

INSPECTION REPORT

THE VAYNOR FIRST SCHOOL

Headless Cross, REDDITCH

LEA area: Worcestershire

Unique reference number: 116727

Headteacher: Mr D G Whittington

Reporting inspector: Mr S Hill
21277

Dates of inspection: 16th - 19th June 2003

Inspection number: 247676

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

© Crown copyright 2003

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:	First
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Tennyson Road Headless Cross Redditch
Postcode:	B97 5BL
Telephone number:	01527 543 187
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr G Hook
Date of previous inspection:	February 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21277	Steve Hill	Registered inspector	History, Art and Design Educational Inclusion	What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What the school should do to improve further.
19361	Keith Ross	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
20003	Suzi Metcalfe	Team inspector	English, Music, Religious Education, English as an additional language	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
12301	Joan Boden	Team inspector	Foundation Stage, Design and Technology	
18201	Margaret Danby	Team inspector	Mathematics, Information and Communication Technology	How good are curricular and other opportunities?
22729	Bob Arnold	Team inspector	Science, Physical Education, Geography, Special Educational Needs.	

The inspection contractor was:

Evenlode Associates Ltd
6 Abbey Close
Alcester
Warwickshire
B49 5QW

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 ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	12
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	13
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	15
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	16
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	17
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	20
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	21
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	26

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This is a large first school, which caters for 420 boys and girls aged from four to nine. All but five pupils have English as a mother tongue, and just two are at an early stage of learning English. Most pupils are of white, British heritage, with about five per cent coming from a range of other backgrounds. The number of pupils with special educational needs is low, at about seven per cent. They have a range of needs including physical, emotional and behavioural, and moderate learning difficulties. Pupils' social circumstances are generally better than average and only a few pupils are entitled to free school meals (under four per cent). Pupils' attainment when they enter reception covers a wide range, and varies from year to year, but overall is above average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The Vaynor is a thriving community where pupils enjoy school, behave well and take a pride in their achievements. Pupils' achievement is sound overall, and the school obtains good standards in English and mathematics, after a slow start in the foundation stage. In many lessons, pupils make good progress because of good teaching, and in most other lessons teaching is satisfactory. The management of the school has some strengths but there are weaknesses in how the school checks up on how pupils are getting on, to help them improve. Overall, the school gives sound value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils achieve good standards in English, mathematics, art and design, and physical education by Year 4.
- Standards are good in reading and mathematics by Year 2.
- There is much good teaching in the school, particularly in Years 3 and 4.
- Good provision is made for pupils' moral and social development.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to school, form good relationships, and behave well.
- Relationships with parents are good.

What could be improved

- Subject leaders' roles in monitoring and improving standards could be better.
- Provision in the foundation stage has weaknesses.
- The match of work to pupils' individual needs is not consistent.
- Standards are too low in information and communications technology because equipment is inadequate.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. Standards, while showing some variation, have generally been maintained, and the quality of teaching has improved. Many of the key issues identified in the last report have been addressed, but there is still need to improve the involvement of subject leaders in monitoring standards, and to match work more consistently to pupils' needs, particularly in the reception classes.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools		similar schools	
	2000	2001	2002	2002
reading	A	A	B	C
writing	A	A	B	C
mathematics	A	A	A	A

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The school generally attains above average results in all three areas, and does particularly well in mathematics. Results have varied from year to year, usually because of the variation in the abilities of the different cohorts, and were lower than usual in 2002. Compared to similar schools, the results were still high in mathematics, but were only average in reading and writing. Provisional results for 2003 show an apparent upturn, but there are no national results yet available with which to make comparisons. Inspection evidence shows that standards for seven-year-olds are good in reading and mathematics, and are satisfactory in other subject areas, except in information and communication technology (ICT), where they are too low. At the age of nine, standards are above the national expectations in English (including reading and writing), mathematics, art and design, and in physical education. Standards are satisfactory in most other subjects, but are still too low in ICT.

At the Foundation Stage (in the reception classes) standards are broadly average, and the majority of children will meet the expected standards (the early learning goals) by the time they get to Year 1. However, in the light of their above-average standards when they start school, this represents inadequate progress. This is because of weaknesses in provision in the reception classes.

Pupils' achievement in the school as a whole is satisfactory, including that of boys and girls, pupils with special educational needs, those from different ethnic minorities, and those for whom English is not their mother tongue.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils enjoy coming to school, take a genuine interest in their work, and take a pride in their achievements.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good overall, although occasionally this lapses in a few lessons.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils form good relationships with each other and with adults in the school. Older pupils show a real concern for their younger schoolmates.
Attendance	Satisfactory.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 4
Quality of teaching	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Good

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

Teaching is satisfactory overall. The management of pupils is good throughout, and is based on positive relationships and well-established routines, so that pupils behave well, and are keen to succeed with their work. In the reception classes, teaching is variable, ranging from very good to unsatisfactory. When teachers work with the whole class or with a group, then children make sound, and sometimes good, progress. However, too often the work which pupils are given to work on independently is not challenging, so their progress is inadequate. From Years 1 to 4 teaching ranges from excellent to unsatisfactory, with the majority of lessons being good, and with a higher proportion of very good teaching in Years 3 and 4. The teaching of English and mathematics, including the basic skills of literacy and numeracy, is good in all four year-groups. The teaching of science is a relative weakness. In the better lessons, a strong feature is the way in which teachers carefully match work to the needs of individual pupils, so that they all make good progress. Similarly, many of the better lessons are characterised by a brisk pace, so that pupils' interest is held, and a lot of ground is covered in each lesson. In weaker lessons, although pupils who struggle with their work are always helped to succeed, sometimes higher-flying pupils are given work that is not sufficiently challenging, so they do not achieve as much as they might. During the inspection, this

often caused lessons, which were otherwise good, to be only satisfactory overall. Similarly, too slow a pace in a few lessons meant that pupils lost interest, their concentration lapsed, and they did not make enough progress.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	This is generally broad and covers the national curriculum appropriately. Provision for extra-curricular activities is good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. Teachers ensure that pupils are able to cope in class, and specific help given in groups outside the classroom is good. As a result, pupils make good progress in these sessions, and sound progress overall. There are weaknesses in the way in which each pupil's progress is tracked as they progress through the school.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Although there are no established systems in place, the school responds quickly to the needs of pupils who arrive with little experience of English. They are helped to settle in quickly, and make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' social and moral development is good, and provision for their spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. Many aspects of pupils' social development are very good, but there is not enough provision made for them to take responsibility for their own learning. There is a need to give pupils a better understanding of the range of cultures in current British society. The school has not yet established a formal racial inclusion policy.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Staff are very caring towards their pupils, and care for their general well-being effectively. Child protection procedures are good. There is a need to update and to formalise some procedures to promote pupils' health and safety. Procedures to assess how well pupils are doing are satisfactory, but too little use is made of the results of assessments to improve provision.

The school works well in partnership with parents.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The senior staff give a clear lead to colleagues. The headteacher has a good overview of teaching, but no-one in the school has a sufficiently detailed and accurate picture of standards in individual subjects. Subject leaders provide useful help to colleagues in establishing an appropriate curriculum, but are insufficiently involved in monitoring standards. Year group co-ordinators are successful in ensuring equal coverage of the curriculum in the parallel classes, through joint planning.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. They are supportive, but their overview of standards and the curriculum is patchy. Several statutory requirements are not being met.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Unsatisfactory. The school tracks standards in English and mathematics through a variety of assessment information, but has no clear overview of standards in most other subjects.
The strategic use of	Resources, accommodation and staffing are generally satisfactory, and

resources	sound use is made of them to promote pupils' education. There are insufficient resources for ICT, and this largely accounts for the low standards in the subject. The school makes appropriate use of the principles of "best value".
-----------	---

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • Behaviour is good. • Teaching is good. • Children are expected to work hard and do their best. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities outside lessons. • The extent to which the school works with parents. • The amount of homework that children get. • The information about how their children are getting on.

The team largely support parents' positive views but, although there is much good teaching in the school, teaching is only satisfactory overall. The range of activities outside lessons is good, as is the information provided about how pupils are getting on. Homework is satisfactory. There is scope for the school to be more pro-active in seeking parents' views about aspects of school life.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. During their time in school pupils' achievements are satisfactory. By the time they leave they attain good standards in English, mathematics, art and design and physical education. In other subjects their standards are in line with expectations, except in information and communication technology (ICT), where standards are too low. Pupils' progress during their time in school varies between year groups and between subjects. The results of statutory assessments at age seven, and of the standardised assessments for mathematics and English undertaken at age nine, broadly support this picture. Although the picture has changed from subject to subject, overall standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
2. In the foundation stage, children start with a broad range of attainment, and the proportion of high fliers and those who struggle with their work varies from year to year. However, the school's assessment information over several years, which is based on the local authority's "baseline" procedures, confirms that attainment overall is somewhat above average when children start in reception. During their time in the reception classes, they make inadequate progress overall and have not done as well as might be expected by the time they go into Year 1. This is largely because of weaknesses in the provision. Work that is planned for individual children does not take sufficient account of what they can already do. As a result, too often children have work that is too easy and they do not make the progress of which they are capable. In addition, when children work in groups, some groups get far too little attention from adults and many opportunities to intervene to help them learn are lost. For many, this means they do not make sufficient progress in these sessions. When pupils work directly with adults they make better progress and, over the course of their time in reception, most pupils attain the expected standards (the early learning goals) in most areas of learning and a few exceed this level. The exception is in their creative learning, where standards are too low.
3. Progress through the rest of the school is better, although it varies between subjects. In reading, pupils do well and attain good standards across the school. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. Better direct teaching of reading, the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, and a better involvement of parents in supporting their children's reading all contribute to this.
4. Standards in mathematics are also good at each key stage, largely as a result of good teaching. The setting of pupils for mathematics lessons in Years 3 and 4 is largely successful, particularly in challenging the top sets to attain high standards, and in giving good support to pupils in the lower sets to make progress to the best of their ability. Pupils' written work suggests that progress is somewhat slower, although still satisfactory, in the next-to-top sets.
5. Attainment in science is only satisfactory, despite largely being taught by the same teachers who enable pupils to make good progress in English and mathematics. This is because the work in science is not sufficiently planned to take account of pupils' different abilities. In addition, the work is far too directed, with pupils given very little opportunity to make their own decisions when they do experiments. A similar situation prevails in design and technology, where despite many elements of teaching being good, pupils too often do not have the opportunity to contribute their own ideas when planning what to make. Too often, they end up making a range of products to the same design. In ICT, standards are below expectations because there is not enough equipment for pupils to practise what they are taught and to consolidate their skills and understanding.
6. Standards in art and design are in line with expectations at Year 2 and above expectations by Year 4, largely because of good teaching, and a broad and interesting curriculum. In physical

education standards are also in line with expectations at Year 2 and above expectations by Year 4. A major factor of the good standards for older pupils is the contribution of the co-ordinator. In other subjects of the National Curriculum, standards are in line with expectations throughout the school. Standards in religious education meet the requirements of the agreed syllabus in Years 2 and 4.

7. Pupils who have special needs make similar progress to their classmates in the various subjects, because teachers are careful to give them extra help when it is needed. Their achievement is satisfactory. In literacy and numeracy achievement is better due to the organisation and curriculum content. Tasks in other subjects are not targeted towards the lower ability pupils and often require high adult input.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. At the time of the previous inspection pupils were judged to have very good and positive attitudes to the school and their learning. Their behaviour in and around the school was good and relationships were positive. The school has been able to maintain and build upon these good findings. Pupils' attitudes are good. Parents agree that their children enjoy coming to school and develop positive attitudes to their learning. This makes a strong contribution to the good progress they make and the standards they reach. Children show a good interest and involvement in the range of activities available, are tolerant toward others and value all achievements, their own and others.
9. Pupils respond well to the good teaching that helps them to clearly understand their tasks. They know that teachers have high expectations that they will try hard at all they are asked to do. In such lessons they work quickly and independently with high levels of concentration. They enjoy getting answers right during discussion sessions. All but the very few who have challenging behaviour concentrate well and this enables them to stay on task to the end. Those with behaviour problems are encouraged by the support from staff to become interested and involved with activities. In most cases they have a curriculum and activities specially adapted to help them do so. This has a positive effect on learning. Because teachers share the lesson focus with pupils, pupils know what they are learning about and they respond in a positive and mature way, paying good attention to their work. Very occasionally, behaviour lapses when the pace of the lesson is too slow, and pupils become distracted and do not concentrate sufficiently.
10. Most pupils behave well and are respectful and considerate towards all the adults who support them in and out of class. With good teacher role models they carry this respect over to each other. Through their work in personal, social and emotional development and the careful supporting of their behaviour, pupils quickly learn what is acceptable behaviour. Pupils are young but the acceptance of their responsibility for their actions is satisfactory and they are carefully guided towards tolerance and acceptance that sharing and supporting each other is a worthwhile aim. Parents confirm that this is consistent across the school. As a result pupils learn to take turns and share, and most resolve any differences without using physical force or angry words.
11. Relationships are good overall. Most children have good relationships with members of staff. They are generally polite and courteous and can be relied upon to carry out jobs without prompting. Older pupils, for instance, tidy up after assemblies, wheeling the piano out of the way, raising the screen and moving the overhead projector so that the hall is ready for physical education or lunch. Younger pupils help tidy after lessons, collecting papers, books and other resources and putting them into the correct trays for the teacher. At breaks and lunchtime the older and bigger take care of the younger, especially in the busy playgrounds. Year 4 pupils deliver milk to the rest of the school. All pupils are polite and helpful to visitors, ensuring that they know where they are going. The staff know pupils well and understand their needs. As a result, the children are growing in confidence and develop self-assurance, taking the initiative well when they have the opportunity. Pupils give respect to the school building and take good care of resources and school property.

Pupils are aware of differences within their classes, differences of ethnicity, language, gender and ability, but they generally work happily together, learning naturally about each other's points of view.

12. Pupils with special educational needs are fully accepted into the life of the school. Their peers often respect their views. Their behaviour and their attitudes to learning are good. They are keen to attend and work hard once there. They display positive attitudes towards their work and the staff. They are friendly towards visitors and readily willing to share their learning and successes with others. They are proud of the progress they make and value the involvement in the wider community of the school. When learning literacy skills a Year 3 group displayed genuine pleasure in the success that they were having.
13. On the evidence available attendance is to be broadly in line with the national average, and the level of unauthorised absence is below the national average. Most pupils are punctual, but a small number are late for the beginning of school and miss the start of lessons.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

14. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Teaching and non-teaching staff have positive relationships with pupils and value them as people. Pupils know this and respond well, being keen to succeed and to please their teachers. These good relationships strongly support the management of pupils, which is good throughout. Good routines are established and reinforced, so pupils know what is expected of them. As a result, classrooms are calm and orderly, little time is wasted in changing from one activity to another, for example, and pupils' behaviour is good.
15. In the reception classes, teaching is variable, ranging from very good to unsatisfactory. When teachers work with the whole class or with a group, then children make sound, and sometimes good, progress. They question children well to draw out their ideas, and children contribute willingly. A range of interesting activities is usually prepared for these sessions, and children work hard. Although teachers have a sound grasp of different children's attainment, they do not make enough use of this knowledge to plan work. Too often, all children are given the same tasks regardless of their ability, and higher attaining pupils, in particular, make insufficient progress. This is a particular problem with the work which children are given to tackle independently. In addition, in these sessions too many opportunities to develop pupils' understanding are lost, because there is little or no purposeful intervention from adults.
16. From Years 1 to 4 teaching ranges from excellent to unsatisfactory, with the majority of lessons being good and with a higher proportion of very good teaching in Years 3 and 4. Teachers give clear explanations in their lessons and as a result pupils' understanding is developed systematically. Good use is made of questioning to get pupils to explain their thinking, and this has two-fold benefits. Firstly, it gives the teacher a good idea of how well pupils have grasped ideas and enables them to give extra help or to correct misconceptions. It is also very beneficial in developing pupils' speaking and listening skills. This is done particularly well in literacy and numeracy lessons, but also carries over into other subjects where pupils' good skills support their learning across the curriculum, for example in physical education and art and design.
17. Teaching in English and mathematics is good. Good use is made of the literacy and numeracy strategies to support planning and organisation. In English, teaching is challenging and teachers are clear about what pupils are to learn. They share this with pupils, so that they have a clear idea of what is expected. In mathematics, basic skills are taught well and pupils are given clear specific strategies to tackle different kinds of problem, such as using "near-doubles" in addition. Teachers encourage pupils to think through and explain how they have done a particular piece of work, rather than applying rules mindlessly, and this strongly supports their understanding.

18. The teaching of science, while satisfactory, is a relative weakness. Classroom management, clear explanations and some good questioning are usually strengths. However, in most lessons, no attempt is made to match work to the different needs of different pupils. Teachers do not sufficiently encourage pupils' independence in planning and carrying out investigations. For example, in a science lesson which otherwise had many good features, pupils knew that they should use the same amount of soil in each pot when investigating the growth of seeds, because of the teacher's careful explanations. However, they did not have the opportunity to decide how much soil to use, how much water to put on the plants, or have a range of different pots, so they could see that this was an important variable.
19. In the better lessons, a strong feature is the way in which teachers carefully match work to the needs of individual pupils, so that they all make good progress. This was a feature of a very good mathematics lesson in Year 4, for example. The teacher gave different groups the same basic open-ended task, but pupils who were more confident had to use bigger numbers. During the lesson, the teacher carefully monitored how pupils were getting on, giving help where it was needed and questioning pupils to ensure they knew what they were doing. When he saw that pupils were succeeding easily, he modified his instructions so that they used larger numbers. When they struggled, he suggested that they try with smaller figures. As a result, they all succeeded at a level which was challenging, but within their compass. Conversely, in weaker lessons, although pupils who struggle with their work are always helped to succeed, sometimes higher-flying pupils are given work that is not sufficiently challenging, so they do not achieve as much as they might. During the inspection, this often caused lessons, which were otherwise good, to be only satisfactory overall.
20. Many of the better lessons are characterised by a brisk pace, so that pupils' interest is held, and a lot of ground is covered in each lesson. This was the case in a mathematics lesson with the lowest set in Year 4. The lesson whizzed along, with new and varied tasks being introduced as the lesson progressed, so that pupils' interest was sustained. Anyone whose concentration tended to drift was instantly but gently reminded to get on, and if anyone struggled, they were given immediate help to think through their ideas and succeed. As a result, pupils learned a lot, and greatly improved their skills and understanding of division and remainders. Conversely, too slow a pace in a few lessons meant that pupils lost interest, their concentration lapsed, and they did not make enough progress.
21. The teaching of pupils with special needs is satisfactory. Grouping of pupils in literacy and numeracy lessons is effective, especially when an adult supports less able pupils. The teaching in small groups when pupils get specific extra help is good, and helps them develop their basic skills well. In class, teachers generally monitor pupils who struggle well, so that they provide extra help and support when it is needed, and pupils are rarely left floundering. However, teachers rarely refer to pupils' individual education plans in planning lessons. The targets in these plans are not always appropriate to the needs of individual pupils and some are not sufficiently specific or concise. There is some good group work being undertaken by teaching assistants, linked to individual education plans, in learning literacy skills. Pupils' involvement in the setting of the targets on individual education plans is minimal. They do not have a copy of the targets they are working towards and do not know if they are making progress towards achieving them. Teachers' knowledge of their less able pupils is good, but this is not always used when considering the next stages of development included in the individual education plans.

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

22. The school provides a satisfactory curriculum overall. There are particular strengths in the provision for teaching literacy and numeracy skills, and in mathematics, art and design, physical education, especially games, and in the extra-curricular opportunities provided. Provision for

physical development in the Foundation Stage and for ICT throughout the school is weak because there are not enough resources to deliver the curriculum effectively and this inhibits pupils' achievement. The statutory curriculum for design and technology in Years 3 and 4 is not yet fully in place and, as a result, pupils make barely adequate progress. The links the school has with its partner institutions are good and make a valuable contribution to the effectiveness of the curriculum.

23. The effectiveness of the school's strategies for teaching literacy are good, especially for older pupils and many opportunities are provided for pupils to speak, listen, read and write in a range of situations for instance in history and geography. Opportunities for writing at length are good, often taking a historical topic or religious education theme. The school has been careful to ensure that literacy has not replaced English, so the development of speaking and listening skills are well supported.
24. The school succeeds in making the curriculum broad and relevant to all its pupils and planning cross-curricular topics jointly in year groups contributes to this. Curriculum planning effectively guides teaching and is based on national guidance from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and the Locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education. Personal, social and health education, including sex, relationship and drugs education are satisfactorily covered. Although there is no specific programme for citizenship, it is covered appropriately within other aspects of the curriculum. Visits and visitors make a useful contribution to learning.
25. A minority of parents voiced concern about a perceived lack of extra-curricular opportunities, especially for younger pupils. Inspectors judge that the range of extra-curricular activities is good and caters for pupils with interests in sports, dance, singing, playing instruments and engineering. While most clubs are open to pupils in Years 3 and 4, younger pupils can participate in dance and recorder activities. The clubs are popular and are well attended.
26. Provision for special educational needs and equality of opportunity in the curriculum is satisfactory. The school gives satisfactory attention to ensuring that the curriculum is accessible to all pupils regardless of their gender, race, background or ability. The school is committed to inclusion for all. There is an expectation that all pupils should have full access to all activities. This was well illustrated during a physical education where pupils' with complex special educational needs took a full part in the lesson, well supported by learning assistants. Disabilities are treated with respect by both staff and pupils. The curriculum is sufficiently flexible to enable all pupils to make satisfactory progress and take a full part in all the school has to offer through provision of additional literacy teaching.
27. The provision for pupils whose mother tongue is not English is good. Each child undertakes a range of assessments to gauge their knowledge and understanding of English using the local authority fluency of English tables. From these a programme of study to integrate the pupils into their classes, the provision of good role models from among the school pupils and labels and signs in home languages are provided as necessary. Teachers are well aware of individual's needs and ensure work is adapted to meet them. Teaching and support staff with particular skills in developing knowledge and understanding of English such as those working the Early and Additional literacy strategies give good in class support as necessary. Programmes of study are subject to frequent review. The local authority provides resources in home languages as necessary. Although the school has no formal strategies in written form, the practice to support learning is good overall.
28. The school has good links with partner institutions and satisfactory links with the community. Strong links with the middle school on the same site result in the sharing of facilities and equipment and many opportunities for liaison and co-operation. Liaison between schools in the area also results in opportunities for work experience and the sharing of good practice, which benefits both pupils' learning and teachers' professional development.

29. Various visitors and guest speakers, for example from the Salvation Army and local churches, enhance pupils' opportunities to learn about the wider world and benefits their religious education. The school makes effective use of the local community. For example, pupils visit the local post office and park as part of their studies.
30. Provision for the pupils' personal development is satisfactory overall. Good provision is made for their moral and social development with satisfactory provision for their spiritual and cultural development.
31. Good relationships, based on caring for each other as individuals is at the heart of the provision and the personal, social and health education work in the school provides pupils with many good opportunities to discuss issues and to learn the rules for community living. Although there is no school council, pupils are involved with drawing up class rules in many classes and know the difference between right and wrong. They are taught to value themselves and each other and to understand and follow the rules that govern the school community. For many pupils what they see and hear in the outside world and the expectations within the school can seem to conflict, especially when the images are on the television, computer screens and electronic games. The school helps them to understand and aim towards high standards of behaviour and positive attitudes and relationships.
32. Assemblies and class discussions place these standards into a spiritual context. Unfortunately, although assembly leaders use prayer to focus pupils on the assembly theme, frequently pupils lack the opportunity to reflect in silence. Science, art, music and geography give pupils opportunities to appreciate the natural and man-made world. Through growing plants and seeds; looking at minibeasts and their habitats; listening to music and painting, writing or discussing the feelings generated; examining artefacts such as their teacher's family Bibles along with the opportunity to think of special people and items in their own lives, pupils have a satisfactory range of opportunities to develop aesthetic appreciation. However, there is no discrete planning for these occasions within the curriculum and opportunities to develop a spiritual atmosphere are not always taken.
33. The provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory, but weaker for preparing them for life in a multicultural society. Periods of British history, such as the Victorians, are studied but the development of historical research skills using the history of different cultures, especially those of children within the school from different ethnic backgrounds, is not undertaken. In geography Kenya is the focus, but the opportunity to consider the climate, resources and location on maps and globes, of countries in the news media does not occur. Even religious education, being focused on the two faiths of Judaism and Hinduism along with Christianity, does not help pupils develop their knowledge of the range of other cultures and faiths in Britain. Few pupils know a member of the Jewish or Hindu faith, but the school community does include pupils from a Muslim background. The library, the literacy strategy, music and art give satisfactory support to pupils multicultural development in that a range of stories, poetry, art and music from around the world are introduced to pupils in lessons, but the school could do more.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

34. Overall, the quality of pastoral support and guidance is satisfactory. There are a number of positive factors. The school provides good practical day-to-day care and parents are appreciative of the care and support provided. Procedures for child protection are good and meet statutory requirements. There is a good policy and procedures are communicated to staff effectively. They are aware of their responsibilities if they feel a child is at risk. First aid procedures are implemented very well. Comprehensive instructions are effectively communicated to staff via the

staff handbook. There are three trained first-aiders and parents are informed of any injury that may require further monitoring.

35. Some aspects of the overall good standards of pastoral support and guidance identified in the previous report have not been maintained, however. There are some weaknesses, and some things need to be more formalised, and to be recorded more systematically. For example, risk assessment (which is a statutory responsibility) needs updating. The current documentation does not show a full and accurate awareness of any potential risks to pupils' safety either in school or when out on visits. Fire drills are carried out termly but not documented. Procedures to report health and safety concerns and record any remedial action taken need to be formalised. Also, the school needs to ensure that there are regular annual safety checks of portable electric equipment.
36. The induction arrangements for children starting school are very good, and ensure that they settle quickly and enjoy coming to school. A good programme is in place to ease pupils' transfer to middle school.
37. Overall, the school has good arrangements for overseeing and promoting regular attendance. Any individual problems are quickly picked up and addressed. However, there have been inaccuracies in the total attendance figures that the school has produced in the past. This was because of a technical error in the use of computer software, which the school has now rectified. Teachers use the registration period well to get the day off to a calm and friendly start. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and eliminating oppressive behaviour are satisfactory. Teachers are good role models. Rules, sanctions and rewards are not excessively formal but pupils are expected to listen. Teachers and other staff are sensitive to pupils' needs and monitor their personal development satisfactorily.
38. Support for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. The major strengths are the good support given by teachers to individuals in lessons, and the good quality teaching given when pupils work in small groups. All pupils who have special educational needs have individual education plans, which are reviewed half-yearly. However, the quality of targets in these plans is variable, generally unsatisfactory and does not provide a way of tracking progress. They require matching more closely to what pupils need to do to improve, with review comments that refer specifically to what has been achieved. Some targets are repeated and those set at Annual Reviews are not always included on the individual education plans. Some pupils have more than one individual education plan and consequently are working towards too many targets at any one time. Pupils do not know their targets or get copies and are not often involved in setting them. Targets are mostly inaccessible to pupils because of the vocabulary used. Few pupils attend their Annual Reviews and this further limits their access to their targets and the involvement with them. Annual reviews are carried out and involve parents appropriately. All statutory requirements for special educational needs pupils are completed. The identification of pupils with special educational needs is appropriate and this is confirmed by external local authority monitoring.
39. The school's procedures for assessment, to check how well pupils are doing, are satisfactory overall, but the use made of the data obtained is unsatisfactory. Teachers in the foundation stage use baseline assessments to establish the level of children's attainments on entry to reception. However, they do not make enough use of the information they gain from these assessments to plan the next stages of learning. In Key Stages 1 and 2, the school has recently introduced tracking systems that are generally satisfactory. However, the inconsistent approach, which follows from the teachers being able to choose which system they will use, means that pupils' progress cannot be tracked successfully from year to year.
40. Information gained from analysis of test results at the end of Key Stage 1 is used well in mathematics to set pupils by ability in Key Stage 2. This benefits the pupils because it narrows the ability range for which teachers have to plan, and means that they can give more intensive support

to individual pupils. Not enough use is made of analyses of English and science tests and assessments to plan further learning.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

41. The school has a good partnership with parents. Overall this is a similar picture to that found at the time of the previous inspection. The vast majority of parents hold positive views of the school and are pleased with what it provides for their children. They speak highly of the care and support provided by teaching staff and feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or any problems. Parents feel there have been improvements in recent years at the school. These include more after school activities and a choir. They also believe that the school has maintained good standards and its good reputation in the community. They are optimistic about the school's future.
42. Parents of pupils who have special educational needs are informed each time the targets on individual education plans change. There are good links with local authority support services and these are used appropriately by the school when pupils' individual needs cannot be fully supported.
43. The quality of information provided for parents, particularly about pupils' progress, is satisfactory overall. Suitable newsletters and general correspondence, written in an appropriately friendly style, are sent home frequently. These keep parents informed on such matters as important dates in the school's year, activities of the engineering club, and the various charities the school supports.
44. The governors' annual report contains useful information about the work of the school and the governing body. However, pupils' attendance figures shown are incorrect. The prospectus provides parents with a practical insight into many aspects of the school's work including very detailed information on special needs support and the school's assessment practice. Pupils' annual reports are satisfactory overall and meet statutory requirements.
45. The impact of parents' involvement in the work of the school and their contribution to their children's learning at school and at home is satisfactory overall. The school tries to involve parents in their children's learning. For example, the school recently ran a "keeping up with the children" course that 13 parents attended. This was judged a success by all concerned and resulted in some parents making extra effort to support their children's mathematics homework. A few parents support learning in other ways, for example by assisting in classrooms and with other various activities. Additionally, the school values the support provided by the parents teacher association (PTA). A small but dedicated and active committee organises a range of social and fund-raising events, which are well supported by parents. The monies raised make a significant and highly valued contribution to school resources, which are of benefit to the pupils.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

46. The headteacher is well respected by the school community and provides a clear direction to the school's work. He has been particularly successful in establishing a positive ethos in the school, and in leading a team who work well together to maintain and enhance this. The common approach, based on positive relationships and clear expectations, has ensured that pupils enjoy school, behave well, and take a pride in their achievements because they know their contributions are valued. A parent told inspectors that the school "feels like a small school, with a family atmosphere, even though it is so big." This positive atmosphere supports pupils' progress and the standards they attain.
47. The well-established deputy head plays a significant part in supporting the head in establishing this ethos. In the last few months, in the light of the head's impending retirement, he has been

undertaking a “shadowing” role across the full spectrum of the headteacher’s work, in order to support continuity when the new head starts in September.

48. The recently appointed second deputy plays a major part in overseeing the work in the younger classes, including in reception. He has already identified many of the changes that need to be made in the foundation stage, and has been working with the reception staff on this. He himself is a very skilled early years teacher, whose practice provides a very good role model for colleagues. In addition, during the weeks leading up to the national assessments at age seven, he worked intensively with a group of pupils in Year 2 to help them improve their writing, which had been identified as a relative weakness for higher attainers. This was very effective, as was shown in the higher number of pupils gaining good results in writing, and in the good progress in writing skills which can be seen in these pupils’ work.
49. The school’s management systems are complex and combine significant strengths with some important weaknesses. A system of year group co-ordinators is very well established, and these teachers play a major part in supporting the planning of lessons. This has been very successful in ensuring that the pupils in the three parallel classes in each year group receive equivalent experiences, and cover the same curriculum. It also means that the three teachers involved in each year group can share expertise, and support each other in their preparation.
50. An unfortunate side effect of this system has been the relative marginalisation of the subject leaders. There are leaders appointed for each subject, and for some subjects two members of staff share this role. They are largely effective in establishing a curriculum plan that ensures the national curriculum is covered, and that what is taught builds on what has been taught in previous terms and weeks. They ensure that this happens by monitoring teachers’ planning in the different classes.
51. However, most subject leaders are not involved in monitoring the delivery of this planning. They seldom have the opportunity to check up on the quality of teaching in their colleagues’ classes. There is no systematic way for them to gain a detailed overview of the quality of work that is done in classes across the school. Although most have a sound idea of the work within their own year group, through the joint planning and evaluation led by the year group co-ordinators, many have too limited a knowledge of the quality of pupils’ work and the standards achieved in other year groups in the school. This means that they are unable to assess with sufficient rigour the strengths and weaknesses in their subject, and this limits their ability to provide help and advice to colleagues, in order to help them raise standards.
52. The headteacher has a good overall view of the quality of his colleagues’ teaching skills through his monitoring of lessons across the school. However, this does not extend to a clear, detailed overview of standards in each subject, or of the specific strengths and weaknesses in the teaching of particular subjects. This has meant that nobody has identified the relatively weak teaching of science, for example, by teachers whose teaching of English and mathematics is of a much better standard. No-one has addressed this issue, because neither the science co-ordinator, nor the senior management team were aware of it.
53. The governors try hard to be supportive and have put some promising systems into place to help their work. These vary in their effectiveness. For example, the system of having a governor to link to each subject co-ordinator can be effective but the weaknesses in co-ordinators’ monitoring means that it can only have limited accuracy. In addition, it depends too much on the individual governors having sufficient time to spend in school. As a result, the literacy governor is relatively well informed, for example, but the governors for some other subjects have very little information about strengths and weaknesses. Consequently, the governing body has an insufficiently clear view of the school’s strengths and weaknesses. This aspect of their work is unsatisfactory. The governors have done a good job in taking a strategic view of the school’s needs in appointing a new headteacher, for example going to see the prospective candidates in their own schools to help

assess their suitability. Governors also need to ensure that a number of the school's statutory responsibilities are met.

54. Financial management is satisfactory and the last auditors' report identified only minor issues. The governors are suitably involved in financial planning, which is appropriately matched to the school's priorities for development. Sound use is made of specific funding, such as that for special educational needs. The school maintains a slightly higher-than-average financial reserve. This is because it acts as its own insurer for staff absence, and if it were to take out the Local Authority's insurance plan, its financial reserves would be below five per cent.
55. The special educational needs co-ordinator is hard working and enthusiastic and provides valued leadership. She monitors and oversees individual education plans and has monitored the teachers and teaching assistants who delivery the individual or small group tuition. Consequently, she has good information regarding the effectiveness of special educational needs provision. All staff are very aware of and understand the system for identifying pupils with special educational needs. Teaching assistants provide a valuable and valued resource helping special educational needs pupils to achieve. There is a satisfactory level of support for special educational needs pupils. However, there is currently no additional in-class support for special educational needs pupils in years 3 and 4. The school is in breach of statutory regulations by not having an Access Plan.
56. There is a suitable match of teaching and non-teaching staff to meet the needs of the curriculum throughout the school. Procedures for the induction of staff new to the school are satisfactory overall. Newly qualified teachers receive suitable support from year group leaders, which enables them to settle into the school's routines and plan their lessons in accordance with school procedures. Teaching assistants have regular meetings with a member of the senior management team. Sound procedures for performance management are in place. All the teaching staff have agreed targets, and their progress towards these targets is monitored through formal lesson observations. In the foundation stage there is no evidence that this is helping to move the school forward because each of the three class teachers has a different monitor and there is no common ground with regard to the targets.
57. Overall resources to support teaching and learning are satisfactory. The major exception is in information and communication technology where they are unsatisfactory and have a negative impact on standards. There are also an insufficient range of resources in design and technology and a lack of large apparatus in the foundation stage that inhibits pupils' physical development. Resources in mathematics are good and contribute effectively to the good standards achieved by pupils in that subject.
58. Accommodation is satisfactory overall. The hall, classrooms and joint activity areas provide good space for lesson activities and wall displays enhance the environment and support learning. Outdoors there is sufficient hard play space and arrangements with the neighbouring middle school allow use of the large playing field for sports activities. The school has recently refurbished a courtyard area, which now supports work on rainforests, but the remainder of the outdoor space does not present a stimulating environment and contributes little to learning other than in physical education. For example, the outdoor play space for foundation stage pupils has no markings to stimulate or support play activities. The few planters and flowerbeds around the school are not well maintained. The split-level buildings are accessed via many sets of steps, both inside and outdoors, but the school does not yet have a disability access plan.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

59. In order to build on the school's strengths, the governors and staff should:-

- (1) Improve standards and monitoring in the different subjects (paragraphs 49, 50, 51, 52) by
 - a. Ensuring that the subject leaders have systematic opportunities to get a clear understanding of what teaching and standards are like in different year groups and classes.
 - b. Keeping appropriate records of what they find out, and sharing any issues with colleagues.
 - c. Working with colleagues to share expertise and good practice, and to address any shortcomings which are identified.
- (2) Improve provision in the reception classes (paragraphs 60 - 82) by
 - a. Ensuring that work is planned that is more accurately matched to the different needs of different children.
 - b. Ensuring that "free choice" activities are more meaningful, and that their purpose is clear.
 - c. Making better use of teaching assistants by ensuring they are better briefed.
 - d. Building on the expertise and the example of good practice provided by the lower school co-ordinator.
 - e. Providing more equipment for children to develop their gross motor control.
- (3) Improve the consistency of the match of work to pupils' needs, particularly higher attainers, (paragraphs 15, 18, 19, 21) by drawing on the examples of good practice already present in the school, for example in English and mathematics.
- (4) Improve standards in ICT (paragraphs 119 - 126) by
 - a. Buying more and better equipment so that pupils have more chances to practise their skills, and teachers are better able to show pupils what they should be doing.
 - b. Having a clearer overall strategic plan for the subject, building on (1) above.

In addition the governors should consider including the following more minor issues in their action plan.

- A. Ensure that all statutory requirements are met. (paragraphs 35, 53, 55)
- B. Make better provision for pupils to be independent in their learning, particularly in science and in design and technology (paragraphs 99, 108, 110)
- C. Give pupils more opportunities to learn about the variety of cultures in contemporary British society. (paragraph 33)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	62
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	37

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	14	17	26	4	0	0
Percentage	2	23	27	42	6	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 – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	420
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	15

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	27

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	5

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	18
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.4
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
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)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	39	36	75

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	32	32	35
	Girls	32	34	34
	Total	64	66	69
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (92)	88(97)	92 (99)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	30	34	36
	Girls	32	32	33
	Total	62	66	69
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (91)	88(93)	92(90)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

*Ethnic background of pupils**Exclusions in the last school year*

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	398	1	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	14	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	5	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	2	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	1	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

Teachers and classes**Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y4**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	18.53
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.67
Average class size	28

Education support staff: YR – Y4

Total number of education support staff	17
Total aggregate hours worked per week	262

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2002 - 3
	£
Total income	832037
Total expenditure	877385
Expenditure per pupil	2055
Balance brought forward from previous year	159916
Balance carried forward to next year	114568

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	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	420
Number of questionnaires returned	110

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	58	39	0	3	0
My child is making good progress in school.	54	38	6	2	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	38	49	4	2	7
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	32	45	14	5	5
The teaching is good.	55	36	5	1	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	30	37	27	2	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	53	35	8	3	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	51	40	6	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	31	44	17	4	5
The school is well led and managed.	45	45	4	4	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	51	39	5	2	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	27	40	17	5	11

Other issues raised by parents

Some parents commented unfavourably about the upkeep of the school buildings and grounds. Several were unhappy about younger children not wearing “proper” PE kit in lessons.

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

60. There are good features in the provision for children in the reception classes, but overall it is unsatisfactory because of the weaknesses that prevent all the children from making satisfactory progress. Children start school with overall attainment that is above average for their age. By the end of their reception year, they reach the standards expected for their age in each of the areas of learning, except in their creative development. A small minority exceed the goals that children this age are expected to attain in reading and writing. This is in line with the findings of the last inspection.
61. The foundation stage curriculum does not meet the needs of the children adequately because the planning is weak. The teachers do not plan the activities well enough to ensure that they are challenging and will build on what the children already know and can do. Children do not have enough opportunities to make choices for themselves, or to develop their knowledge and skills through experimentation and exploration. Children with special needs make satisfactory progress because they are supported well. The large outdoor learning area is underdeveloped. There is a lack of suitable equipment to promote children's physical development and their knowledge and understanding of the world.
62. The quality of the teaching seen during the inspection varied between unsatisfactory and very good, but mainly it was satisfactory. The lower school co-ordinator is a very good practitioner. He has a good understanding of how very young children learn, and plans work appropriate to the needs of different abilities. However, although he is able to accelerate language and mathematical development in one class for part of the week, he does not have enough influence on the quality of teaching for the rest of the time. The overall impact of teaching on children's learning over time is unsatisfactory because of the weak planning and the teachers' generally low expectations. The work in children's folders shows that, for most of the time, children of all abilities do the same work. Teaching assistants are not always briefed well enough to enable them to support groups effectively.
63. The relationships between staff and parents are good. Parents are happy with the school and what it does for their children during their time in reception. Parents are welcomed into school to check how their children are doing, and several help with activities in the classrooms. This is much appreciated and reinforces the good relationships.
64. The foundation stage is not led and managed effectively. The year group leader is not in a position to improve the provision because she does not have a clear understanding of the areas of strength and weakness. The lower school co-ordinator has produced a suitable action plan, but he does not do any formal monitoring of teaching and learning to make sure that the actions identified are implemented in all the classes. As a result, the areas of weakness are not addressed.

Personal, social and emotional development

65. By the end of the reception year most children reach the standard expected for their age. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Relationships between adults and children are positive, and this helps the children to settle well into the routines of school life. The staff have high expectations of children's behaviour, although not all the teachers adopt a positive approach to encouraging good behaviour. Children usually behave well, but their behaviour deteriorates when teachers adopt a brusque and authoritative approach. Children get on well with each other and share and take turns when working or playing.
66. The children are keen to do everyday jobs such as taking the register to the secretary's office and

- they do this very sensibly. They are expected to look after their own needs and respond well to these expectations. Most are able to get themselves ready for physical activity sessions in the hall.
67. A weakness in the teaching is that teachers do not encourage the children to become independent and use their initiative in their learning. The opportunities for children to choose their own activities and initiate their own ideas are very limited. There is not enough adult interaction in some of the activities, such as role-play. As a result, children's progress in developing their imagination and extending their learning through play is limited. All the children are keen to engage each other and adults in conversation, and generally show courtesy when other children are sharing their views.

Communication, language and literacy

68. Children's overall attainment when they start in reception is above average. They do not achieve as well as they should because the quality of teaching in this area is unsatisfactory. By the end of their reception year, most children attain the standard expected for their age, with only a small minority going beyond this. Although teachers know individual children's capabilities, they plan timed activities with all the children doing the same work and starting at the same point. This means that those children who are capable of doing more are often not given the opportunity to do so, because they run out of time before they are challenged.
69. The way teachers promote children's language development varies between classes. While it is good in one class, it is barely satisfactory in the other two because the teachers do most of the talking and sometimes do not model good speaking skills. When adults interact with children, they tend to direct the activities rather than engaging the children in conversation by asking them, for example, to explain what they are doing or to comment on their work. Despite this, most children speak clearly and listen attentively most of the time. They listen particularly well to stories, which they enjoy. When the teaching does not engage their interest a small minority find it hard to listen without calling out.
70. The teaching of reading is satisfactory and most children make satisfactory progress. By the end of reception, most children recognise many familiar common words and the highest attainers are above average readers for their age. They can read simple books and retell stories, remembering the correct sequence of events. Teachers are good at stimulating children's interest in books through reading well-chosen stories in a lively manner. This makes the children want to learn to read for themselves. Children look for information in non-fiction books, but this is a directed activity using a small selection of books chosen by the teacher. Children do not have enough opportunity to choose to read and explore books independently during the day. Teachers have started to use some of the guided tasks in the national literacy strategy. While this approach is appropriate, a weakness is that the tasks do not always match accurately the needs of the children, particularly the higher attainers. This means that these children do not achieve as well as they might because they are not stretched.
71. The teaching of writing is good and the children make good progress. The teachers are good at showing the children how to write and encouraging them to understand the purpose of writing, for example to write their own books about sea creatures. All the children can write their own names and most can form letters correctly. The highest attainers can write simple sentences.

Mathematical development

72. Most children have reached the standard expected for their age, with a small minority doing better than expected. They do not all make the progress they should because the quality of teaching is unsatisfactory overall. Although there are some good features in the teaching, the planning is weak. As with literacy exercises, children of all abilities usually start from the same point. Those who could do more challenging work are not stretched and so do not achieve as well as they might. There is occasional variation when the lower school co-ordinator takes one class for part of the week.

73. Teachers take good opportunities to develop mathematical language in other lessons. In a physical activities session in the hall, for example, the children had their own spots to sit on. The teacher reinforced their understanding of positional language by asking them to move 'in front of', 'behind', 'across' etc. They showed a clear understanding of comparative terms when deciding whether the different sizes of balls were easier or harder to catch.
74. All the children can count at least to 20 and about half can count to 100. They develop their counting skills well through good practice sessions as they are having their milk. A small minority of higher attaining children can explain the information presented on a block graph in terms of how many children prefer different fruits. They talk about the proportions being 'more than' or 'less than'. They gain a good understanding of shape through well-planned activities that encourage them to think hard about the properties of the shapes. For example, they feel a shape inside a bag, describe its properties and name it. This makes learning fun and the children remember the shapes. A weakness in the provision for mathematical development is that there are no opportunities for children to explore and investigate for themselves. For example, they do not have ready access to sand and water activities, and the role-play area does not support mathematical development.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

75. Children's general knowledge and their understanding of the world are average for their age. The quality of teaching and the progress children make are unsatisfactory overall. Children could achieve much more if they were given the opportunities to do so. Teachers are good at extending children's knowledge in specific topic areas. For example, the focus during the inspection was on sea creatures. Teachers used a suitable range of resources and effective questioning to enable the children to learn the names and characteristics of many different sea creatures.
76. Children do not have enough opportunities to experiment and investigate for themselves. There is no opportunity for them to experiment with recycled materials, for example, to find the best ways of joining them together. Although equipment is available such as hole-punches, magnifiers and magnets children do not have enough independent access to it so that they can find out for themselves how things work. Although in one classroom there was a collection of sea-shells linked to the current topic, too little use is made of such collections to stimulate children's curiosity and encourage them to ask questions. When children are involved in independent activities there is not enough adult intervention to engage them in conversation and comment on what is happening and why. Most children can use a computer program effectively to reinforce their learning. For example, they used a program about sea creatures very confidently and competently.
77. Most children know where they live and can talk about the buildings in the area and what they are used for. They know, for example, that the post office sells stamps and that the church is 'where you go to pray'. They know that Christmas is Jesus' birthday, although they do not know the significance of Easter.

Physical development

78. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. The majority of children have reached the standard expected for their age. Overall, progress is satisfactory. Most children could develop at a faster rate if the provision for outdoor play was improved. There are not enough good quality resources to support children's physical development, for example in extending their large-scale movements such as climbing, swinging and balancing on large equipment. When children use the wheeled toys that are available they are largely unsupported. Teachers do not challenge them, for example, to extend their skills in steering and braking.

79. Children are developing their sense of space well. In physical activities in the hall teachers help them to become aware of others moving around them as they respond to instructions to move about. Most children have average skills in controlling their movements, although they all have difficulty in controlling their landings when they jump off apparatus. Most are confident in using the large apparatus, and those who are less confident are supported sensitively by support staff. This enables them to make good progress during lessons. Overall, children have average levels of dexterity in handling small objects. However, a small minority do not hold their pencils correctly, and this affects their writing. Teachers recognise this but do not always take the appropriate action. Children could achieve more if they had more opportunities to cut, draw and mould with different materials.

Creative development

80. Most children do not reach the standard expected for their age. They make unsatisfactory progress because the quality of teaching is unsatisfactory. There is not enough scope for them to develop their creative abilities. Teachers encourage them to take part in role-play. However, once the role-play area is set up, there is not enough adult intervention to help the children to play together adding their own ideas and extending their learning. The result is that they play in isolation, with very little communication between them.
81. Children do not have opportunities to develop their work independently, for example experimenting with different colours and making marks using different tools. The work they do is over-directed and gives them very limited opportunities to use and develop their own ideas. Teachers are good at teaching basic skills, such as applying a colour wash to represent the sea. However, once the children have done this, they do not then have the opportunity to use this technique to reinforce their learning independently in other contexts. Work on collage is also very directed, with teachers deciding on the materials and how they are to be used. Although the children are pleased with the end results this kind of activity does not develop their creativity.
82. The teaching of music is weak. Again, there is no opportunity for the children to explore sounds for themselves. Consequently, when they have their group sessions, they become over-excited at the prospect of playing instruments and do not listen to what they are asked to do. In the lesson seen, the children could not tap out a simple rhythm. Most can join in and perform actions to the songs used to support mathematical learning.

ENGLISH

83. Pupils leave the Foundation Stage with standards in line with national expectations. Standards are in line with the national average at the end of Year 2, with reading standards above those expected. Pupils are making good progress in their learning overall. Standards for older pupils are above those expected, especially in reading and writing. Progress in the upper school is good as teachers build on the good work of the lower school classes. Since the previous inspection standards in English have been maintained in both the lower and upper school especially in speaking and listening while standards in reading have improved. This is because there is a consistency of teaching and learning brought about by the introduction of the national literacy strategy which has resulted in pupils having a full, structured curriculum to develop their reading and writing skills. Throughout the school there is no significant difference in the attainment of girls and boys or those from different ethnic backgrounds. Those whose mother tongue is not English are well supported in their literacy work. In the spring term the school tried out a system of withdrawing higher ability Year 2 pupils for the further development of their writing skills. This contributed to the number of pupils attaining higher levels in the recent statutory tasks and tests. This work is being evaluated by the co-ordinators as part of the subjects' development plan.
84. Standards in speaking and listening are satisfactory by the end of Year 2. Pupils listen with good

attention to their teachers. They show by how they respond that they have understood what has been said to them. They are confident when asked to give their explanations in question and answer sessions and show a good grasp of standard English. Nearly all pupils reply to teachers' questions by using complete sentences. They use parts of the question in their answers. They practice the skill in enjoyable sessions taking it in turns to re-arrange a line of fellow pupils holding word cards, moving to a question from a statement. They also identify and use "question words" such as 'who', 'what', 'when', 'where' and 'why' in their work. Pupils of above average ability are able to add variations such as 'may' and 'can' independently to their work. Pupils know that they need to use formal language in different situations. They wait for others to finish speaking before making their contribution to discussions and this willingness to listen to the views of others leads to the strengthening of personal relationships. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have speaking and listening skills that are being well developed. They have an extensive vocabulary and speak with a greater fluency than would be expected for their ages and abilities on different occasions.

85. Reading standards in the school are above the national average. Pupils make good progress. Those with special needs are well supported with the careful and structured development of their reading skills through the early and additional literacy skills projects. This is an improvement on the previous inspection, where a key issue was to develop a systematic approach to the teaching of reading skills throughout the school. Each day in their work from the national literacy strategy pupils read together from a range of books and posters. Using large scale texts, both fiction and non-fiction and in groups reading together, pupils learn the skills of deciphering print. They sound out the letters of individual words, learn a range of frequently used words and use the context of the story to make sense of different reading matter. Teachers are good reading role models. Pupils see how teachers use the punctuation and other clues within a text to bring out aspects such as the different characters in stories or the humour or solemnity in poetry. Guided reading groups are well managed and pupils read with expression and, through teachers' questions, understanding. Pupils frequently take home a reading book to enable their families to support learning and this has a positive impact on the standards they achieve. Clear guidance on the hearing of reading is available for parents and they are encouraged to not only record pupils' likes but also any problems encountered.
86. The standard of writing is better than expected in comparison with the national expected levels by the time pupils leave the school. The school has moved from the focus on reading, following the previous inspection, to writing, especially for higher attaining Year 2 pupils, as this area came to the fore after an analysis of English by the co-ordinators. Unfortunately there is still a heavy reliance on commercially produced worksheets for all pupils in some classes. Although extension activities are on teachers' planning sheets often all pupils have to complete all sheets before moving on to work matched to their specific needs. In classes where there is more judicious use of worksheets, pupils' progress is better as they have the opportunity to practise a wider range of skills and use what has been previously taught in different ways. This very good, clear and challenging teaching results in pupils trying hard and putting effort into their work. In Year 1 pupils independently write simple sentences learning the grammar and punctuation for stories and factual writing. By Year 4 they write for a wide range of purposes and audiences including writing letters, poems and both factual and story writing. Pupils learn how to sequence instructions for science or design and technology. They invent their own rhymes and acrostic poems and produce book reviews, character studies and story openings and closings. Pupils analyse the stories by authors such as Anne Fine and Ted Hughes. They take stories such as 'Killer Cats' by Ms Fine and use her style to write their own animal stories.
87. Pupils with special educational needs are developing their writing well because they have effective support. Higher attaining pupils achieve a high standard when teachers plan activities over and above worksheet exercises. All classrooms have good displays of ideas on how to improve the quality of writing for example, a list of good story starters and finishers and a range of exciting words linked to the topics of history and science. The weakest area within writing is the development of pupils' handwriting skills. Most pupils form their individual letters correctly and

produce neat, careful work in pencil. However, for a significant number of pupils, handwriting skills development is poor in that they have a grip which means that they are unable to see the point of their pencils and previously written words. As they move from pencil to pen this results in a lack of fluency and smudged, untidy work with tension in the wrist and hand that results in malformed letters and arm ache. Pupils have handwriting practice sessions, but these do not fully improve skills as pupils do not have the opportunity to watch each other practise their handwriting skills. Pupils do not check that they are sitting correctly, angle the paper depending on whether they are left or right handed or check their pencil grip before writing. For many younger pupils the pencil is too long. This results in pupils gripping the pencil too tightly to counter the weight and balance being in the wrong place for fluency. Because of the focus on the national literacy strategy, spelling throughout the school is good as pupils regularly take high frequency words home to learn.

88. The quality of teaching is good overall. Two thirds of teaching in the lower school is good and three fifths of teaching in the upper school is very good. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen during the inspection. Teachers plan lessons well to challenge pupils to consolidate previous learning and develop new skills and understanding. Teachers use the format of the national literacy strategy, planning a range of activities to help pupils develop their concentration skills and work at a good pace. In weekly planning meetings teachers evaluate lessons and focus upon activities according to the strategy to ensure the progressive and continuous development of skills. In some classes pupils have looked at their own work and negotiated individual targets with teachers to develop their English skills and these are on display as a frequent reminder for pupils. Teachers share learning objectives with pupils, though some teachers tend to use the formal language of the curriculum rather than ensuring that all can read and understand what they are to learn. Teachers tend to use formal English and literacy lessons to develop and practice knowledge, skills and understanding, providing opportunities in other subject areas to practically apply these taught skills. This results in good quality writing in other subjects such as history and religious education. Information and communication technology is used well to support learning in English, with pupils using their word processing skills to produce their stories and poems in a range of interesting forms.
89. The leadership and management of the subject are good overall. The co-ordinator and second deputy have ensured that literacy is now embedded in the school and is taught each day. Staff have had training in delivering the national literacy strategy and the school has made good use of the local authority link advisor to support developments. The co-ordinator has undertaken lesson observations in the past and the headteacher, who regularly monitors teaching, shares any English concerns with her for staff development. From an analysis of statutory tests and tasks and the schools own assessment procedures along with a scrutiny of the work of each year the co-ordinators draw up the subject action plan. This enables them to plan staff training, the further development of pupils' skills and the need for and use of resources. From this came the decision to trial intensive support for possible underachieving higher attainers in year 2 in the spring term. The results of their statutory tasks and tests are to be monitored to judge the effectiveness of the support and to make decisions for next year.
90. Resources are good throughout the school. The co-ordinator has audited the reading scheme, buying in a good range of books for guided and group reading for outside the literacy period. The library has recently been updated and a scanning system for book management introduced using information and communication technology. Formal library skills developments are planned when the revamped library is available again. Pupils are aware of a range of researching skills through the literacy strategy and the texts teachers bring into the classroom, but their independent researching skills will be well supported when classes have regular timetabled sessions in the library.

MATHEMATICS

91. The teaching of mathematics is a strength of the school and leads to good standards.
92. When pupils enter Year 1 their attainment in mathematics is in line with that expected. They make good progress throughout the school and achieve standards that are above those expected of seven year-olds by the end of Year 2 and above those expected of nine year-olds by the time they leave the school. This is confirmed by the results of national assessments when pupils are seven. Results show that pupils' results are usually well above average, and that over a half of pupils attain levels higher than that expected for their age. Boys and girls achieve equally well. Pupils with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language, receive effective help and also achieve well. The high levels of achievement noted at the time of the last inspection have been maintained. The school has improved its provision so that the inconsistencies reported in progress between the younger and older pupils have been eradicated and achievement in relation to all attainment targets is now more consistent.
93. Pupils develop good knowledge of the number system and are able to competently manipulate numbers and carry out calculations. Year 2 pupils, for example, use their knowledge of odd and even numbers and their understanding of the relationship between doubling and halving to help them solve problems, such as adding near doubles like 14 and 15, or 35 and 36. Year 4 pupils confidently recall multiplication facts to 5x and are gaining confidence in using 6x and 7x to solve problems mentally. They recognise the reciprocal relationship between multiplication and division and use this knowledge to check their work. They use a variety of written methods to record addition and subtraction of decimals to two places. Pupils have secure knowledge of shapes, space and measures. Year 2 pupils know the names and properties of a good range of 2-D and 3-D shapes, including identifying those with reflective symmetry. Year 4 pupils use standard metric units accurately when using thermometers and other measuring equipment and successfully calculate the perimeter and area of simple shapes. Pupils are developing good skills in data handling. For example, Year 1 pupils use ICT to create a bar chart showing how many different coloured sweets there are in a tube of Smarties and use a print-out to help them interpret the results. By Year 4 pupils use a range of tables, charts, graphs and diagrams to help them organise and interpret data. Pupils in all year groups learn the correct mathematical vocabulary and use it confidently to explain their work. They are aware of an increasing range of strategies to help them solve problems and select and apply them well in their work. Pupils enjoy mathematics. Their interest, application and creativity in the subject increase as they move through the school.
94. Teaching is good overall but ranges from excellent to unsatisfactory. In Year 1 and three of the four sets in Year 4 the teaching seen was very good. It was excellent in the top set in Year 3. Despite the one unsatisfactory lesson, teaching has improved overall since the last inspection as in more than half the lessons seen it was very good or excellent compared to being very good in just over a quarter last time. Teachers have good subject knowledge and teach the basic skills and strategies for problem solving well. They promote the use of correct mathematical language well and this helps pupils to understand and explain their reasoning. Teachers plan lessons with clear objectives linked to the National Numeracy Framework and share them with pupils so that they know what they are expected to achieve. This helps to give a strong shared sense of purpose, which, when supported by effective organisation and management of tasks and pupils, ensures pupils are productive throughout the lesson and the objectives are achieved. Teachers use good quality resources effectively to demonstrate and support activities and these help pupils to visualise and remember key teaching points. This includes the appropriate use of ICT, although limited access to computers restricts these opportunities. Work is usually well matched to pupils' abilities. Teachers assess pupils appropriately in lessons and generally intervene quickly to correct errors and misconceptions, although they do not always respond as quickly to higher attaining pupils needing a greater level of challenge.
95. Teachers have good relationships with their pupils and, especially where the teaching is very good or excellent, they give very positive, encouraging feedback to pupils that inspires confidence and a willingness to try hard and to learn something positive from any errors. The better the teaching,

the faster the pace of the lesson. When lessons are brisk, pupils work harder to keep up and this helps to increase their mental agility. In the unsatisfactory lesson seen in Year 2 the pace of work was too slow so that pupils did not have to concentrate and make an effort throughout the lesson; consequently they learned less. Lack of pace during the mental starter to lessons is apparent even in some lessons in which the teaching is satisfactory or good overall. It does not promote quick mental recall and fails to meet the school's expectation, as set out in the mathematics policy, of enabling "quick-fire practice of number facts". In these lessons also, whilst pupils are developing good problem solving skills, the challenges they are set by teachers are often too prescribed and do not give pupils, especially the higher attainers, enough opportunity to set and solve their own mathematics problems. Often they are given a worksheet to complete when they could be challenged more and consolidate their learning better by thinking up and solving their own problems. Homework makes a satisfactory contribution to learning in the subject. It is based on current class work and is set weekly in Years 1 - 4.

96. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory overall. Co-ordinators from upper and lower school share co-ordination of the subject. The National Numeracy strategy is firmly embedded within the school. The subject is well resourced. Planning covers the full programmes of study, is consistent with the National Numeracy Framework and is sufficient to ensure that a challenging curriculum is provided for all pupils. Joint planning within year groups ensures that all pupils cover the same topics so there are no gaps in their learning. There are satisfactory procedures in place to monitor pupils' progress. The organisation of pupils into four sets in Years 3 and 4 is beneficial as it means that pupils are in smaller groups so have more individual attention and has ensured that work is well matched to pupils' abilities. It has contributed to the maintenance of high standards in the subject. The lower school mathematics co-ordinator has analysed the results of the Year 2 national tests and identified implications for teaching which she intends to share with Year 2 colleagues. There are no clear procedures in place for identifying strengths and weaknesses in standards and provision across the school as a whole. Although the school development plan indicates that the co-ordinators will undertake structured observations of numeracy in all classes, this has not yet happened.

SCIENCE

97. Pupils' work in their books and in lessons indicates that standards are currently average at the end of Years 2 and 4. Children start in Year 1 with average standards in their knowledge and understanding and understanding of the world. Consequently pupils' achievement by Year 4 is satisfactory. This appears to be a worse situation since the previous inspection. Year 2 pupils' teacher assessment indicates that above average standards are being achieved, especially by higher attaining pupils, but discussions with staff, observations of teaching and scrutiny of work suggests that teacher assessments are over generous. Across all years presentation is generally poor and the quantity and quality of work in pupils' books varies between classes within year groups. Work is often not marked or dated making progress difficult to track.
98. Pupils in Year 2 know about some physical changes associated with growing up, both in humans and plants, and they can investigate the properties of materials. They have an understanding of the effects of the environment on plants and animals. Pupils undertake investigations associated with sorting and in comparing similarities in living things. They can record their findings in a variety of ways including simple drawings and pictures. By Year 4, most pupils can describe and name the main parts of a plant and carry out investigations connected with comparing growth. They can explore separating materials in a solution and record their answers in graphs or in writing. In discussion they are aware of the effects of exercise and location of the heart and lungs. Some pupils are clear about the necessity for fair testing in their investigations. Few know the main functions of leaves or can list the major characteristics of a living organism.

99. Teaching of science is now weaker than at the last inspection when it was described as good and often very good. The quality of teaching is now satisfactory across all age groups. There was no good or better teaching seen. Two out of the seven lessons seen were unsatisfactory. The better teaching demonstrated good use of open-ended questioning which challenged pupils to think hard about problems and then predict likely outcomes. The questions explored 'why they thought as they did' and the teacher encouraged the pupils to express all ideas. This was seen in a Year 2 lesson where pupils were asked to explore the likely outcomes of different items being dropped into a tank of water. The teacher first explored pupils' ideas then encouraged them to predict and record their findings, using drawings, before they were required to carry out the investigation. Unfortunately successful strategies for teaching science were not in evidence in most of the lessons. Often lessons are very teacher led and do not ask pupils to carry out investigations with any independence. In the less successful lessons, planning did not match what pupils knew to what they needed to learn. Investigations and tasks were aimed at whole classes with no variation in approach or appropriate challenge for the higher ability pupils, and teachers did not sum up what had been covered or help them to understand and clarify what they had achieved. The pupils with learning difficulties sometimes receive additional teacher support to enable them to complete the same task, but where this is unavailable they sometimes struggle.
100. Management of science is unsatisfactory. There is no clear plan for improving teaching and learning and the current action plan for developing the subject does not include any strategies for raising standards. Curriculum planning is monitored to ensure National Curriculum coverage but there are no plans to observe teaching. Observations of lessons by other staff have not been used to improve teaching in science. Schemes of work are in line with recent national initiatives and the school's overall provision for the subject is satisfactory, which represents an improvement since the last inspection. Teachers plan in year groups from national schemes of work, which ensures coverage over time. However, this planning does not take account of the differing needs of pupils in different classes. There has been no recent audit to match resources to curriculum needs. Assessment is new and is not used to inform planning or for grouping pupils in lessons, consequently tasks do not always closely match pupils' needs. There is no consistent tracking of progress across the school or in year groups. There are no targets for improvement. Teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 are not moderated or checked by the co-ordinator and no written record is available when teachers match pupils' work to the National Curriculum. This makes it more difficult to track progress of knowledge and skill development and to ensure that each pupil achieves well. Very limited use is made of information and communication technology to support learning in science, especially in developing research skills and the recording of investigations.

ART AND DESIGN

101. Pupils achieve well and attain good standards by the time they leave. After a slow start to this aspect of their learning in the reception classes, they make good progress through the school.
102. Their work in colour mixing is a strength in Years 1 and 2. By the end of Year 2, they produce work in a variety of media, all of which reaches a sound standard. For example, their line drawings of artefacts from the museum vary with each pupil's ability, but are of a satisfactory standards overall. In the lesson seen, pupils show that they are confident in experimenting with new techniques, show imagination in what they do, and can suggest how their work might be improved. The recently completed pictures in another Year 2 class, using a mix of paint and pastel to show reflections, were of a good standard, with subtle use of colour, and care and inventiveness shown in execution.
103. Pupils built on this good start in Years 3 and 4, to achieve standards above expectations by the time they leave. They extend the range of media they use, and improve their understanding of art and artists from other times and cultures. Pupils in Year 3 have done some particularly impressive

pictures using a range of techniques to show rain. Their work was clearly based on a particular picture by the Japanese artist, Hiroshige, but went beyond just being copies. They had really captured the feel of the original in both their use of line and colour.

104. In Year 4, some particularly impressive work has been done on painted papier-mache masks based on African designs. The display in the co-ordinators' class showed the development of the project, from the study of a range of African patterns and masks, through experimenting with a range of their own designs, before going on to make the final masks. These were varied in colour and design, meticulous in execution, and very individual while retaining the link with the original African inspiration. Year 4 pupils have combined their skills in rendering tone and colour in their drawings and paintings of glass bottles, which show great care, and subtle use of colour to represent glass.
105. The teaching is good. Classes are managed well and clear routines support good behaviour. Teachers provide a wide range of stimulating materials to enthuse and interest pupils, and to give them insights into different approaches. Examples included a huge variety of leaves for pupils doing observational drawings in Year 3 and the wide range of reflection pictures in Year 2. Specific techniques are taught very clearly, and are often modelled by the teacher so that pupils fully understand what is meant. When pupils are working, they are carefully monitored by the teacher, and are challenged to improve and develop their work. Some opportunities are missed, however, for pupils to evaluate and comment on each others' work. Pupils enjoy art, work hard, and take a pride in what they achieve. Because they know that this is valued, they are often meticulous in the care they take, and this supports the good standards they reach.
106. Good leadership from the co-ordinator has ensured that a broad and interesting curriculum is in place, and supports the standards obtained. She provides a model of good practice in her own work, and is very willing to provide help and advice for colleagues. Management of the subject is satisfactory. Although the co-ordinator is able to gain a good overview of standards by looking at work on display, there is no systematic way of recording what she finds, or of using the information to improve standards. For example, when work is clearly of a better standard in one class than another in a particular year group, despite them planning the work together, there are no mechanisms for her to identify and share the better practice.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

107. From the evidence of lessons seen during the inspection, standards at age seven and nine are broadly as would be expected. This is in line with the findings of the last inspection. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, and this enables pupils to make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. In Key Stage 1, teachers plan effectively to develop pupils' basic skills such as cutting and joining materials before they make their own models using what they have learnt. There was no evidence available to support a judgement on this aspect in Key Stage 2.
108. Pupils have satisfactory design skills. However, in both key stages they are given too much help by teachers and are not challenged to initiate and develop their own ideas. In a Year 2 class, for example, children making boats were told to bring in a suitable container such as a margarine tub to use as a boat. In a lesson in Year 4, the teacher led a whole-class brainstorming session and wrote all the ideas on the board for reference. Apart from diminishing the challenge to pupils, this takes away the fun and excitement for the pupils and inhibits their personal development. Higher attaining pupils, in particular, do not have the opportunity to achieve as well as they might.
109. Teachers plan interesting contexts for the work, linking it effectively to other areas of the curriculum. In Year 4, for example, pupils have designed minibeast traps linked to their study of habitats in science. Pupils in both key stages are keen to contribute ideas and work hard in lessons. Teachers use the subject well to develop pupils' literacy skills. For example, pupils have many good opportunities to put forward their ideas to the rest of the class, and teachers emphasise

correct spelling when pupils label their drawings.

110. Leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory. There are no systems in place to give the co-ordinator an overview of what is happening throughout the school, and she is not in a position to influence standards. Additionally, the curriculum in Key Stage 2 does not fully meet statutory requirements. Pupils do not have the breadth of experiences to which they are entitled. They work with a very limited range of materials and equipment, and do not have enough opportunities to select these for themselves. In Year 3, for example, pupils make self-watering planters. This is a very prescriptive task, with all the parts cut and prepared, so that all the pupils have to do is put them together. To move the subject forward the school should ensure that the requirements of the National Curriculum are fully met in all year groups. The main weakness is that the work is too teacher-directed and does not help the pupils to be more creative and develop their own ideas.

GEOGRAPHY

111. Only one lesson was observed in geography. Analysis of previous work, inspection of planning documents and discussions with staff and pupils indicates that a full geography curriculum is provided and that standards are broadly as expected at the end of both Years 2 and 4. Pupils are achieving appropriately. This judgement is similar to that of the last inspection.
112. Pupils in Year 2 can find places on simple maps using co-ordinates. They have a satisfactory understanding of topics they have studied, such as rain forests and the area around the school. They use block graphs to record where they live after a walk around Headless Cross. They are able to make a map of an imaginary place and describe simple key human and physical features. By Year 4 they have extended their knowledge wider to include comparing life in a Kenyan village to life in Redditch. They describe similarities and differences including school and home life. They are aware of crops that grow in Kenya but not in England. Their map reading skills now include using four figure grid references and some use a map of the school, unaided, to plot different habitats. They use and can name all the points of a compass. In discussion with a small group of pupils they were able to name all the countries and the capital cities of the United Kingdom. They were much less secure about countries in Europe with some thinking France and Germany were in the United States of America. All displayed a liking and enthusiasm for geography.
113. Although little teaching of geography was seen during the inspection, from the scrutiny of work teaching over time is satisfactory. However, presentation skills are poor and work is often not dated. There is also a wide variation of quality and quantity of work completed across different classes in all year groups.
114. The school uses National Curriculum schemes of work for geography and this ensures satisfactory coverage overtime. There is no assessment in geography and skill development is not tracked. Subject leadership is satisfactory but the co-ordinator has not had the opportunity to monitor delivery of the curriculum. However she has a clear view of the subject's strengths and has plans to develop the subject, although these are not written down. The use of information and communication technology is unsatisfactory and is not included in any planning seen. Trips to local parks and field studies enhance the curriculum and contribute well to the consolidation of knowledge and understanding of geography.

HISTORY

115. No lessons were observed in history, but discussion with pupils and scrutiny of their work show that standards meet the national expectation. Pupils in Year 2 have done a wide range of work on

the theme of “life 100 years ago”. They have recorded their understanding in a range of pictures and writing. They show that they have a clear understanding of changes over time in a variety of aspects of life, including bath time, dress, and schools. Their writing about going to school makes good use of their literacy skills, explaining their understanding very much in their own words.

116. By Year 4 pupils’ work shows a sound understanding of aspects of their most recent topic, the Vikings. They have used their literacy skills to make notes from a variety of sources with varying success. Although a few are inclined to copy slavishly elements of what they have read, many are much more adept at putting ideas into their own words. Their work shows that they know about such things as Viking place names, longships, and the way of life in a Viking village.
117. Discussion with pupils in Year 4 showed that their history skills and knowledge have a secure basis. They have a good knowledge of chronology, and are able to place the Vikings, Saxons, Normans and Romans in the correct order for example. They understand the relationship between the Saxons and Normans. They know that things happened in the past for particular reasons, such as the Vikings invading England because it had richer farmland than their homelands. They know that historical “facts” can be distorted over time, and discussed this in the context of whether Henry VIII really wrote “Greensleeves”. They understand that this may never now be resolved. They have a sound understanding of the kinds of evidence that tell us about history, including archaeological. They know that history never stops, and that the kinds of changes which they see in their lives, are the stuff of future history. In discussion they were very enthusiastic, enjoyed the subject, and were able to frame intelligent historical questions.
118. The subject leader has succeeded in putting in place a broad curriculum, which caters well for pupils’ needs and interests, and gives them a secure grounding in the subject. There are no systems in place for her to gain an overview of standards across the different classes, so that she has no basis on which to work with colleagues in raising standards. The joint planning of the subject within individual year groups ensures equal opportunities for pupils in parallel classes, and enables some sharing of expertise and experience. There are no agreed systems for assessing pupils’ progress in the subject, either individually or by groups.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

119. The standards achieved are below those expected of pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 4. This contrasts with the judgement at the time of the last inspection that standards were in line with expectations, both at the end of Year 2 and when pupils left the school. The reasons for this are two-fold: the statutory curriculum for the subject has changed and the standards expected now are more demanding, and the school does not have enough information and communication technology equipment to deliver the new curriculum effectively.
120. Too few opportunities to use information and communication technology resources result in pupils of all abilities making slow progress. Pupils’ achievement is below expectations at the end of Year 2. With guidance, they record information in a simple database, use a graphics program to create a symmetrical image and to draw island shapes, use a word processor to record ideas and give instructions to a robot to make it move. Few develop the capability needed to make confident use of information and communication technology resources, for example, to generate, amend, save, print, retrieve or add to their ideas and information. They have little knowledge of the uses of information and communication technology outside school, apart from games.
121. When they leave the school at the end of Year 4, their achievement remains below expectations. They control the movements of a floor robot and navigate through an adventure game successfully. Pupils in some classes know how to use a search engine to help them find information on the Internet and, with help, can send and open an e-mail. They know how to enter data into a database and, with help, create a decision tree. Pupils have limited knowledge and

understanding of using information and communication technology to generate, develop, organise and present their work. They understand the basic functions of word processing software but they rarely use it to support their work. Most have limited knowledge of the functions and effects that can be achieved using graphics software.

122. Across the school as a whole, most pupils are developing reasonable competence in using the mouse to select and move items on screen, as was seen when pupils in Year 2 used a “dartboard” program to support work in numeracy. For many pupils, this proficiency is strongly supported by the opportunities they have to practice using basic operational skills on a computer at home.
123. Teaching in the subject is satisfactory overall throughout Years 1 to 4. Teachers have satisfactory subject knowledge and teach the basic skills well. They use and successfully encourage pupils to use the correct vocabulary associated with the subject and this helps pupils when discussing activities. The use of assessment to guide teaching is weak. Teachers tend to see progression in the subject as being task related rather than focused on the development of specific skills, knowledge and understanding. So, for example, if pupils are introduced to a task linked to a science lesson, all pupils are expected to complete the same task. The lack of equipment means that this may take several days and involve pupils working on the task during other lessons to which it is not relevant. This reduces the impact on learning, both in information and communication technology and the other subjects. The teaching methods used are generally effective although teachers are constrained by the lack of computers and large display facilities.
124. The statutory curriculum is in place but delivery of it is compromised because of the lack of equipment. Teachers plan a broad curriculum that provides pupils with relevant lessons across the full range of the programmes of study, but coverage lacks depth. This, together with the lack of guidance and effective procedures for assessment, contributes to the unsatisfactory progress pupils make within the subject.
125. There are fewer computers than in most schools of a similar size. This means that each pupil has less time to use them than most children of their age. Teaching and learning are hampered, not just by a lack of equipment, but also because of the variety of systems in each class, which means it is often not possible for all class computers to be used for the task in hand, which further reduces pupils’ access time.
126. The management of the subject is satisfactory and ensures, in so far as it is able, that the subject is taught satisfactorily. The school’s policy of information and communication technology being taught across the curriculum is reflected in practice and suitable software has been purchased to support it. However, the leadership of the subject is weak. There is no monitoring of standards and provision that would provide staff and governors with the information about strengths and weaknesses in the subject that could help them decide on the improvements needed. The co-ordinator has drawn up a useful development plan for information and communication technology in the school as a whole that identifies many areas to be developed over the next few years. However, there is no clear vision of what the school expects competent pupils to achieve or of the steps needed to raise standards further. Thus strategic planning is not sufficiently focused.

MUSIC

127. The school has maintained the average standards reported by the last inspection for seven year-old pupils. Pupils make good progress across the school. Although only a few lessons were seen during the inspection, from singing in assemblies and singing practices and the work in the choir and recorder clubs as well as discussions, pupils have access to a full music curriculum overall. Pupils also have the opportunity to learn to play the trumpet or violin, though parents are expected to contribute to the costs of such lessons.

128. Pupils listen to a range of recorded and live music. For instance, during lower school music practice, the music of Saint Saens – the Aquarium from the Carnival of the Animals – was linked to the reception classes theme of fish. Pupils listened carefully to the effects that different instruments could produce to give the feeling of being at the bottom of the ocean. By age seven, children identify a range of percussion instruments and learn the correct way to hold and play them. They use such instruments to compose an accompaniment to the singing of their classes, working on pitch and tempo. The Year 2 teachers, in their whole year group music session for instance, matched singing to body percussion, then pupils had fun listening to four of their number playing chime bars of different pitches and moving them around to order their pitch from high to low. Great applause greeted their final success!
129. Pupils' technical musical knowledge is developed well as they move from simple picture scores, via graphic compositions to more formal notation by the time they are in Year 4. During the inspection Year 4 pupils were matching the syllables of insects from their work in science to the formal notation of minims, crotchets and quavers, composing simple four bar phrases, starting to record their compositions so that others could reproduce their work. The school focus on singing is well developed, especially in the lower school. The lead teacher put particular emphasis on diction and articulation, accuracy of pitch and tempo choosing a range of songs for assemblies. From lower school singing onwards, pupils are learning to follow a conductor and this enables them to sing together in two and three part rounds as well as learn new songs using a follow-my-leader learning system, a good practice. The number and range of programmes for pupils' public performances in the co-ordinators file gives a good picture of the range of opportunities to share skills and the enjoyment of performing to parents and the wider community that music provides.
130. The school has been successful in continuing to provide quality musical experiences for the pupils during the recent national emphasis on literacy and numeracy. A number of teachers have piano skills and this relieves the pressure on the music co-ordinator who is also a full time classroom teacher. The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good. The better lessons are characterised by very good technical ability and clear structures to develop pupils' knowledge and skills. These teachers use their knowledge of the pupils matched to a clear programme of study. Their planning is thorough and builds on an evaluation of work covered previously. Included are development points and guidance as well as the songs, instruments and resources. Pupils' attitudes to music are positive because they are given opportunities to explore possibilities and express their own ideas. Older pupils show good levels of insight into how music creates mental pictures and suggest different types of instrumental sounds to match these moods. Teachers are careful to get an appropriate mixture of whole class and individual opportunities for pupils to develop fully.
131. Although there have not been opportunities for staff training and in class observations, the co-ordinator monitors plans and sees through samples of pupils' written work and through the choir and recorder group the knowledge and skills that teachers are developing. The opportunity for the co-ordinator to monitor the quality of teaching and learning within classes would enable staff training to be planned resulting in an extension of teachers' skills and confidence that would raise standards higher. The range of instruments and other resources is good. The school updates percussion equipment regularly and maintains the instruments well. Each year group has a range of instruments in their areas and larger resources such as glockenspiel and keyboards are kept centrally.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

132. Standards of physical education are in line with national expectations for seven year-old pupils and are above expectations for nine year-olds, particularly in games and swimming. The school has maintained these standards since the last inspection. Previous years' records indicate that the school consistently manages to get over fifty per cent of pupils to swim 25 metres, the standard expected of pupils aged eleven. The school places a high priority on the development of physical

education and this has been rewarded by success in gaining 'Active Mark Gold'. The input of a specialist, untrained teacher who teaches the older pupils is significantly contributing to the sustained good standards. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included and also achieve well.

133. Teaching is good in athletics and games for Years 3 and 4. It is satisfactory in gymnastics for younger pupils. No lessons were seen for dance. In all lessons, teachers give clear instructions, expect pupils to respond promptly and are vigilant in matters of safety. They 'warm up' pupils well. Pupils from Year 1 upward understand the need for exercise. Brief discussion about the merits of safe exercise in every lesson contributes well to this understanding. Pupils demonstrate a high level of enjoyment. They warm up enthusiastically and are keen to improve their performance. In one of the lessons, for Year 4, the teacher made good use of appropriate vocabulary, demonstration and questioning to ensure pupils extended their skills. They watched a good demonstration from two pupils before evaluating that performance. Then after the teacher had instructed them how to improve their racquet skills, by using smaller movements, further practice improved their performance.
134. The best teaching uses good examples of pupils' performance and self-assessment to stimulate improvement. In gymnastics lessons in Years 1 and 2, instruction took too long, so that pupils did not have enough time to perform, practise and improve their skills. They were very 'teacher led' and this did not give pupils the opportunity to develop their own ideas. Although some teachers asked pupils how well they thought they were performing the opportunity for them to evaluate and comment on their own and others' performance was underdeveloped. There was little emphasis on improving the quality of pupils' movement, and especially the endings to sequences.
135. Physical education has a high profile across the school and pupils are successful in a range of sporting events. Teachers plan appropriately using the national scheme supplemented by other commercial material, which ensures coverage of the National Curriculum. The keen and able co-ordinator has monitored planning and teaching and has very clear ideas on how to develop the subject. Assessment is well established but is not yet informing planning. However, this development forms part of the subject's action plan. It is used successfully to identify pupils with movement difficulties who then benefit from the "Instep" lessons provided by the co-ordinator.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

136. In spite of all the changes to the curriculum brought about by national strategies for literacy and numeracy and curriculum 2000, the school has been able to maintain the standards of the previous inspection. Standards seen in lessons and samples of pupils' work are satisfactory and in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils are making satisfactory progress across the school.
137. Work by pupils in the lower school shows they are familiar with the range of festivals, celebrations and factual information from the two key faiths of Christianity and Judaism. They have learnt about key ceremonies such as Harvest, Christmas and Easter. They recognise artefacts such as the Torah Scrolls, the Kippur and Yad, the Bible, candles and crosses and their importance to Jewish and Christian followers. The work of faith leaders such as Jesus and Moses and their relationship to God are thought about. The impact of the faith and leader on the life of their followers, including disciples and ordinary people such as Mary Jones and her wish for the Bible in Welsh is studied. Stories about Jesus and Moses, their birth, stories about their lives and miracles are also enjoyed.
138. Older pupils are introduced to Hinduism as well as continuing their work on Christianity. During the inspection, Year 3 pupils were studying prayers, including the Lord's Prayer, with the focus that all can pray and can do so at home as well as within a Church. The session ended with pupils

writing their own prayers. Year 4 pupils consider the links between Judaism and Christianity with a comparison between the Ten Commandments and Jesus' Two Golden Commandments. Overall, they have made a good start in learning about different faiths, with some lively, thoughtful discussions occurring. Pupils consider the range of religious ideas and use them to reflect on their own lives and experiences. Good support is given by religious education to pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development. For instance, through learning of the beliefs and faiths of different peoples in today's multicultural society and right and wrong when thinking of the Ten Commandments.

139. Teaching and learning is satisfactory overall with good teaching seen in the lower school especially. Teachers plan carefully, being sure to make any information as factually accurate as possible. They tread carefully the fine line between encouraging thought and indoctrination. Teachers ensure accuracy in the vocabulary they use, share resources and carefully plan the use of time so that lessons remain Religious Education, and not English or art using a faith theme. Lessons took on a special significance as two teachers shared their family Bibles with pupils. Pupils copied the teachers in showing reverence for the family heirlooms, and were very interested in the background to the books. This led pupils to consider artefacts and people who were important to them and their families. Pupils are thus learning from Christianity as well as about Christianity.
140. The co-ordination of Religious Education is changing as the new co-ordinator has just returned from maternity leave and will fully take over the subject in the autumn. A new policy and scheme of work has been put into place in line with changes in the locally agreed syllabus. The school at present does not have any planned assessments to check what pupils know, understand and can do; instead the co-ordinator collects samples of written work and sees teachers planning at the weekly planning meetings, but no formal structures are in place. The co-ordinator ensures that all teachers are aware of the recommended time for the subject. The resources to support the subject are good in quality and quantity and continue to be extended to match curriculum developments. The links with the middle school are good, each school agreeing the faiths to be studied in line with the locally agreed syllabus. However, the school should look at the breadth of the curriculum, especially the cross faith links that can be used to support pupils' multicultural development.