

INSPECTION REPORT

**WETHERSFIELD C of E (VC) PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Wethersfield – Braintree

LEA area: Essex

Unique reference number: 115110

Headteacher: Mrs M B Ferland

Reporting inspector: Mr Michael Raven
3961

Dates of inspection: 14 – 16 July 2003

Inspection number: 247535

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Silver Street Wethersfield Braintree Essex
Postcode:	CM7 4BP
Telephone number:	01371 850220
Fax number:	01371 851200
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr P Jerram
Date of previous inspection:	October 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
3961	M Raven	Registered inspector	Mathematics Science Information and communication technology Design and technology Geography Physical education Special educational needs Educational inclusion	What sort of school is it? Interpretation of the school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What the school should do to improve further
10329	B Sampson	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
12764	W Thomas	Team inspector	English Art and design History Music Religious education Foundation Stage of Learning English as an additional language	How good are curricular and other opportunities?

The inspection contractor was:

Baker-Phillips Educational Communications Ltd
The Croft
Brierley Way
Oldcroft
Lydney
Glos – GL15 4NE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school serves mainly the village in which it is situated, although a small number of pupils come from other villages nearby. There are 57 pupils on roll, aged from four to eleven. There are many more boys than girls. Pupils are taught in three small mixed-age classes. Most pupils come from White British backgrounds, there being little ethnic diversity in the area. A very small number of pupils are at an advanced stage of learning English as an additional language. The attainment of children on starting school varies considerably from year to year, with the varying characteristics of the very small numbers of children involved. Overall, attainment on entry is about average. This is reflected in the average proportion of pupils who have special educational needs. These special needs stem mainly from various learning difficulties.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school is improving. It currently offers a reasonable education to its pupils. Standards in most subjects, including English, mathematics, science and religious education (RE), are in line with national expectations by the time pupils leave. The school offers sound value for money.

What the school does well

- The leadership and management provided by the headteacher are good.
- The teaching is good.
- The school successfully promotes good behaviour and enthusiasm for learning.
- Relationships are very good.
- The provision for pupils who have special educational needs is good.
- The school has established a good working relationship with parents and carers.

What could be improved

- The role of the governing body.
- The leadership and management roles of subject managers.
- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT).
- The use of ICT to support teaching and learning in the other subjects.
- The curriculum.
- Standards in geography.

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 1997. It has made acceptable progress since then, much of it in the past year, since the appointment of a new headteacher. Standards have generally improved in line with the nationally improving trend. The quality of teaching is better. However, weaknesses in the curriculum remain.

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	
	2000	2001	2002	2002	
English	D	B	C	D	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	E	C	D	E	
Science	E	A	D	E	

The very small number of pupils taking national tests each year means that care must be taken when analysing results. Where groups may be as small as just three pupils, the effect of one pupil's test performance on the school's percentage measure is considerable. Change from one year to the next needs to be seen in this context. The analysis of trends over a longer period is more reliable. This shows that standards have been steadily improving over the past five years, at a rate similar to that found nationally. The inspection shows that standards in English, mathematics and science are average at the end of Year 6. The same is true of RE and most of the other subjects about which a judgement can be made. Standards are above average in art and design, but below average in ICT and geography. At the end of Year 2, standards are above average in reading and mathematics. They are average in most of the other subjects about which a judgement can be made, but below average in ICT. The children currently coming to the end of their reception year exceed expectations in all the areas of learning for children of this age, including personal, social and emotional development and communication, language and literacy. The school sets appropriately challenging and realistic targets for pupils' performance in national tests in English and mathematics. Pupils, including those who have special educational needs and those few who are learning English as an additional language, achieve reasonably well in most subjects, given their capabilities and starting point.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils take part in lessons and other activities with enthusiasm and enjoyment, even in conditions of extreme heat.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school, in the village hall and at the playing fields.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Boys and girls work and play very harmoniously together, showing understanding and respect for one another's feelings and beliefs.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. Well below the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The teaching of English and mathematics is good. The basic skills of reading, writing and the use of numbers are taught well, with the children having a good start when they first come to school. Classes are well managed, so that pupils pay attention well and are able to concentrate and get on with their work. Teachers spend a high proportion of their time on good, clear, direct teaching which helps pupils to understand things. Marking is good. It gives pupils plenty of clear advice on how they are getting on and what they need to do to improve. Good care is taken to meet equally well the learning needs of all pupils, regardless of age, gender, capability or home language. Not enough use is made of ICT to support teaching and learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Unsatisfactory. The balance between subjects is uneven. The curriculum is not planned carefully enough to ensure the smooth progression of pupils' learning from year to year. The curriculum does not meet statutory requirements in respect of ICT. The range of activities outside lessons is good and includes appropriate sporting opportunities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. These pupils are well supported in lessons, as well as in groups withdrawn from lessons, so they are able to play a full part in all activities and, therefore, make good progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. The very small proportion of such pupils receives appropriate support so that they have full access to the curriculum along with their peers.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Spiritual, moral and social development is promoted well. The provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory, but it could be stronger. For example, more could be done to promote pupils' experience and appreciation of music.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Child protection and pastoral care are very good. The monitoring of pupils' academic performance is satisfactory.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory overall. The headteacher provides good leadership, based on vision and drive for school improvement. She fulfils her management responsibilities well, for example, carefully monitoring and evaluating progress on the school improvement plan and checking on teaching and pupils' work. However, the role of subject managers requires improvement. There is too little systematic monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching, learning, standards and pupils' progress on the part of those with subject responsibilities.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Unsatisfactory. The governing body does not fulfil its responsibility to ensure that the ICT curriculum meets statutory requirements. It has too slight an involvement in school development and improvement planning. However, governors have made an important contribution to plans to improve the accommodation.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. Only because the headteacher takes care to check on standards, pupils' progress and the quality of teaching and learning. Governors and other staff do not play an active enough part in this.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. The school uses its money and staff appropriately to support the central purposes of the school in teaching and learning. The headteacher ensures that the principles of best value are applied to the work of the school.

There are adequate numbers of appropriately trained and qualified teaching and support staff to teach the full curriculum and meet pupils' learning needs. The accommodation is unsatisfactory, as are resources for learning, and this restricts the teaching of the full National Curriculum, including ICT.

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 teaching is good. • Teachers expect the children to work hard and do their best. • Behaviour is good. • The school is approachable if parents have a question or problem. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The information that they receive about their children's progress.

The inspection team fully endorses all the positive views expressed by parents and carers. It finds that the quality of information provided for parents, particularly about pupils' progress, is very good.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. There is an apparent contradiction between the good quality teaching and standards that are generally only average, and below average in some subjects. If pupils start school with average capabilities and they are well taught, why do not they not achieve well and reach above average standards by the time they leave? The answers lie mainly in understanding the recent history of the school and the inadequacies of the curriculum.
2. The school suffered a prolonged period of staffing problems that coincided with the ill health and eventual retirement of the previous headteacher. When the present headteacher took up her post four terms ago, there were no other full-time permanent teachers. This made it very difficult to assure the quality of teaching. The lack of planning meetings, for instance, meant that there were inconsistencies in what was taught and how. The national guidance on the teaching of literacy and numeracy, which has been in use in most schools for some time now, was not fully implemented. The school had only had a full complement of permanent teachers for just on one full year at the time of the inspection. These problems have been overcome, but they leave their mark. There are gaps in pupils' learning. Some things have been repeated too many times, while other things have been left out. Although pupils are now catching up and gaps are being plugged, they do not know and cannot do as much as they should. Although they are now achieving reasonably well in most subjects, including English, mathematics and science, they have not achieved as well as they should have done over their whole time in school. For example, pupils' writing in Year 6 is less well formed than it should be and their spelling is weak. At the start of the year, they were still printing, instead of joining up their letters. Most pupils are now joining their writing neatly by about the end of Year 3. Teachers' comments in pupils' books show that these problems were quickly identified at the start of the year. Pupils were given good advice on how to improve and targets were set. As a result, clear improvement has taken place. However, the failure to demand consistently high standards of handwriting and spelling in the past has taken its toll, and standards are still not as high as they could be.
3. The school has focused this year on making up some of the lost ground, particularly in literacy and numeracy. This focus, together with the good quality teaching, has paid off. Standards in reading and mathematics are above average at the end of Year 2. They are average in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6, where the evidence in pupils' books shows that they were not securely on course to reach expected levels when they started the year. They have made good progress from a below average starting point. However, the emphasis on the basic skills has meant that some other subjects have not fared as well.
4. The weaknesses in the provision for ICT hold down standards, not only in ICT itself, but in the other subjects. Shortages of appropriate hardware and software, together with the unreliability of some of the hardware, mean that pupils miss out on required parts of the ICT curriculum. They cannot, therefore, reach expected levels by the time they move on to secondary school. They are not able, for example, to use data-capture equipment in order to make and analyse measurements of things, such as changes in temperature or light over time. Pupils' opportunities to communicate with others by using email are restricted by the lack of appropriate facilities, so that they cannot fulfil

expectations. It is an expectation of the National Curriculum that pupils in Years 3 – 6 will use ICT as they learn in all subjects, except physical education. However, pupils are not able to do so. This affects their learning across the curriculum and it means that they do not achieve as much as they could.

5. Inadequacies in the way the curriculum is planned mean that standards in geography are below those expected by the end of Year 6. Pupils have too little knowledge and understanding, for example, of how the physical and human features of places affect the lives and activities of people living there. This is because they have not done much geography and the programme that they have followed has been incoherent. They did no geography for one whole term this year.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

6. Pupils have good attitudes to school. They show enthusiasm and interest in whatever they are doing. Despite extremely trying conditions during the inspection, due to extreme temperatures and high humidity, they still managed to concentrate well. This was particularly noticeable during a whole-school assembly with over fifty pupils in a very small, airless classroom. All of the pupils put their full efforts into hymn singing and a discussion on 'Teamwork - working together'. At playtime, team games of football and tag were still in operation even in the blazing thirty degrees sunshine.
7. Behaviour is good, both in lessons and around the school. When walking in line from playtime to class, or at lunchtime to the village hall, the pupils are respectful and well disciplined. They are proud of their school, which is a tidy place. During the inspection, no evidence of graffiti or vandalism was seen. The pupils step back and open doors for visitors and often ask if you are lost. No bullying was witnessed during the inspection and pupils report that such incidents are very rare. The school has had one short-term exclusion during the twelve months prior to this inspection.
8. The personal development of pupils and relationships within the school are very good. Pupils have a very good understanding of the impact of their actions upon others. They appreciate that not everyone comes from the same background or has the same home language, even within their own school. Therefore, they are beginning to understand well, different feelings, values and beliefs and how and why these exist. The degree of initiative shown by pupils and their willingness to take on responsibility are good. There is a whole-school council that meets every two weeks, as well as class monitors and older pupils who act as 'buddies'. During assembly, pupils take over the use of the overhead projectors without being asked. Pupils get on very well together whether it is at play, learning in pairs or in teamwork. The staff are very well liked and respected by the pupils. Pupils know that they can turn to them at any time for advice and guidance.
9. Attendance is unsatisfactory. It is now well below the national average for this type of school. This does not reflect any negative attitudes to school. It comes about because a small number of pupils take long holidays in term time, affecting the overall attendance figures. The majority of pupils attend regularly. They arrive at school on time and lessons commence promptly. The school has no unaccounted for long-term absentees.
10. Overall, the attitudes, values and personal development of the pupils at the school are good and standards compare well with the previous inspection. Such aspects are well supported by the school's good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and contribute significantly to the success of the pupils' learning.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

11. In almost eight lessons in every ten seen during the inspection the teaching was good. In two lessons in ten the teaching was very good. The work in pupils' books shows that this good quality teaching is the norm. As a result, pupils learn well. Although there are gaps in their learning, pupils are catching fast up in most subjects.
12. The good class management seen throughout the school is an important factor. Teachers insist on high standards of behaviour. Pupils feel secure in an orderly atmosphere; they have respect for their teachers and listen carefully to what they say. Very good relationships are established and this also contributes to a positive, co-operative climate for learning. Teachers make good use of praise and encouragement and pupils respond confidently, happy to have a go at something new. The children in reception were happy to talk to the whole group about their own birthday as they learned to recognise the months of the year. They felt confident enough to have a go at moving the hands of the clock to show key times in their day and did not mind making the occasional mistake. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 felt confident enough in a well managed RE lesson, to stand up individually and read out prayers that they had written. In Years 5 and 6, the atmosphere of trust and respect that had been established enabled pupils to share confidently their sketches and models with the whole class.
13. The high proportion of lesson time spent on whole-class teaching is effective in promoting good learning. Teachers explain and demonstrate things clearly, so that pupils easily understand new ideas. In a Years 5 and 6 science lesson on 'gases around us', a long time was spent in direct teaching. First, the purpose of the lesson was clearly displayed and explained. This enabled the pupils to have a good understanding of what they were going to do and what they should learn. Scientific equipment was then used very effectively to demonstrate how the amount of gas in a fizzy drink can be measured by the amount of water that it displaces. This very successfully captured the pupils' interest. They watched with fascination as the level of water in the flask fell, displaced by the gas. Questioning and explanations were used well to ensure that the pupils understood the need for a fair test before setting about designing their own investigation.
14. Teachers use marking well to let pupils know how they are getting on and what they need to do to improve. They engage in constructive dialogue with pupils about their work, identifying strengths and weaknesses and setting targets for improvement. Some very good examples of this were seen in pupils' books in Year 6. Weaknesses in handwriting, for instance, were identified at the start of the year. Advice was given, targets were set, and the teacher followed this through until a clear improvement could be seen.
15. Teachers face the particular challenge of meeting the learning needs of pupils in mixed-age classes in addition to the usual range of capabilities, difficulties and home languages. This challenge is greatest in Class 1, where pupils in three distinct year groups are taught together. This is complicated by the fact that the children in their reception year work to a different curriculum from those in Years 1 and 2. Careful planning and the use of teaching assistants and volunteers, enable the needs of all the different groups of pupils to be appropriately met.
16. The good support for pupils who have special educational needs is well organised. The support given in lessons and in small groups, or individually outside lessons, is carefully matched to these pupils' identified learning needs and is focused on targets set in their individual education plans. A pupil worked hard and with evident satisfaction

on sequencing the letters of the alphabet, saying their names and sounds and then writing them. This brief activity, for which the pupil received individual attention, was carefully planned to address problems with sequencing that had been identified and set as targets in her individual education plan. Pupils who are learning English as an additional language are suitably supported, although they are sufficiently fluent to cope well with all subjects.

17. The inadequacies of resources for ICT mean that teachers do not use ICT enough to support their teaching. Nor is it used, as expected, by pupils to support their learning. The impact of good, clear teaching is lessened when there are too few working computers to go round. In a Years 5 and 6 lesson, for example, the teacher demonstrated very clearly how to start to put together a multi-media presentation using ICT. However, pupils' learning was limited, despite very good clear direct teaching because there were not enough computers for them all to apply what they had learned for themselves. In Year 2, pupils' learning about how to represent data using pictograms and block graphs was limited, despite good teaching, because there were too few working computers for them all to try it out for themselves.

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

18. The school provides a satisfactory range of learning opportunities for pupils. However, there are weaknesses in the way the curriculum is organised, which means that some subjects are not taught in sufficient depth.
19. The National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy are well established and enable pupils to make good progress. A good range of after-school activities, including sporting and musical activities, enriches the curriculum. These are well attended and greatly enjoyed by pupils.
20. All subjects of the National Curriculum are taught, but statutory requirements for ICT are not met. The resources needed for the subject are not in place and, as a result, pupils do not make the progress they should in the subject. The school does not have appropriate software to enable teachers to use ICT to promote pupils' learning in other subjects of the curriculum as is required.
21. As the school has mixed-age classes, the staff have devised a two-year curriculum plan to avoid pupils covering the same topics each year. However, this is not well balanced and results in some subjects not being covered in enough depth. This is particularly the case with geography, where very little work has been covered and pupils have very little subject knowledge. The school has already identified the need to review curriculum plans to ensure that all aspects of the curriculum are covered appropriately.
22. The school makes appropriate provision for sex and relationships education and drugs awareness. The school nurse supports this and parents are invited to view the materials used. This aspect of the curriculum is very well addressed through the new scheme of work for personal, social and health education. A range of educational visits enriches the curriculum. Pupils have visited a country park to undertake a stream survey, a nature centre for pond dipping and mini-beast studies, and a workshop with a professional orchestra at the local high school. There are also visits to various museums and other places of interest. Every two years there is a residential visit for Years 5 and 6 so that all pupils have the opportunity to experience this during their time at the school.

23. There are good links with other schools. The good links with the local nursery and pre-school help children settle quickly into the reception class. Arrangements for transfer to secondary school are good and enable pupils to transfer smoothly from Year 6 to Year 7. These arrangements are particularly helpful for those pupils with special educational needs. Teachers from the high school visit and special induction procedures are arranged. The school also hosts students from local secondary schools on work experience placements. There are good links with other local primary schools. Schools agree a training focus each year, and have recently agreed a focus on raising standards in teaching for the coming year. There has also been joint training for administrative staff and for special educational needs co-ordinators.
24. The school regularly invites visitors in to support the curriculum. A recent writing week, involving an author, librarians and journalists, was very successful. There has recently been a Jewish visitor to support work in RE, and the vicar regularly takes assemblies. Pupils were very enthusiastic about a visit from a local beekeeper.
25. Provision for pupils' personal development is now good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual development. Acts of collective worship provide some opportunities for reflection. There are also opportunities in lessons for pupils to reflect on their experiences and those of others. In a very good Years 5 and 6 history lesson, pupils reflected upon the issue of racism in studying the life and work of Martin Luther King. In their personal, social and health education lessons, pupils consider their own personal qualities and how they would like to improve. They discuss what makes them feel valued and how they can make a commitment to their community. They talk about the unique nature of each person. Pupils produce some thoughtful and reflective work.
26. Provision for pupils' moral development is good. Staff provide good role models and pupils are taught to know right from wrong. They are expected to be kind and considerate to one another and they are, which effectively guards against bullying or harassment of any kind. Pupils understand the school's system of rewards and sanctions. They take responsibility for their own behaviour and help each other. The personal, social and health education curriculum encourages pupils to respect the feelings and value the contributions of others. They consider the qualities that make a good friend and try to act this out in practice.
27. The school makes good provision for pupils' social development. Pupils in all years elect a representative to the school council and councillors are proud of their involvement. Social development is also well promoted in lessons where there are opportunities for pupils to take turns in discussion and to share. Although the school has far more boys than girls, this does not affect pupils' social development. Pupils work and play very well together, regardless of gender. In addition to serving on the school council, pupils are given opportunities to take responsibility by being monitors.
28. Provision for cultural development is sound, as it was at the time of the previous inspection. There are good opportunities to study the work of different artists and writers, but music plays only a small part in the curriculum as yet. There are still limited opportunities for pupils to learn about a range of different cultural traditions. Religious education makes some contribution to pupils' cultural awareness. A Jewish visitor talked to pupils about her faith, and visitors from the local RE resource centre taught pupils about Hindu marriage customs. There is still more that could be done to prepare pupils for life in a culturally diverse society.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

29. The school has very good procedures for child protection and for ensuring the welfare of its pupils. The headteacher is the named and trained child protection person and she has ensured that all staff are also well trained. New staff receive training as part of their induction. There is a detailed, up-to-date written policy and very good liaison with the local social services department. Any concerns are carefully and confidentially recorded.
30. The headteacher is also the named health and safety person. Together with the senior teacher and named governor, she ensures regular site inspections and risk assessments. All fire fighting, portable electrical and gym equipment are checked. Fire exercises are held every term and all escape routes are accessible and well marked. The school has caring and efficient procedures for recording and reporting accidents and administering medicines. There are several trained first aid personnel.
31. The school makes good use of outside professional help, such as the school nurse, educational psychologist and various behavioural and therapist services. The police come in and talk about 'Stranger Danger' and Year 6 have recently completed 'Crucial Crew' training to deal with emergencies. The school has an appropriate Internet safety policy agreed with parents, ensuring that pupils do not have access to inappropriate images or other material.
32. The school has satisfactory procedures to monitor and improve attendance. All class registers are well maintained. The headteacher completes a regular analysis of figures and all parents are sent regular reminders of their responsibilities in respect of attendance. The school tries to contact home by 09.15 daily if a pupil fails to turn up. There is a tight 'lateness' routine and good liaison with the local educational welfare officer.
33. There are good procedures for both monitoring and promoting good behaviour, and eliminating oppressive behaviour. The school's detailed behaviour policy contains realistic rewards and sanctions, of which all pupils are well aware. Pupils appreciate the honour of being put into the Gold Book, being presented with a certificate at the weekly celebration assembly and having their commendation sent home. Time out, missed play, being reported to parents and a behaviour chart are less sought after. Pupils are encouraged to report any bullying incidents to an adult. All staff are aware of potential incidents and of nipping them in the bud.
34. Good use of the school's personal, social and health education programme ensures that procedures for monitoring and supporting the pupils' personal development are good. The teachers know all pupils well and the open-door nature of the school ensures that they can inform parents regularly of positive or negative developments. Progress is recorded in the pupils' personal files and also conveyed to parents through the pupils' annual report.
35. The school provides a caring and safe environment in which the pupils can develop and learn successfully. These aspects have improved since the previous inspection.
36. The school has good procedures for checking on pupils' attainment and progress in English, mathematics and science. Records are kept of pupils' attainment in a variety of tests and in the national assessments at the end of Years 2 and 6. These results are now used in planning to provide well matched tasks and to set individual targets for pupils. The target setting for individual pupils is newly established. Teachers regularly refer to pupils' targets in lessons and pupils are involved in evaluating their own

progress. Assessment in subjects other than English, mathematics and science is, as yet, at an early stage of development.

37. Ongoing assessment is well used in lessons to guide curriculum planning and help pupils to improve their work. Teachers make good evaluations of their lessons and use these well to inform further planning. Marking is very effective. As well as celebrating pupils' achievements, comments are very helpful in guiding pupils as to the improvements they can make in their work. In their marking, teachers refer to pupils' targets and clearly expect pupils to respond. Pupils do respond to teachers' comments and, as a result, their work shows improvement over time.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

38. Parents believe that this is a very good school. They mostly say that the teaching is good, the school is well led and managed, behaviour is good and their children like school. They think that their children are making good progress, the school has very high expectations of pupils and is helping them to become mature and responsible persons. They also believe that the school works closely with parents and they, as parents, are comfortable about approaching the school with a question or problem. A significant minority feel that they are not well informed about their children's progress and a few feel that there is insufficient homework.
39. The quality of information that the school provides for its parents is very good. The prospectus conforms to all statutory requirements, but the governors' annual report to parents has minor omissions of which the school is now aware. The pupils' annual reports are very good. The school has worked hard to produce a report, which, although very analytical, is still easy for parents to understand. It shows clearly what their children can do and sets realistic targets for improvement. In addition, parents receive regular and informative weekly newsletters, a copy of the homework policy and a copy of the behaviour policy. The school offers helpful 'meet the teacher' evenings in addition to easy access to the headteacher and staff at other times.
40. The contribution of the parents to pupils' learning is good. Several parents help in school with reading and generally as required. Many are keen to help with transport for trips out or to assist with costumes and scenery for school plays. Most parents are appreciative of the home/school reading diaries, which they find to be a good two-way communication and which contain details of homework.
41. The impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school is good. The school is indebted to its very energetic parent/teacher association, which has raised considerable funds, for example for the proposed new ICT suite.
42. Overall, the school has good links with its parents, which compares well with the previous inspection. Such good links contribute significantly to pupils' learning.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

43. The headteacher's sharp focus on school improvement and raising of pupils' achievement is well reflected in the school improvement plan. This was based on a perceptive analysis and evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and its improvement since the previous inspection. It prioritises a realistic set of appropriate targets. These include improving the curriculum, raising standards and developing the role of subject managers. The headteacher has taken effective steps this year to monitor and evaluate progress towards these targets and has clearly identified what

has been achieved and what needs to be carried forward to next year's plan. Improvements to the curriculum, for example, have been evaluated and further action to be taken has been identified.

44. The headteacher has successfully recruited a full complement of permanent staff this year. She has built a well motivated team that is committed to school improvement. She has taken parents and pupils with her, so that there is a strong sense of teamwork and shared endeavour. Parents think highly of the way the school is led and managed and they believe that the school is now improving well. Pupils' attitudes to school and their enthusiasm for their work show that they, too, feel committed as part of the team. Staff work well together and share the headteacher's concerns and aspirations for the school. They all agree, for example, that teachers' roles as subject leaders are in need of improvement.
45. The headteacher's monitoring and evaluation of teaching, although limited by time constraints, are of good quality. Strengths and weaknesses in teaching and planning are effectively identified and point to areas for improvement. However, subject managers are not fulfilling their role in this respect. As a consequence, there is too little systematic checking on teaching, planning, standards and pupils' progress, overall. This requires improvement.
46. The governing body takes too little part in shaping the vision and direction of the school. Although it has been centrally and energetically involved in bringing about the very necessary improvements to the accommodation, its involvement in other aspects of school improvement has been limited. School development and improvement planning depends too much on the headteacher. There is but a tenuous understanding of the principles of best value on the part of the governing body as a whole, although individual members have a secure grasp. This weakens the governing body's role in challenging the plans and decisions of the headteacher and staff.
47. There are serious shortcomings in the accommodation and learning resources, besides those affecting ICT. Four year-groups are taught together as two classes in one room, with only a partial room divider to separate them. This leads to problems with noise leaking from one part of the room and disturbing teaching and learning in the other part. This is especially significant in practical lessons and it affects the teaching of music in particular. There is no school hall, so that pupils have to walk to the village hall or to the recreation ground for physical education (PE) lessons, which wastes time. Since the village hall is ill equipped for PE and the school lacks resources for gymnastics, the full PE curriculum cannot be taught.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

48. In order to address the issues raised within this report, the governing body, headteacher and staff should now:

- (1) Increase the involvement of the governing body in school development and improvement planning.

(Paragraph 46)

- (2) Improve the leadership and management roles of subject managers.

(Paragraphs 43 – 45)

- (3) Raise standards in ICT.

(Paragraphs 96 – 99).

- (4) Improve the use of ICT to support teaching and learning across the curriculum.

(Paragraphs 68; 74; 80; 95; 96 – 99; 101; 108)

- (5) Ensure that a more balanced curriculum is offered to pupils.

(Paragraphs 18 – 21; 94)

- (6) Raise standards in geography.

(Paragraphs 92 – 95)

THE SCHOOL SHOULD ALSO PLAN TO ADDRESS THE FOLLOWING WEAKNESS

- In order to improve attendance, discourage parents from taking their children out of school for holidays in term time. (Paragraph 9).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	20
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	13

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	4	15	1	0	0	0
Percentage	0	20	75	5	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	57
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	4

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	9

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.7
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	9	4	13

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Total	11	11	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (75)	85 (88)	92 (88)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Total	8	8	9
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	62 (88)	62 (88)	69 (75)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	5	7	12

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Total	11	9	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	92 (93)	75 (73)	92 (100)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Total	11	8	10
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	92 (87)	67 (73)	91 (80)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

The numbers of boys and girls have been omitted from the tables due to the small numbers involved and the need to protect their anonymity

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	53	1	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	4.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	13.6
Average class size	19

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	59

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2002/2003
	£
Total income	286,530
Total expenditure	226,266
Expenditure per pupil	3970
Balance brought forward from previous year	53,006
Balance carried forward to next year	60,264

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5.1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	5.1
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	57
Number of questionnaires returned	24

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	33	63	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	42	50	8	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	21	75	0	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	21	71	4	0	4
The teaching is good.	63	38	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	42	42	17	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	58	38	4	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	50	50	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	29	63	8	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	50	42	0	0	8
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	33	53	4	0	0

The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.

29	63	4	0	4
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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

49. Children start school at the beginning of the term in which they are five. At the time of the inspection there were seven children in the reception year. They are taught in a mixed-age class with pupils in Years 1 and 2. At the time of the previous inspection, children under five made satisfactory progress and reached or exceeded the nationally expected learning outcomes for five-year-olds. Since the introduction of the Foundation Stage of Learning, the school has built on existing good practice, and children's achievement is, overall, satisfactory.
50. The school's own assessments show that, when they start school, children's attainment is broadly average. However, this varies from year to year, as cohorts are small. Most children in the present reception class are attaining above average standards in all the areas of learning.
51. Most of the children have some pre-school experience. The school has good links with a local nursery and a pre-school. The reception teacher visits children in those settings before they start school. Parents and children are invited to visit the school on three afternoons in the half-term before they start school.
52. Teaching in the reception class is consistently good. The children receive a good start to their education. The curriculum is planned to encompass the six areas of learning in the Foundation Stage and children are assessed according to their progress in the nationally recommended Early Learning Goals. Planning for the Foundation Stage is thorough and provides good opportunities for children to build systematically on their experiences and develop their knowledge, skills and understanding in all the areas of learning. The classroom is well organised to provide a good range of learning opportunities. Children do not have a dedicated outdoor area for their use, but have specific times to use the fixed climbing apparatus to develop their physical skills. They also have access to sand and water play outside.
53. The staff have a good understanding of the learning needs of young children. The teaching assistants work well with teaching staff to form an effective team and support children's learning. All adults are clear about their roles, and their good relationships act as good role models for children. While the teaching and provision are good, the fact that children are taught alongside pupils in Years 1 and 2, places considerable burdens on the teaching staff, particularly in planning and organisation for both the National Curriculum and the Foundation Stage curriculum.
54. Staff make regular careful observations of the children's attainment and progress. They use these well to help in planning appropriate learning activities. The children are managed very well. The adults have a calm and welcoming manner to which children respond very positively. Children are taught through a wide range of appropriate practical activities. Staff question children well and take every opportunity to develop their vocabulary and speaking skills. None of the children in the present reception class

has been identified as having special educational needs. There are no children for whom English is an additional language. Staff monitor children's progress with care to ensure that their learning needs are being met.

Personal, social and emotional development.

55. Children achieve well. They are happy and settled in school and familiar with class routines. They are interested in learning and keen to take part in new activities, for example, in tasting and describing different fruit juices. They play and work well together, taking turns and sharing resources. They show appropriate understanding, for their age, of the school rules and what is right and wrong. Children have good levels of concentration and stay with their chosen activities for a good length of time. They show care for one another and get on well together.

Communication, language and literacy.

56. Children achieve well. They are mostly exceeding expectations at the end of their reception year. They have a good knowledge of books. They understand that the book cover gives the name of the author and illustrator and can say what these terms mean. Children are making good progress with their reading skills and a few are already reading at the level expected for Year 1 pupils. Most children are reading familiar words and have a good knowledge of sounds to help with their reading. They use pictures to help them tell the story. Children are given good opportunities to develop their speaking skills. They write their names without help and a few are beginning to write simple sentences independently.

Mathematical development.

57. Children make good progress in this area of learning and are mostly exceeding expected levels at the end of their reception year. They enjoy singing number rhymes and playing number games. They count to ten, matching objects as they count, and most count beyond this. Children recognise written numbers and confidently match sets of objects to them. The most capable children add and subtract numbers to ten with confidence. They name the months of the year, though not all can manage all twelve months in order. Children know in which month their birthday falls. They are developing a sense of time, saying that they come into school at 9 o'clock and know what happens at 12 o'clock and 1 o'clock. Some of them are able to show these significant times by moving the hands on a clock.

Creative Development.

58. Children enjoy painting, singing and other creative activities. They enjoy making pictures using cutting and sticking techniques. They enjoy using their imagination games, such as escaping from crocodiles by using the outdoor climbing frame. They enjoy listening to stories such as the tale of *The Gingerbread Man*. In an art activity observed, children enjoyed making masks by covering balloons with papier mâché.

Knowledge and understanding of the world.

59. Children are curious about their surroundings and enjoy exploring their environment. They enjoy using the computer in their classroom to play language and mathematical games. They control the mouse well to move objects on the screen. When talking about the different fruit drinks they taste, they say that too much sugar is bad for their teeth and that they need to drink to stay alive. When one of the children described water as 'see-through', another could say that this means transparent. Children understand that some drinks help them to develop healthy bones. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is well developed for their age.

Physical development.

60. Children are agile and well co-ordinated. They enjoy playing on the fixed climbing frame in the playground and show good awareness of others in the space around them. Wheeled toys are available, but children were not observed using them during the inspection. In the classroom, children handle pencils, brushes, scissors and other small tools with increasing skill. Their writing shows that their pencil control is developing well. Children use construction toys competently to build models. They are mostly on course to exceed expected levels of development by the end of their reception year.

ENGLISH

61. Standards in English are improving in line with standards in schools nationally. Standards at the end of Year 2 are currently above average. At the end of Year 6, they are average. As year groups are small, results in national tests vary from year to year with the varying characteristics of the pupils involved. In last year's national tests standards in reading were average, but in writing they were below average at the end of Year 2. Standards at the end of Year 6 were average.
62. When they start school, pupils are confident in speaking and have good listening skills. They build well on the good start to education they receive in the reception year and their reading and writing skills develop well. Pupils are confident in answering questions and keen to take part in discussions. They have well-developed vocabulary and express themselves well. In a lesson for Years 1 and 2, pupils discussed animatedly the characters they would include in their story and enjoyed giving them 'spooky' characteristics. Older pupils are able to suggest a wide range of idiomatic phrases and use these to write lively passages of dialogue.
63. Pupils are given regular opportunities to discuss their work in small groups. They enjoy talking to visitors about their work. Pupils listen well to one another and use a good range of vocabulary to express their views. For example, in a Years 5 and 6 history lesson, pupils discussed their views on the American civil rights movement and were aghast at the harshness of some of the segregation laws they read about.
64. Pupils throughout the school enjoy reading and make good progress in developing their skills. They read regularly at home with family members and some are members of local libraries. By the end of Year 2, pupils recognise a good range of familiar words on sight and have good strategies for tackling unfamiliar words. Pupils have a very good knowledge of letter sounds and use this to sound out words. They also split words into smaller parts or use picture and context clues to check that their reading makes sense. They read fluently with good expression and understanding.
65. By the end of Year 6, pupils are competent readers and have the skills they need to support work in all subjects of the curriculum. They are confident in using libraries to find the information they need from books and other sources. Some, however, are not very enthusiastic about reading for pleasure and have a very limited knowledge of books and authors beyond very popular children's fiction. As the school has a very high proportion of boys, it recognises the need to develop more strategies to engage all pupils in reading for pleasure and introduce them to a wider range of books that would help them to develop higher level reading skills.

66. Pupils have a good knowledge of sounds, but do not use this consistently in their spelling, which is weak. Older pupils use dictionaries to look up spellings, but do not do this consistently in their independent writing.
67. In recent years, there have been several changes in staffing. One effect of this is that pupils' handwriting has not been developed systematically and several older pupils have not developed neat joined script. This is now being addressed and handwriting is showing improvement. Pupils try hard to present their work well. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are beginning to present their ideas logically and use complex sentences in their writing.
68. By the end of Year 6, pupils show good understanding of grammar and punctuation. They use different forms of writing appropriately, for example, in devising advertising slogans, writing dialogue between two characters, or writing a story from the point of view of different characters. Many pupils are developing a lively style in their story writing that engages the reader's attention. They understand that they need to use formal or informal writing for different purposes, such as writing a letter of complaint or inviting a friend to a party. Pupils use their writing skills well in other subjects of the curriculum, although there is very little use of ICT in their English work.
69. The teaching of English is good throughout the school and, in a Years 5 and 6 lesson, teaching was very good. Teachers have a secure understanding of how to teach reading and writing. They take care to develop pupils' vocabulary and develop their knowledge and understanding of the structure of language. They ensure that pupils know what is expected of them and review learning well at the end of lessons. Teachers use a good range of vocabulary to promote pupils' interest in new words. They teach pupils the correct grammatical terms and insist that they use these correctly. This encourages pupils to express their ideas accurately. Teachers challenge pupils to think for themselves and to explain their ideas clearly. They use a good range of strategies to ensure that pupils remain focused and attentive, and relationships are very good. As a result, pupils enjoy their lessons and work productively. Pupils' work in books shows that they are achieving well over time, although this has not been the case until this year, so that they are catching up on some learning that they have missed out in the past. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported and are making good progress in relation to their individual targets.
70. A particular feature of the good teaching observed was the very effective marking. Teachers praise pupils for their achievements, but they also refer regularly to English targets and give pupils good advice about how they can improve their work. Pupils respond well to teachers' marking and this helps them to improve their work. In one of the best examples, a teacher regularly reminded one pupil of his handwriting target and a lively dialogue resulted. Teachers regularly review and adjust pupils' targets as they make progress. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate their own work and are involved in setting their targets.
71. Management of English is in need of further development. The subject leader has good knowledge but is not yet sufficiently involved in monitoring teaching and learning. The results of tests are analysed and this gives a good view of strengths and weaknesses in the subject.
72. At the time of the previous inspection, standards in English were satisfactory for pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Over time, results have varied as some cohorts, such

as the current Year 6, are very small. Overall, standards show an improving trend and improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory.

MATHEMATICS

73. Standards are average by the end of Year 6. They are above average by the end of Year 2. Standards vary greatly from year to year, with the varying capabilities of the very small groups of pupils involved. This is common in small schools, where the performance of just one pupil can have a considerable impact on the overall picture. The trend in standards achieved by the oldest pupils over the past five years, which is more reliable than change from one year to the next, has been broadly in line with the nationally improving trend. Given their various starting points, pupils achieve reasonably well overall. Pupils in Years 3 – 6 are achieving well now, as they make up lost ground. The marked gender imbalance makes it impossible to detect reliably any differences in achievement or standards between girls and boys. No great differences were evident during the inspection. Pupils who have special educational needs achieve soundly and reach standards that are appropriate to their capabilities. Pupils who are learning English as an additional language also achieve satisfactorily.
74. By the end of Year 2, almost all pupils reach expected levels of knowledge and understanding, including the use of numbers. Half the pupils currently exceed expected levels. They know the difference between odd and even numbers. They understand simple fractions, such as $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{1}{4}$. Most pupils confidently count to 100 in tens and partition two-digit numbers into tens and units. They give change from £1. Although most of the work is on the use of numbers, pupils also learn about shape and measuring. They know, for example, that a cube has six faces, eight corners and twelve edges. They tell the time to the hour using both digital and analogue clocks and, at the time of the inspection, were making good progress learning to recognise half and quarter-past the hour. Pupils gather information, for example, concerning eye colours, and organise this into simple graphs, such as pictograms and block graphs. They make some use of ICT in this work, but its effectiveness is limited because there are too few computers that run the appropriate programs.
75. By the end of Year 6, pupils currently meet national expectations in all aspects of mathematics, including the use of numbers. There is little evidence of any performance beyond expected levels. Pupils multiply hundreds, tens and units. They work out percentages and know the fractional equivalents of some percentages. They find the area of a regular shape, using the mathematical formula, and measure and draw angles. There are some good opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical skills to real life situations and problems, which helps them to understand why they learn the subject. For example, pupils weigh packets of fruit and vegetables and then work out the approximate weight of one item. They investigate the number of sweets in a number of boxes of sweets and work out the average contents. There are only limited opportunities for pupils to use ICT as they learn.
76. Teaching is good. It is enabling pupils to make good progress in their learning. The older pupils are catching up some of what they have missed in the past. Teachers help pupils to have a good understanding of their learning. They explain clearly at the outset what the lesson is about and its purpose, writing this up on the board for all to see and discussing it with pupils. Good attention is given to direct class teaching. Secure class control and good relationships create a positive and productive learning atmosphere in which pupils are happy to listen carefully, ask and answer questions and try hard to do their best. The use of well chosen practical equipment helps teachers to demonstrate new ideas effectively. This was seen, for example, in a Years 3 and 4 lesson on weight,

as pupils passed round and compared 100g and 1kg weights. Imaginative practical activities help to bring lessons to life. Pupils enjoyed weighing out the ingredients to make cakes. In Years 5 and 6 they gained a good understanding of probability through playing games of chance. This gave them one of their few opportunities to use ICT, as they tried to predict the probability of an event in a computer game.

77. The subject leader manages the subject satisfactorily. She has made an appropriate start on monitoring, evaluating and developing the quality of teaching, through observing lessons and checking teachers' planning. The main weakness that needs attention is the unsatisfactory use of ICT to support teaching and learning.

SCIENCE

78. Standards are average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. They are similar to those found at the time of the previous inspection. Standards at the end of Year 6 are judged to be better than they were in last year's national tests, when they were below average. Such differences from one year to the next are common where such very small numbers of pupils are involved. The analysis of test results over a five-year period shows a steadily improving trend in national tests, in line with the national improvement in standards. Pupils, including those who have special educational needs, progress soundly over their time in school and reach standards that are generally appropriate, given their capability. The same is true of pupils for whom English is an additional language. There are no great differences in the achievements or standards reached by boys and girls.
79. By the end of Year 2, pupils know that pushing and pulling are forces. They identify things that they push and pull in school, such as pushing the door open and pulling the mouse across the desk as they use the computer. Pupils understand that forces may slow things down, speed them up or stop them. They know some of the properties of materials used around the home and in school. They know that a window or a computer screen is transparent, whereas a shower curtain is translucent. Pupils investigate materials, such as paper and polythene, and discover that some are waterproof but others are not. They know about the life-cycle and development of the frog and understand how these differ from those of humans. They make some use of their mathematical skills, for example, as they measure their height and gather information on individual differences, such as eye colour.
80. By the end of Year 6, pupils reach expected levels of knowledge and understanding. They know that micro organisms play a part in causing disease. They understand the idea of a fair test and take this into account as they investigate, for instance, what makes food go mouldy. Pupils understand that plants require certain conditions such as light, water and warmth in order to develop healthily. They know that some materials conduct electricity and that others, called insulators, do not. They make some appropriate use of mathematics, for example, as they graph the amount of air that they discover in sand. There is too little ICT use to support learning. Pupils do not, for example, sense physical data such as light and temperature change using ICT.
81. Teaching is good. It is enabling pupils to make up for gaps in their learning in the past. This is particularly true of the oldest pupils. Teachers make learning interesting so that pupils are enthusiastic and make a good effort. Lively teaching combines good, clear demonstrations and explanations with plenty of good opportunities for pupils to be active and find things out for themselves. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 gained a good understanding of plant growth through planting their own seeds in a range of different environmental conditions and comparing the outcomes. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 readily understood how the amount of gas in a liquid could be measured because it was very

clearly demonstrated for them. They then went on to investigate gases in liquids in their own way, so deepening their understanding and honing their investigative skills.

82. The management of science requires improvement. There is too little systematic monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning and of standards and the progress that pupils are making.

ART AND DESIGN

83. No judgement was made about standards in art at the time of the previous inspection. Not enough curriculum time was devoted to the subject. The school has worked hard to address this issue and, as a result, improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory.
84. Only two lessons were observed in the current inspection, one in Years 1 and 2 and one in Years 5 and 6. In Years 1 and 2, pupils were investigating the properties of materials by making papier mâché masks. The younger pupils pasted paper on to balloons to create a mask shape. Older pupils sketched profiles and then, using card as a base, built up a papier mâché profile. Pupils showed good observation in their sketches and used the materials well.
85. In Years 5 and 6, pupils practised their drawing skills, focusing on people moving. They used their previous sketches of people in action and made pipe-cleaner models to represent people. They then sketched these. The teacher used these well to teach pupils about the proportions of the human body. Pupils then evaluated their first attempt and adjusted their models accordingly.
86. No lessons were observed in Years 3 and 4, but displays show a good range of art and design work. Pupils have been learning the techniques of screen-printing and batik and have produced some very attractive work.
87. On the evidence available from lessons and displays, teaching in art and design is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and there is a good focus on direct teaching of art skills. As a result, pupils, including those who have special educational needs, achieve well and greatly enjoy their art and design lessons. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate and improve their work. Sketchbooks have recently been introduced for pupils to try out techniques and collect ideas. Teachers use resources well, for example, in the Years 5 and 6 lesson, pupils were provided with a selection of drawing pencils, enabling them to experiment with line and shading.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

88. No lessons were seen and, therefore, no judgement can be made about the quality of teaching. The examination of pupils' work and discussions with pupils show that pupils achieve satisfactorily and standards are in line with national expectations by the end of Year 6. There is too little evidence to make any judgement about standards at the end of Year 2. No judgement was made about standards at the previous inspection.
89. Pupils devise their own recipes for making bread, trying out some unusual ingredients, such as mint and chocolate flavourings. They taste and evaluate the finished product, and invite comments from their friends and families. In the light of their evaluations they make changes to their recipes. They thoughtfully design a shelter, for example, for the *Three Little Pigs*, and build a prototype to test out their design. They evaluate this and make any necessary modifications before building their final product. One pupil found,

for example, that the legs that were designed to give added security to his shelter were unstable when he built his prototype. He therefore modified his design and this led to the building of a more successful, stable structure.

90. ICT is not used as much as it could be in the designing process. Pupils do, however, bring to bear some of their mathematical skills, for example, as they weigh out ingredients for bread making and measure the dimensions of their structures.
91. Leadership and management require improvement. There is as yet no regular and systematic programme for monitoring the quality of teaching or the progress made by pupils.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

92. At the time of the previous inspection, standards in both subjects were in line with national expectations, although skills in historical enquiry were below expected levels. Pupils in the current Year 6 now reach average standards in history but standards in geography are below average. Not enough evidence is available to make a judgement about standards in Year 2. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory in history, but unsatisfactory in geography.
93. Only one history lesson was observed and this was in Years 5 and 6. No geography lessons were observed. In this history lesson, pupils learned about the life and work of Martin Luther King and their impact on contemporary society. Pupils are developing good historical research skills, which is a good improvement since the previous inspection. For example, a pupil had printed an article on the subject from the Internet, but then had highlighted the most important points to use in discussion. Pupils are developing reflective attitudes towards their work in history. They were aghast at the way black people had been treated as a result of the 'Jim Crow' laws, and this led to a sensitive discussion on racist attitudes.
94. Scrutiny of pupils' work shows that they have studied ancient Egypt and learned about aspects of life and death, such as mummification and the Egyptian number systems. In geography, pupils have done too little work this year because of the way the curriculum is planned. They studied a stream and learned something about the effects of flowing water in causing soil erosion, but their understanding and recall are very limited. They have located the school and their own homes on a local map, but this is low-level work for pupils in Years 5 and 6.
95. There is not enough evidence to make an overall judgement on the quality of teaching. In the one history lesson observed, teaching was very good. The teacher had very secure subject knowledge and planned a good range of activities to develop pupils' historical skills. There was a good emphasis on the impact of historical events on contemporary society. Good use was made of homework to support pupils' learning. There is no evidence of pupils using ICT in school to support work in history or geography, although some pupils have used computers at home to research topics.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

96. Standards are not as good as they were at the time of the previous inspection, almost six years ago, when they were in line with national expectations. The school has not kept pace with the developments since then. Resources are inadequate to meet the demands of the modern curriculum. The accommodation is unsatisfactory. Standards are below average throughout the school, including at the end of Year 2, and when

pupils transfer to secondary schools at the end of Year 6. The curriculum does not meet statutory National Curriculum requirements. Pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory. Pupils who have special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language do not make as much use of ICT to meet their particular learning needs as they could.

97. Although the small amount of teaching seen was good, its effectiveness was limited by the restrictions imposed by the hardware and software. Pupils in Year 2 understood clearly how to use the computer to sort information and represent it graphically, as a result of a good, clear demonstration. However, they were frustrated in their attempts to practise what they had learned because there were too few suitable computers with the necessary program loaded. Similarly in Years 5 and 6, pupils learned how to start to put together a multi media presentation, but too few machines were available for them to practise for themselves.
98. The consequences of inadequate learning resources combine with lack of consistent teaching in the past and result in a mis-match between what is expected and what pupils understand and are able to do. Pupils in Year 2 have only very rudimentary skills in organising and analysing information and presenting their findings. Their ability to use tables, graphic images and, in particular, sound, is poorly developed. By the end of Year 6, pupils have no experience of sensing physical data, as they are expected to do by this stage, because the necessary equipment is either broken or missing altogether. Their experience of using e-mail is limited, as is their experience of using control technology. They have only a limited understanding of how the use of ICT in school differs from that outside school. They do have some experience of using ICT to make predictions, for example, as they learn about probability. Their ability to present information using a range of media, such as sound, text and graphics, is at least a year behind expectations.
99. Subject management requires improvement. Too little is done to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning, and standards and pupils' progress.

MUSIC

100. No music lessons were observed in the previous inspection and so no judgement was made on teaching and learning. This was also the case in the current inspection.
101. Pupils sing well in assemblies. They sing tunefully and with secure rhythmic skills. Pupils have the opportunity to learn the recorder and a small number have instrumental lessons. The full music curriculum is not in place, however, as there is no use of ICT in the subject. Music is planned for, but the planned lessons took place outside the inspection days. It is not, therefore, possible to make a secure judgement on teaching and learning.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

102. The curriculum cannot be taught in full because of shortcomings in the accommodation and the lack of suitable resources, particularly for gymnastics. Much of the work necessarily goes on out of doors. Games and athletics are taught to standards that are about average by the end of Years 2 and 6. There are no great differences between the standards reached by boys and girls, overall. Pupils who have special educational needs take a full part in lessons and make progress and reach standards similar to others. The school makes good use of specialist sports coaching to promote pupils'

games and athletics skills. However, the inclusion of the children in the reception class in the programme for pupils in Years 1 and 2 is inappropriate to their learning needs.

103. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a very clear understanding of the importance of teamwork and co-operation with others in playing sport. This point is clearly and effectively emphasised by the good quality teaching. Pupils have a good understanding of why it is important to warm up safely before exercise. Skills, such as the correct technique for throwing a ball, are demonstrated very clearly. As a result, pupils easily understand what to do and make good progress in their learning. They respond positively to clear explanations and demonstrations, trying hard to do their best and improve their skills. They co-operate well in relay races and run and jump with appropriate skill, control and co-ordination for their age.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

104. Pupils continue to attain standards in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus, as they did at the time of the previous inspection, and their achievement is satisfactory. No lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2, but work in books shows that they cover the required elements. Pupils write their own prayers and reflect on Bible stories, such as that of Zacchaeus. This leads them to think about what they can do to help others.
105. In Years 3 to 6, pupils were studying Judaism. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 learned about the significance of the Shabbat meal. In a previous lesson they had learned how Jewish families mark the beginning of the Sabbath. They showed good recall of their previous learning. In the lesson observed, they learned about the Havdalah ceremony which marks the end of Shabbat. Pupils showed interest in their learning and are developing very respectful attitudes towards different faiths. Pupils enjoyed the task of imagining they were a Jewish child inviting a non-Jewish friend to a Shabbat meal and explaining the customs so that the friend would be well prepared for the ceremonies.
106. Years 5 and 6 pupils learn about the Bar and Bat Mitzvah ceremonies. They appreciate that these signify becoming an adult and taking responsibility. They name many of the symbols of Judaism and show understanding of their significance. They use the symbols to design a Bat or Bar Mitzvah card.
107. Teaching in religious education is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use this well to present their lessons in a lively and interesting way. They make good use of artefacts to engage pupils' interest. They question pupils well to check their understanding. A good feature of teaching is that a good emphasis is placed upon what religious belief means to groups of believers and how their faith influences their lives.
108. Although the requirements of the agreed syllabus are largely in place, there is no use of ICT to support pupils' work in the subject.