past gaps in pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. Procedures to monitor pupils' progress are satisfactory but are not yet well established. New arrangements involving both teacher and pupil self-assessment are being introduced. However, these measures need further adaptation to enable the school to monitor overall standards.
118. The subject is satisfactorily led by a new and enthusiastic co-ordinator. An internal appointment, she has been supported and prepared well for her role. She has a clear understanding of what needs to be done to develop the subject and raise standards further. Following a review of provision she has produced a suitable action plan. Although the timetable for the ICT suite indicated that it is constant use during lesson time, during the inspection this was seldom the case.

MUSIC

119. The standard of music is above average for 11 year-olds, which is an improvement since the last inspection, and average for seven year-olds. Upper juniors sing different songs in two parts with simple chord accompaniment, for example 'When the Saints go marching in' with 'She'll be coming round the mountain'. They are starting to recognise and read standard notation and have a good knowledge of musical instruments for their age. They sing well with confidence in assemblies, showing enthusiasm and ability to pitch notes with accuracy. Infant and reception pupils also enjoy singing; they demonstrate that they recognise the sounds made by different musical instruments as they sing 'I am the Music Man'.
120. The teaching seen ranged from very good in the juniors to satisfactory in the infants and reception. The new music co-ordinator's lesson was an example of how very good teaching can motivate all pupils, including a few older boys who had behaved badly in other lessons. This lesson was very well planned starting with a warm-up session in which the children followed the

teacher's direction to sing 'Boom-Chikka-Boom' in different vocal styles - loud, soft, slow, fast, whisper; high, low. The teacher paid particularly good attention to a necessity of good posture and breathing. She had very high expectations of their ability to pitch notes, asking them to close their eyes, hear the note in their head, then sing it. By the end of the lesson the children had risen to the considerable challenge of singing in two groups whilst a third group played an accompaniment on glockenspiel and keyboard. After much practice and rehearsal, during which all the groups practised the songs directed by pupils and the accompaniment directed by the teacher at 'rehearsal pitch', the final performance came together well and all pupils showed a very good sense of achievement.

121. In the infant and reception classes, only singing was seen. Teachers have satisfactory knowledge when backed by the scheme of work but lack the expertise to extend it further.
122. The co-ordinator is newly in post but very experienced and an exemplary teacher. Others learn from her expertise in singing assemblies twice weekly where she demonstrates, for example, how to get children to learn to pitch notes by singing to them and getting them to repeat back at the same pitch, how to breathe properly and have the correct posture for singing. She has already made some evaluation of the school's provision for music and has changed the scheme in the lower juniors to give the relatively inexperienced teachers confidence in their ability to teach the subject well.
123. The curriculum is satisfactory; the music scheme meets the requirements of the National Curriculum but is rather dull, especially in reception and the infants. The co-ordinator has very good vision for the development of the curriculum and has made a good start. There are already a choir and recorder groups, and some children learn the keyboard through Berkshire Young Musicians Trust, whose public concert in the summer is already being rehearsed by the school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

124. Standards are not as high as they were at the last inspection. Pupils achieve in line with expectations in Year 2 but by Year 6 standards are below those typically found.
125. In gymnastics, Year 2 pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their skills and in performing simple actions with appropriate control and co-ordination. They show sound achievement in performing basic actions of balancing, stretching and travelling, using both the floor and small apparatus. They show a sound awareness of space when travelling and linking travelling movements to create a sequence. Their ability to perform short linked sequences with clear beginning, middle and end is satisfactory. Many upper juniors do not show sufficient desire to improve on their performance and as a consequence the quality of their movements in gymnastics is unsatisfactory. They do not demonstrate precision, control or fluency, for example, to the extent normally found. Pupils make satisfactory progress in games lessons: lower juniors in developing throwing and catching skills and upper juniors in applying racket and ball skills in small group activities. However, their abilities are often below expectations. Pupils' understanding of health and safety issues is not good enough. Upper juniors, for example, are not good at explaining the purpose of warming up.
126. The school has not maintained the good quality of teaching and learning observed at the last inspection. Although there is some good teaching seen, lessons were mostly satisfactory with one unsatisfactory lesson. Lessons are generally well prepared and organised. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and appropriate awareness of health and safety issues. However, in two junior lessons, the behaviour of a minority of pupils interfered with the quality of learning. In the gymnastics lesson, the teacher's behaviour management techniques were good enough to maintain discipline and ensure sufficient progress for most of the class. However, in a dance

lesson they were not and as a consequence, the progress of the whole class suffered. In contrast, in Year 2 teachers manage their pupils well and pupils behave well and respond readily to their teachers' instructions. In a good gymnastics lesson the teacher's clear focus on developing skills and the positive response of pupils prompted an improvement in the quality of their movements. The teacher gave effective demonstrations of teaching points at appropriate places within the lesson, allowing sufficient time for pupils to practise and develop their skills and observe the efforts of others.

127. The subject has not been effectively managed and there has been insufficient improvement since the last inspection. However, the recently appointed co-ordinator is keen and enthusiastic and has appropriate plans to develop the subject. The curriculum is broad and the school offers pupils an appropriate range of opportunities in gymnastics, dance, games, swimming and outdoor pursuits. However, it is not planned in sufficient depth to ensure that pupils' skills are sufficiently built upon and there is no effective system for assessing and recording pupils' progress. Although the subject promotes pupils' personal development well in Years 1 and 2, juniors sometimes show immaturity, lack of self-discipline and desire for self-improvement and insufficient consideration for others. There are sufficient resources but the hall is a little small for gymnastics.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

128. Standards remain similar to those found in the previous inspection and satisfactorily meet those identified in the locally agreed syllabus at the end of Years 2 and 6. Since the previous inspection, the planning has been extended to meet the requirements of the newly formulated local syllabus, and Islam has been incorporated into the religions being taught in the junior department. Additionally, strong links with the school's personal and social development programme are incorporated into the planning.
129. In Year 6, pupils are studying the values of the Sikh religion and, in particular, the manner in which members act to support others in their own and the wider community. Through skilful questioning, teachers help all their pupils to understand the impact of these actions and how thoughtful deeds of their own will have a positive impact on the school community. In this manner, teachers are enabling their pupils to acquire guidance from religion for living their own lives. Younger juniors are looking at Hinduism. Having learned about the three main gods, they were then amazed to hear from a visiting practising Hindu that altogether Hindus have more than three thousand gods. This is an example of the very good use of visiting practitioners to bring the religion to life for pupils, and to help them understand what members of the faith groups believe and how members live their lives.
130. In Year 2, many pupils are familiar with the birth of Jesus and the religious celebration for this, but few have retained their learning related to the birth of Mohammed. Teachers are skilled at leading discussions and through this technique they enable all their pupils to understand in a mature manner the reasons for celebrating births and some of the traditional methods. Empathetic teaching encouraged pupils to consider the feelings of pupils less fortunate than themselves. Pupils are given simple recording activities following these discussions but these do not challenge the pupils sufficiently and tend to trivialise the preceding discussions.
131. Teaching is good in the juniors and satisfactory in the infants. In all year groups except year one, pupil's attitudes and responses are good. They are stimulated, involved and contribute well with lively interest. In Year 1 attitudes are unsatisfactory. In the lesson seen, pupils contributed little to discussions, a significant number fidgeted and distracted others and all laughed when the class teacher dropped some materials. In contrast in Years 3 and 4, when visitors provided them

with interesting information pupil's attitudes were very good. They were fired with enthusiasm and asked very deep thoughtful questions.

132. The subject is well led. The co-ordinator provides good leadership and the curriculum is well planned. This includes effective use of visits to places of worship and carefully selected visitors from each faith studied. Use of the Internet for resources is planned but was not seen during the inspection. Resources are just adequate but the impact of display around the school is small. Assessment arrangements are good and the co-ordinator is developing a portfolio of assessed work.