

INSPECTION REPORT

ECTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Ecton, Northampton

LEA area: Northamptonshire

Unique reference number: 121818

Headteacher: Mrs. S. Sayers

Reporting inspector: Miss Savi Ramnath
21334

Dates of inspection: 3rd – 5th June 2003

Inspection number: 248287

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	5 - 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Ecton Northampton
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr James Mogridge
Date of previous inspection:	October 27 th 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Miss Savi Ramnath <i>Registered inspector</i> 21334	Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage Science Information and communication technology Religious education Education inclusion including race equality	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
Ms Liz Brameld <i>Lay inspector</i> 19557		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Ms Jo Cheadle <i>Team inspector</i> 23233	English Art and design History Music Special educational needs English as an additional language	
Ms Theresa Quick <i>Team inspector</i> 32226	Mathematics Design and technology Geography Physical education	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How good are curricular and other opportunities?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This is a small, community school situated in the village of Ecton on the outskirts of Northamptonshire for pupils aged between five and 11. There are currently 103 full-time boys and girls who are taught in four classes, three of which have pupils of mixed-ages. This includes 11 children who are taught in the mixed-age Reception/Year 1 class. The school draws pupils from a wide area with very few pupils eligible for free school meals, which is below average. Thirty-six per cent of the pupils are on the school's register for special educational needs, four of whom have statements of special educational needs. This is well above the national average. Almost all of the pupils are of white British origin and speak English as their first language. A very small percentage are from Traveller backgrounds and a high proportion of pupils join or leave the school other than at the usual time. Attainment on entry to the school is varied and for the past few years has been below average. However, the attainment of the present Reception class is broadly average. Since the last inspection, there has been major refurbishment of the accommodation and a significant number of staff changes during the last two years.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Ecton Primary provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. Pupils are valued and work well in a caring and supportive environment. Relationship between pupils and adults are very good. When the present Year 2 and Year 6 pupils started school their levels of attainment on entry were below average. Although standards remain below the level expected nationally in English, mathematics and science, pupils' achievement is at least satisfactory and sometimes good. The overall quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory. The leadership and management of the school is satisfactory overall, although systems for monitoring and supporting teaching lack rigour. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The headteacher and supportive governing body, work well together and share a commitment to improve the school.
- The school makes good provision for pupils with special education needs.
- The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities, which is well supported.
- The provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good.
- Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to work are good.
- The school provides a very good level of care for all its pupils and relationships are very good
- The school has established good links with parents and very good links with the community.

What could be improved

- The inconsistent quality of teaching and its capacity to promote effective learning in all subjects.
- The rigour of systems for monitoring, supporting and improving the quality of teaching and learning.
- The quality of provision for children in the Foundation Stage¹ and their rate of progress.
- Involvement of teachers with management responsibilities in the day-to-day running of the school.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The last inspection was in October 1997. Since that time the nature of the school's intake has changed significantly and there have been many staff changes. This has provided a challenge for the school in tackling improvement. Nonetheless, action has been taken on all key issues, although some aspects have not been fully addressed. Good use has been made of the national guidelines and schemes of work are now in place for all subjects. Although these provide useful guidance for planning on a two-yearly cycle they have not been adapted sufficiently to meet the needs of all pupils. As a result, pupils are often given the same work regardless of age or levels of attainment in the mixed-age classes. Assessment procedures are satisfactory and the information gained makes a useful contribution to planning for the next stage of learning especially in English and mathematics. Although some progress has been made in

¹ Foundation Stage - Education before pupils enter Year 1, i.e. in the Nursery and Reception classes.

strengthening the role of subject co-ordinators, many are new to their roles as well as to the school. As a result, the role of co-ordinators in monitoring teaching and learning and their involvement in the management of the school remain underdeveloped. Apart from addressing the key issues from the last inspection, the school has made effective improvements in other areas. Much work has been done to improve the accommodation and resources. An information and communication technology suite is in place and requirements are now met for the delivery of physical education in Years 1 to 6. However, the school still lacks a suitable play area with large climbing and balancing apparatus for children in the Foundation Stage. Overall, satisfactory improvement has been made. The staff are dedicated to improving the school and it has a satisfactory capacity to improve.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point² scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools ³
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	E	D	B	C
Mathematics	E	E	E	E*
Science	E	D	E	E*

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E
lowest 5% nationally	E*

Note: Only a small group of pupils takes the tests each year (In 2002, there were 14 pupils in Year 2 and 12 in Year 6) so trends over time and comparisons with results nationally should be treated with caution.

National Curriculum test results for pupils in Years 2 and 6 show fluctuation over recent years. Overall, results in the 2002 national tests for Year 6 pupils were well below the average of all schools and were very low, and in the lowest five per cent when compared with similar schools. A number of factors have an adverse effect on standards and mask the progress that the majority of pupils make. The attainment of pupils in this group on entry to the school was below the national average, nine of them were identified as having special educational needs and only seven of them started school in the reception year. Consequentially, comparing the school's results with those achieved nationally does not accurately reflect pupils' achievements. Analysis of the results of the pupils who were at the school at the start of Year 3 and took the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2002 indicate that pupils' achievement⁴ was good in English and satisfactory in mathematics and science.

Over three years the school's rate of improvement is below the national trend. In 2002, the school's target for raising standards in English was exceeded, but was narrowly missed in mathematics. Targets for the current Year 6 are challenging and not likely to be met due to the high percentage of pupils with special educational needs.

For pupils at the end of Year 2, the results in the 2002 national tests were well below average in reading and writing, and average in mathematics when compared with all schools. The teachers' assessment in science shows that pupils' performance was below average when compared with all schools. Although test results at the end of Years 2 and 6 in 2002 indicated that girls performed better than boys, inspection evidence shows little difference in the current performance of boys and girls.

Attainment on entry to the school during the period 1999 – 2002 was below average, though the attainment

² Average points score - pupils' levels in National Curriculum tests are converted to points and used to compare a school's performance with schools nationally and with similar schools.

³ Similar schools are those that have a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals.

⁴ Pupils' **achievements** are the progress they make in relation to their initial attainment. Therefore, a child starting school with low attainment may achieve well but still not reach the nationally expected standard of attainment by the end of Year 6.

of one child in a small year group can cause statistical fluctuations from year to year. However, the attainment of the most recent group of children was average. Inspection evidence indicates that children in the Foundation Stage achieve satisfactorily. Most are on target to meet the standards expected (the Early Learning Goals) by the end of the year in all areas of learning. In early writing skills standards are below expectations. Progress is limited at times because too few planned opportunities are provided to develop children's early writing and recording skills and assessment information is not always used well for both age groups to challenge the most able children. In Years 1 to 6, pupils' achievements is satisfactory. Starting from a low base, standards in English, mathematics and science remain below national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6. In all other subjects, standards are at the levels expected nationally for both age groups except in geography and history where standards are below expectations and in physical education where standards are above the level expected nationally. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in meeting the targets in their individual education plans.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Attitudes to work are good. Pupils take an active interest in what is being taught and are eager to learn. Most concentrate and make efforts to do well especially when suitably challenged.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Most pupils understand the school's expectations of their behaviour. However, occasionally a small number of pupils behave inappropriately in lessons when insufficiently challenged or involved.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils help each other willingly and gain in confidence as they grow older. Younger pupils learn well from older ones. Relationships between pupils and with adults are also very good.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Attendance is in line with the national average and pupils have few unauthorised absences. Pupils arrive at school in time for the start of the day.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Foundation Stage	Years 1 to 2	Years 3 to 6
Quality of teaching	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

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

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. However, evidence from pupils' books, teachers' planning and discussion with pupils show that there are some weaknesses in teaching and this has a negative impact on pupils' learning over time. The proportion of lessons where teaching is good has decreased since the previous inspection and there is higher proportion of unsatisfactory teaching.

In the Foundation Stage the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall but with some weaknesses. Not all activities are always planned and monitoring is not sufficiently rigorous to ensure that all children gain fully from the rich range of activities on offer.

The literacy and numeracy strategies are satisfactorily established in Years 1 to 6 and the school's focus on writing has resulted in improving standards across the school. The teaching of mathematics and science is satisfactory, but pupils have too few opportunities to apply their learning to real situations in mathematics and work is not always matched to the needs of pupils in the mixed-age classes. Although

the teaching of information and communication technology is satisfactory, pupils do not make sufficient use of computers in other subjects. In those subjects where it is possible to make a judgement the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory.

Very good and good quality teaching and learning was seen in English, mathematics and physical education and results from teachers' good subject knowledge, high expectations, skills in providing lively and challenging lessons and planning for the range of attainment so that all groups learn well. Weaknesses, even in otherwise satisfactory lessons, exist where teachers do not provide work which takes full account of the different levels of attainment of pupils and expectations are not high enough. In the lower juniors, unsatisfactory lessons were observed when the purpose of the lesson was unclear, pupils were not managed effectively and the pace of the lessons was slow. In the Foundation Stage, unsatisfactory teaching occurred when children were taught as a mixed-age class. In these sessions, learning intentions are not always clear. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall and most effective when pupils work with learning support assistants.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The school teaches a broad curriculum which is enriched by a very good range of extra-curricular activities. Links with the community are very good and educational visits enhance pupils' learning. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage, although satisfactory, is narrow in some areas of learning.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. There is clear identification of needs and tracking of pupils' progress. However, pupils' individual education plans are not always effectively implemented or their success evaluated by teachers.
Provision for pupils' personal, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	There are particular strengths in the way teachers promote high standards of moral and social development. Pupils' spiritual and cultural development are satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. Arrangements for child protection, first aid, and health and safety are very good. Staff know the pupils well as individuals and work hard to ensure their welfare.

Partnership with parents is good and is valued by both school and parents. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory overall. However, the information from day-to-day assessments is not used consistently and systematically to plan further work. Similarly, the marking of the pupils' work does not show them how and where they can improve.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The headteacher provides good pastoral leadership and, overall, planning for school improvement is satisfactory. Teachers with management responsibilities do not play a full part in the management of the school. The capacity to implement decisions has been limited by a high turnover of teachers.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities well and its role in monitoring the work of the school is increasing.
The school's evaluation of	Satisfactory. The headteacher and senior teacher carry out detailed

its performance	analysis of test results and they have a good knowledge of the school's strengths and areas for development. The monitoring and support of teaching have not always been rigorous enough.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Financial planning and day-to-day financial management of the school ensure all spending decisions follow the principles of best value. Funding has been used well to enhance the accommodation and has brought benefit to both teaching and learning.

The school has a mixture of experienced and teachers new to the profession. Teaching assistants are valued and make a significant contribution to pupils' progress. The accommodation is adequate, but lacks a secure outside play area with large climbing and balancing apparatus to promote children's physical development in the Foundation Stage. Overall, resources are sufficient to support learning in most subjects areas except large climbing apparatus for children in the Foundation Stage and large books for English.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
Parents are pleased with most aspects of the school, but they are especially content that their children <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • like school. • behave very well at school. • make good progress. They are also pleased that the school. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has a positive effect on their children's values and attitudes. • expects children to work hard. • keeps them well informed. 	A small number of parents do not like the leadership and management of the school.

Parents returned 17 questionnaires (18 per cent) and nine parents attended the pre-inspection meeting. Comments were favourable from the small number of parents who responded. The inspection team supports nearly all of the parents' positive comments but found that pupils' progress was satisfactory overall. Inspectors could find no evidence to support the negative views expressed by a few parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

This section should be read in conjunction with the section on standards in the summary. Details about standards will also be found at the beginning of each subject report and through examples given in those reports.

Overall, pupils' achievements are **satisfactory**.

Strengths:

- Clear identification of needs and tracking of progress made by pupils with special educational needs.

Areas for development:

- The consistency of pupils' progress during their time in each class;
- Opportunities to reinforce literacy across the curriculum and for pupils to use their information and communication technology (ICT) skills to enhance their learning in other subjects;
- Pupils' skills in using and applying their knowledge in mathematics and science;
- The general presentation of work;
- The development of children's early writing skills in the Foundation Stage⁵.

1. The last inspection in 1997 reported that standards for Year 2 and 6 pupils were above expectations in English, mathematics, science and in some of the foundation subjects. Standards were below the levels expected nationally in ICT. Since then test results have fluctuated at the end of both Years 2 and 6 and for the past three years standards have remained well below the national average in mathematics and science at the end of Year 6. This is because, over this time, the nature of the school's intake of pupils has changed. There has been a significant rise in the number of pupils identified with special educational needs and many of them join or leave the school other than at the normal time. Numerous staff changes and ineffective teaching especially for pupils in Years 3 and 4 have meant that the school has faced challenging circumstances in which to maintain and improve standards of attainment. Consequently, standards in several subjects are not as high as they were when the school was last inspected.
2. In 2002, national test results for pupils in Year 2 showed that standards, as measured by average points score, were well below the national averages in reading and writing and in line with the national average in mathematics. Results when compared with those of pupils in similar schools were very low, that is to say in the lowest five per cent of schools nationally in reading and writing, but below average in mathematics. Based on teachers' assessments, attainment in science shows below average standards when compared with all schools, as well as similar schools. When the end of Year 2 test results in reading, writing and mathematics for 2002 are compared with the previous years, they show fluctuating standards dependent on the percentage of pupils with learning difficulties.
3. In the 2002 national tests for pupils at the end of Year 6, results in English were above the national average due to the school's focus and good targeted support. In mathematics and science standards were well below the national average. When compared with similar schools, standards are average in English but in the lowest five per cent of schools in mathematics and science. Test results for 2002 indicate some differences in the performance of boys and girls at the end of both Years 2 and 6. Caution should be taken in interpreting these statistical results, as the number of pupils taking the tests was always less than 20. As previously stated a number of contributory

⁵ Foundation Stage is the provision for children aged from three to the end of the Reception Year. QCA (Qualification and Curriculum Authority) has produced a set of Early Learning Goals for the end of the Foundation Stage. These goals are sets of skills, knowledge and understanding that children might be expected to achieve by the age of five. There are six areas of learning: personal, social and emotional development, language, literacy and communication, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development.

factors have an adverse effect on standards that are attained and mask the progress that the majority of pupils make. Comparing the school's results with those achieved nationally does not accurately reflect pupils' achievements. An analysis of the results of the pupils who took their Year 2 national test in the school have been compared with the standards reached in the 2002 national test at the end of Year 6 and this showed that pupils' achievement was satisfactory and in some instances good. As noted above results for 2002 are much worse than those of similar schools. Such comparisons are not reliable for Ecton Primary, as a number of factors are not taken into consideration.

4. The school analyses its performance data thoroughly and the information gained is well used to set targets for raising standards in English and mathematics. In 2002, the school's challenging targets were exceeded in English and very nearly met in mathematics. The school continues to have high expectations and very challenging targets have been set in consultation by the local education authority for Year 6 pupils for 2003. It is unlikely that these will be met because nine out of the 11 pupils have been identified as having special educational needs.
5. Attainment on entry to the school is complex and varies significantly from year to year. Since the school was last inspected the attainment on entry has fallen and for the present Years 2 was below average. However, the attainment of the present Reception Year children is average and similar to that found in most schools.
6. Children are admitted to the mixed-age Reception/Year 1 class at the beginning of the year in which they are five. Overall, children achieve satisfactorily in the Foundation Stage, so that by the end of the year nearly all are well in line to achieve the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning. In their early writing skills children do not meet the expectations. This is partly because there are too few planned opportunities to develop these skills.
7. The findings of the inspection are that standards in English are below the expected level at the end of Years 2 and 6 in nearly all aspects of the subject, except in speaking and listening where standards are in line with expectations. Pupils listen attentively to teachers' explanations and instructions, respond appropriately to questions and more able pupils confidently and articulately express opinions. The good use made of discussion partners helps to clarify and extend pupils' understanding of what others are saying. This contributes well to their learning. In reading and writing, standards are below expectations. Although pupils learn how to write in the variety of styles and for different purposes, the skills they learn in the literacy sessions are not being developed further in other subjects. Written work on display around the school is generally well presented, but this neat quality of writing and presentation is not seen pupils' books, many of which are untidy.
8. In mathematics and science, standards, although below expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6, are better than the results of the 2002 National Curriculum tests. Pupils have too few opportunities to extend their learning by investigating and solving mathematical problems. In science, there has been an increased emphasis on experimental and investigative work since the last inspection. However, the delivery of the science curriculum on a two-year rolling programme has resulted in pupils often being given the same work regardless of their prior attainment in Years 3 and 4 and Years 5 and 6. Consequently, standards are affected. Standards in ICT are in line with national expectations and pupils make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. The improvements made since the last inspection are a direct result of the high priority given to staff training in the subject as well as the significant improvements made in the provision of computers. Although the required skills are taught progressively, pupils have too few opportunities to use technology to support other areas of their learning. In the majority of other subjects standards are in line with the levels expected nationally, except in physical education where standards are above expectations and history and geography were standards are below. In religious education, standards are in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Inspection evidence confirms, that starting from below average standards on entry to school the present Years 2 and 6

pupils, make satisfactory and sometimes good progress. Overall, pupils' achievements are satisfactory. However, assessment information is not always well used to plan work to meet the prior attainment of pupils of different ages and levels of attainment in the mixed-age classes.

9. The school is largely successful in meeting its aim to ensure that all pupils achieve equally well. However, ineffective teaching in Years 3 and 4 has led to some inequality in the progress made by pupils in this class. The leadership and management of the school are very aware of this and from September a new teacher has been appointed. Pupils with special educational needs receive appropriate work and make progress at similar rates to their peers. This includes those who have a formal statement of need who make good progress in relation to their prior attainment and to the targets set for them.

Pupils' attitudes and values and personal development.

Overall standards are **good**.

Strengths

- Pupils have good attitudes to school;
- Pupils behave well;
- Relationships are very good.

Areas for development

- Standards of behaviour are inconsistent across the school.

10. At the time of the last inspection pupils were found to have good attitudes to learning, to enjoy their work, to be self-disciplined and to co-operate well with each other. These positive features are still to be found and the school demonstrates that it continues to encourage good standards of behaviour and also that it is promoting good attitudes and values. Where teaching is good, behaviour is good. However, where teaching was unsatisfactory there was a significant lapse of standards of behaviour which inhibited the learning of others. Where teachers have high expectations of work and behaviour, pupils respond positively. They are attentive and eager to answer questions in assemblies. Most are interested in their work and generally sustain their concentration during lessons and respond well to the teacher, to adult helpers and to each other. Pupils work and play co-operatively. They are confident to show their achievements to the other pupils who value their work. Opportunities for independent working are, however, generally limited. Pupils in the Foundation Stage are happy and are well settled into school. They are responsive and confident.
11. The behaviour of pupils around the school is good and acknowledged by the parents. When visiting the church, for instance, pupils were respectful, attentive and very well behaved. From an early age, pupils develop a clear understanding of right and wrong and they respond well to the school's systems of rewards and sanctions. There have been no exclusions during the last year. Neither racism nor bullying are issues in the school.
12. Relationships within the school are very good. Pupils are polite and confident with adults and are happy to talk about their work and their feelings about school. Older pupils support the younger pupils in a very caring, responsible manner. When a younger child hurt herself on the playground, for example concerned older pupils accompanied her into school. Pupils play in mixed-age and mixed-gender groups. The number of tasks for which the older pupils are responsible is developing. Pupils willingly accept responsibilities both in the classrooms and around the school. They help clear the hall after all pupils have had their sandwiches at lunchtime and ensure that the hall is ready for afternoon lessons. There is now a school council, through which the pupils support with enthusiasm the school's policies for healthy eating and looking after the environment. Pupils with special educational needs as well as those from different ethnic groups have positive attitudes to their work. They are well integrated into the life of the school.
13. Attendance is satisfactory. Most pupils attend regularly and arrive at school on time. Absence is

largely due to sickness and holidays taken during term time and there is little unauthorised absence.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is **satisfactory**.

Strengths:

- Teachers build positive relationships with their pupils;
- The very good teaching has both pace and challenge;
- Good use is made of support staff to extend pupils' learning.

Areas for development:

- Planning for children in the Foundation Stage;
- The use of ongoing assessment, including marking.

14. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory and this is similar to the findings of the last inspection. There were several instances of good and very good teaching, but also unsatisfactory teaching of children in the Foundation Stage and in Years 3 and 4. This inconsistent quality of teaching is leading to some uneven learning in year groups and subjects, with the teacher of the oldest pupils trying to plug the gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding when pupils leave Years 3 and 4. Since the last inspection there has been an almost complete change of teaching staff.
15. Of the 25 lessons or part of lessons seen, teaching was very good in four lessons, good in eight lessons and satisfactory in nine lessons. Although the four unsatisfactory lessons (two in the Foundation Stage and two in the Years 3 and 4 class) form a high proportion of the overall lessons observed, the school is fully aware of the weakness in Years 3 and 4 and an experienced teacher has been appointed for September. The unsatisfactory lessons in this class were characterised by slow pace, inappropriate match of work to the needs of pupils and weak management strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour. In the Foundation Stage, activities were not well planned and the monitoring of children's experiences was not sufficiently rigorous.
16. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory, but with some good and less than satisfactory practice. Good teaching in the Foundation Stage gets children off to a good start, especially in the basic skills. In these instances teaching is sharp, focused and skilful. The range of activities organised is effective in promoting learning in all areas of the curriculum. In particular, children's personal and social development is given good emphasis. This plays a significant part in helping children take a more active part in other learning activities. However, the teacher's knowledge and understanding of the stepping-stones and Early Learning Goals is not yet strong enough. Insufficient use is made of assessment information to provide suitably matched work and the monitoring of individual children's experiences is not sufficiently rigorous to provide staff with information that would allow them to produce a balanced curriculum. Overall, since the last inspection, the school has not kept pace with the national changes of how to best provide and teach a high-quality Foundation Stage curriculum.
17. Good and sometimes very good teaching was observed in nearly all classes across the school. Some of the weaknesses identified in the teaching in the previous inspection have been dealt with and this, as well as the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, support from the local education authority and the school's focus on writing, is beginning to have a positive effect on standards in English and mathematics. In Year 1 and 2 and in Years 5 and 6 the teaching of English and mathematics is at least satisfactory with some good and very good teaching. Where teaching is very good, teachers regularly share learning objectives with the pupils at the beginning of the lesson and refer to them throughout so that at each stage pupils know what they should be learning. In mathematics, teachers are familiar with the National Numeracy Strategy and make appropriate use of all the elements. The pace of lessons is usually sufficiently brisk to support pupils' development in rapid mental mathematics. However, pupils have limited opportunities to use their investigative skills to solve problems. Although literacy and numeracy skills are satisfactorily taught across the curriculum and key words are emphasised in several subjects, there are, not enough planned opportunities for pupils to extend their literacy skills

in all subjects. Although the teaching of science is satisfactory overall, pupils in the mixed-age classes in Years 3 and 4 and Years 5 and 6 are often given identical work regardless of their age or prior attainment, and work is not always well matched to the National Curriculum. Since the last inspection teachers are now more confident in the teaching of ICT and in some lessons, such as art and design, teachers' planning effectively incorporates the use of ICT skills. However, overall there is insufficient planning for the use of ICT to support work across the curriculum. There was insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement about teaching and learning in art and design, history, geography, music and physical education. In all other subjects teaching was satisfactory. Whilst teaching is broadly satisfactory, some weaknesses remain, notably in planning for the different levels of attainment and this has a negative impact on pupils' learning over time and the standards they achieve.

18. Teachers generally have a satisfactory command of the subjects they teach, with the exception of aspects of science and religious education. Secure knowledge of the subjects they teach enables staff to make effective and pertinent teaching points and to provide pupils with accurate and relevant information. This was well demonstrated in a Year 5/6 mathematics lesson on converting fractions to decimals. The teacher's very good subject knowledge led to pupils making very good progress during the lesson.
19. Since the last inspection, the school has addressed the issue of improving the longer term planning in order to help teachers improve their shorter term planning thereby improving the systematic development in pupils' learning. Good use is made of a computerised system to support teachers when planning. However, this has not had enough time to impact on improving the overall quality of teaching and learning and lesson plans do not routinely identify the provision for pupils of different levels of attainment in the mixed-age classes.
20. Overall, teachers' expectations of pupils' behaviour and their work are inconsistent. Most teachers are particularly good at managing pupils and establishing orderly classroom procedures so that they create very effective learning environment for their pupils. For example, in a good Year 2 English lesson on 'posing questions to find out information', the secure relationships between the teacher and pupils played a significant part in giving lower-attaining pupils the confidence to question the teacher in her role as 'Gran'. However, teaching and learning are not always as good as they could be in Years 3/4. This is because the teacher insistence on good behaviour is not high enough and pupils become very noisy, causing the pace of the lesson to slow. As a result, pupils do not achieve as well as they could. Teachers' expectations for the accuracy, quality and presentation of work are not high enough.
21. Teachers' use of day-to-day assessment is inconsistent and unsatisfactory overall. There are good examples of regular assessments in English and mathematics where pupils' recent performance is recorded and used effectively to plan suitable tasks in subsequent lessons. However, little evidence was seen in other subjects of teachers planning lessons on the basis of what pupils had learned previously. Where teaching is good or better, teachers often use questions well; for example, carefully targeting questions to check and challenge all pupils' thinking and understanding, and to ensure that there are equal opportunities for both boys and girls to answer questions and make contributions. Good examples were seen during an ICT lesson in Year 2 where the teacher's effective questioning on how to enter instructions to control the movement of a floor robot led to pupils making good progress. In these sessions teachers also make good use of the end of lesson discussions to review the learning objectives and discuss with pupils the extent to which they have been achieved. This practice gives teachers an opportunity to evaluate their own teaching and pupils' learning, and to know what to plan for the next lesson. A review of pupils' earlier work indicate that marking is often minimal, with little evaluative comment or pointers on how pupils might improve their performance. Whilst there are some good examples of helpful marking, these are not typical.
22. Homework begins in the Foundation Stage, partly to encourage links with parents and increases as

pupils move through the school. It is regularly set in English, mathematics in Years 3 to 6 and is used satisfactorily to support learning. Occasional research topics are set to reinforce learning in other subjects. Reading books and spellings are sent home regularly in the Years 1 and 2 classes.

23. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall and most effective when pupils work with learning support assistants. In these sessions, specific needs are well catered for and pupils make good progress. It is not always apparent that teachers make use of pupils' individual education plans to ensure that the work they prepare for them is really appropriate. In some instances, especially when pupils need support for their behavioural needs, this can result in work not matching attainment levels and pupils become restless.

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

The school has a **satisfactory** curriculum and overall makes **good** provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Strengths

- The range of activities beyond lessons is very good;
- Links with the local community greatly enrich the curriculum;
- The provision for pupils' social and moral development is very good;
- The quality of the ICT curriculum has improved significantly since the last inspection.

Areas for development

- More opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual and cultural development.

24. The school provides a broad curriculum that meets statutory requirements. For pupils in Years 1 to 6 the curriculum is satisfactory. Pupils of all ages have equal access to the curriculum irrespective of gender, or ethnicity. All except one year group is taught in mixed-age classes and this presents a challenge to teachers. Work is not always well matched to the needs of the pupils. When the timetable allows, single age-group teaching takes place, which is more focused and better matched to pupils' needs. Teachers have to take consideration of the significant number of children with special educational needs, and the fact that many pupils join and leave the school other than at the normal times.
25. The Foundation Stage curriculum is satisfactory. The curriculum takes account of the six areas of learning and is planned to enable children to achieve the Early Learning Goals. The needs of children in the Foundation Stage are met effectively when taught separately rather than when taught with Year 1 when the needs of the wide age range and levels of attainment are not always well met.
26. Since the last inspection, curriculum planning has improved. The school uses a commercially produced planning system, which teachers annotate to take account of national guidance. This provides a more focused and coherent curriculum plan. Teachers' long-term planning shows a systematic development of skills knowledge and understanding in each subject. The delivery of the curriculum in some of the non-core subjects is in half-termly blocks in a two-year cycle. This system has been recently reviewed and adaptations made to the curriculum, for example, in geography, to ensure continuity of learning and improves pupil progress. However, further improvement is needed. Medium-term planning identifies learning objectives, but does not always plan for the needs of pupils' different ages and levels of attainment. Often teachers give the same work to all pupils in the mixed-age classes whatever their levels of attainment.
27. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory throughout the school. The requirements of the national Code of Practice are met and detailed individual education plans are established and regularly reviewed. Targets are realistic, and where possible parents are involved in the reviews.

28. The National strategies for the teaching of literacy and numeracy have been satisfactorily adopted. In some classes, these have been tailored to meet the needs of individual pupils better than in others. However, teachers do not consistently plan to develop literacy and numeracy in other subjects across the curriculum. There are limited opportunities for pupils to reinforce or extend their literacy or numeracy skills through other subjects such as science, history or design and technology.
29. Good provision is made for pupils' personal social and health education. Through topic work, lessons and extra-curricular activities, pupils are taught to maintain safe and healthy lives. The school has good policies for sex education and drugs misuse.
30. The curriculum is enhanced by a very good range of extra-curricular activities. There are clubs organised by teaching staff, parents, and friends of the school. The curriculum is improved by educational and residential visits. Visitors to the school help further develop pupils' interest and learning.
31. Links with the community are very good and pupils gain much from these well-planned activities. The school uses the local environment effectively to support its work. For example, pupils visit the church weekly for collective worship and, during the inspection, the older pupils remained there to complete work linked to religious education and art and design. Many visits are made to places of interest linked to topics and pupils benefit greatly from these first hand experiences. The school has very good relationships with local pre-school and good links with the secondary schools. All work closely together to achieve a smooth transition between phases of education. The school is actively involved in village and local events, such as the Easter parade. A member of staff runs the Ecton Youth club. Villages are welcomed into school and the local charities are very supportive of the school. Many of the resources and facilities offered to pupils have been provided with their financial assistance.
32. Overall, the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Spiritual development is satisfactorily promoted through assemblies whether held in school or in the local church. Pupils attend the village church for a weekly assembly usually taken by the vicar. Although time consuming, this contributes well to the pupils' spiritual development. Pupils absorb the atmosphere of the occasion and show great respect. Teachers develop values very well, especially Christian values and use questions effectively. During lessons some opportunities for reflection are missed.
33. The provision for pupils' moral development is very good. From a young age pupils are taught right from wrong in all aspects of school life. The very good behaviour systems that follow the school policies are in place throughout the school. These lead to good behaviour and positive attitudes across the school. Pupils benefit from effective moral teaching in assembly, an example of this was in the assembly; in church when they learned about the story of 'The Prodigal Son'. Within the curriculum, there is a good emphasis placed on the need to care for people and all living things and a good understanding of the need to care for the environment.
34. Provision for social development is also very good. There are many examples of pupils working together, sharing and helping each other. They are encouraged to work in pairs, and in small groups, and to negotiate with each other in many practical sessions. This is particularly evident in subjects like physical education and design and technology. In a physical education lesson, good strategies were employed to teach pupils in Year 2 to co-operate and to respect each other's contributions. Pupils chose one of their number to demonstrate their good movements to the class while others applauded the effort. Lunchtimes are very sociable and well-organised occasions with pupils sitting at tables in mixed-age groupings. Older pupils look after and play with younger pupils. The residential visits in which all pupils have the opportunity to take part enhance pupils' social development. They are reminded of their social responsibilities as they raise money for

different charities. In spite of the fact that many pupils who attend the school come from outside the village, the school is very part of the village and local residents support the school well. This is to the credit of the school. Pupils enjoy taking part in competitive games and sports against other schools. This further improves their social development. There are good relationships throughout the school which help the understanding of living in community. The school has close links with the local church, the village schools within the local cluster group and the local secondary schools. This has been enhanced with the building of the new school hall, which allows greater access for parents and the local community to meet.

35. Provision for the pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils learn about their own cultural traditions through local visits linked to geography, history and religious education. Traditional crafts, for example lace making, are encouraged through visitors working with the pupils. They learn to appreciate differing forms of art, for example the book illustrations of Quentin Blake and the work of Rembrandt, which was used to illustrate the assembly in the village church. Pupils develop an awareness of other cultures and customs in geography and in religious education they learn about other faiths. There are good displays featuring Indian crafts and The Chinese New Year which aid the school's success in promoting pupils knowledge and appreciation of the traditions, and the diversity and richness of other cultures.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

Overall, the school cares **very well** for its pupils.

Strengths

- Effective policies and procedures promote pupils' welfare very well;
- There are very good procedures for checking and recording pupils' behaviour.

Areas for development

- Assessment procedures are not fully in place in all subjects and the information gathered is not used effectively.

36. The school makes very good provision for the well being and personal support and guidance of all pupils, in a caring and supportive environment and this has successfully been maintained since the last inspection. Parents expressed the view that the school provides consistently good support for their children and is a safe, happy and caring place in which their children's needs are well known. Inspection evidence confirms these opinions. The school is an orderly, caring and sharing community, which abides by a few rules. These enhance the pupils' development of self-discipline, personal and social skills, resulting in good standards of behaviour that are conducive for learning. In classrooms teachers and support staff work effectively together. Appropriate policies and procedures are in place to meet the personal, social and emotional needs of pupils.

37. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good. Parents are generally conscientious in notifying the school and staff generally follow up any absences where no notification has been received. Punctuality is monitored carefully. The school works very closely with the education welfare service where necessary. There are very good procedures in place for child protection and promoting the well being, health and safety of all pupils, with high staff awareness of the issues. The school has close links with other agencies and deals very effectively with any concerns they may have. The school is kept clean and well maintained. Appropriate health and safety checks are carried out regularly. The school actively promotes healthy and safe living through its comprehensive personal, social, health programme and participation in the 'Healthy School' initiative.

38. The school has very good measures to promote and maintain good discipline and behaviour with a reward system that pupils understand and value. There are clear guidelines for staff. Support staff make a significant contribution to the successful inclusion of pupils with behavioural difficulties in lessons and other activities. Appropriate procedures are in place for dealing with bullying or racial harassment, although there are almost no incidents.

39. The Foundation Stage staff make very good links with parents and the pre-school settings prior to children joining the mixed-age Reception/Year 1 class. There are very good induction arrangements, which help settle the youngest children into school. All children new to the school are quickly and effectively integrated because of the school's caring systems.
40. The school now has satisfactory procedures for assessing how well pupils are doing in English and mathematics, and this is an improvement since the last inspection. Information about pupils' performance in both subjects is regularly collected, and teachers can easily check if individuals are on line to achieve the targets that have been set for them. Use of assessment information is only in its infancy, but improving. At present, when it appears that pupils are not making enough progress, this information is always used effectively to change what or how the pupils are taught. There have been staffing issues and changes that have impacted on the consistency and rigour of the school's use of assessment information. At present there are limited procedures for collecting evidence of how well pupils are doing in the non-core subjects. The school recognises that a checklist of skills would provide useful information about the starting point for new learning in many subjects.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

Overall the school has a **good** partnership with parents.

Strengths:

- Parents are supportive of the school;
- Parents think very highly of the school;
- The quality of information for parents is good.

Area for development

- None.
41. The school's relationship with parents is good and benefits from the commitment of staff to work in partnership with parents. From the response to the parents' questionnaire and at the parents' meeting prior to the inspection, it is apparent that parents are very supportive of the school. Many are actively involved in events organised by the Friends' Association and significant funds are raised each year, which are used to enhance the school environment, resources and the educational experiences, which pupils receive. Most parents comment very favourably on the openness of the school and say they are made to feel welcome and staff are very approachable. 'home school agreements' have been implemented and there is a very good range of opportunities provided for parents to find out about the work of the school. These comprise special assemblies, curriculum evenings and parents evenings. Parents have good opportunities for both formal and informal daily discussions with staff.
42. The quality of information for parents is good. Parents are kept well informed through regular letters and newsletters about school life. The school prospectus and governor's annual report to parents provide up-to-date information on the school. Annual written reports to parents are generally good and provide information on pupils' progress and knowledge. Some have pertinent comments for improvement.
43. Individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs are drawn up to provide appropriate targets, which are shared with parents who are always invited to attend meetings and reviews, although not many do so.
44. Parents are appreciative of the opportunities they have to see the work of the school. A small number of parents come into school regularly to help in classes. They are always valued and welcomed. Parents are encouraged to help children at home with reading, spellings and other homework activities. Pupils are encouraged to bring items in from home to support topics they are

interested in. However, in spite of the school's efforts, attendance at curriculum evenings is not good.

45. Overall, the school has successfully built on the good relationships with parents and continues to promote actively partnership in learning.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

Overall, the standard of leadership and management is **satisfactory**.

Strengths:

- Financial planning.

Areas for further development:

- Monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning and using the information effectively in developing the work of the school;
- Resources, to ensure that children in the Foundation Stage have access to large climbing apparatus.

46. Although the leadership and management of the school are satisfactory overall, the school faces a raft of difficulties. As a result, insufficient time has been spent analysing the school's performance and seeking improvements. The headteacher has to work against a background of inadequate and frequently changing staffing, a mobile school population which contains a high percentage of pupils with special educational needs. Nevertheless, the headteacher is strongly committed and has been successful in creating a school that provides good pastoral care for all its pupils. Since reducing her teaching commitment she has developed a much clearer understanding of how the school needs to improve. She believes strongly that all pupils can achieve and, as a result, the school has earned a reputation for succeeding with pupils who have learning difficulties. Inspection evidence support this.
47. Although there is satisfactory delegation of responsibilities to members of staff there is an absence of a closely-knit and coherent team essential for a corporate ethos within the school. The arrangements for monitoring and evaluating teaching are unsatisfactory. Although the school has a programme of monitoring in place, systems are not sufficiently rigorous or frequent enough to iron out the inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and leaning across the school. In addition, the evidence gained from these monitoring activities is not evaluated effectively to target support where it is most needed. As is common to small schools, each teacher manages two or more subjects. Curriculum co-ordinators contribute satisfactorily, but a significant number are inexperienced or recent appointments.
48. Overall, the role of subject co-ordinators remains underdeveloped. They have yet to make an impact and do not have a sufficiently clear picture of the standards in their subject or of the progress pupils make.
49. Overall, the governors play a satisfactory role in shaping the school and accounting for its performance. The governors are able, active and very supportive of the headteacher. They provide effective support and are involved in decision making and evaluating aspects of the school's work. An effective committee structure operates, with clear terms of reference. The governors make good use of opportunities to increase their knowledge about the school through training, school visits and meetings with the teachers with management responsibilities. As a result, they are acquiring an increasing understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement, which will help them guide the school forward more rigorously. Some governors make occasional visits to gain information at first hand and discuss achievements and concerns with staff and some subject leaders.
50. The school is efficiently managed. Financial planning is good, governors are fully aware of the implications of the budget. Efficient use is made of technology in the administration of the school and this provides the headteacher and governors with regularly updated and relevant information for financial decision-making. The school makes good use of the allocated funds to meet the needs of the whole school and individual pupils. Funds have been appropriately earmarked to provide additional support in classes and resources for building development. Additional funds, available for the school's work in supporting pupils with special educational needs are used effectively. The school is aware of and effectively applies the principles of best value. All funds

are administered by the headteacher in conjunction with the governing body. Given that unit costs for small schools are high, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

51. The school has an adequate number of teaching and support staff to meet the needs of the curriculum. Some teachers are very experienced while others are new to the profession. As the number of teaching staff is small, difficulties have arisen when there has been a need to cover staff absence or the need to support and develop less experienced members of staff. In addition, some teachers have not always been willing to accept the need to develop their own practice. The headteacher and 'senior teacher' are now establishing ways of addressing school development issues together, to ensure that the staff work as a team and to improve the overall provision and standards attained by pupils.

52. The accommodation has significantly improved since the last inspection and parents commented that this has had a positive impact on the work of the school. Overall the accommodation is good for the number of pupils on roll and the curriculum provided. The space available for teaching is used effectively and provides an attractive and welcoming working environment for pupils and staff. The new ICT suite provides an excellent facility and has a very positive impact on teaching and learning. The hall extension is very good and is a very valuable resource for pupils' all round development and for links with parents and the community. The attractively refurbished library area now enables pupils to make good use of this resource. The outdoor covered classroom in the Foundation Stage is used well, but the outdoor area does not provide a safely enclosed, readily accessible, stimulating external environment. The Foundation Stage teaching areas are not accessible for adults or children with physical disabilities. However, the school has identified this in their action plan to address the Disabilities Discrimination Act. The school has an adequate range of resources to meet the demands of the curriculum except for large apparatus for children who complete the Foundation Stage in the Reception class, few 'big books' in English, software for ICT and resources for design and technology.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

53. In order to improve the quality of education provided for pupils, the governors, headteacher and staff need to:

- **Improve consistency in teaching through the school and its capacity to promote the pupils' learning in all subjects by:**
 - ensuring individual teachers' subject knowledge is good enough by providing training where needed;
 - ensuring that the outcomes from monitoring and information from regular on going assessment are used effectively and systematically to plan further work and set targets for improvement;
 - ensuring that lessons have sharp and clear learning intentions which focus on what pupils of different ages and levels of attainment are expected to learn and do by the end of the session;
 - raising teachers' expectations of the quality of presentation of pupils' work;
 - improving the quality of marking so that the pupils have a clear idea of what they need to do to improve their work.

[paragraphs 7, 8, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 72, 76, 80, 82, 84, 87]
- **Improve the rigour with which teaching and learning are monitored and evaluated, providing, where necessary, guidance and training for staff who are to be involved.**

[paragraphs 47, 86, 93, 96, 98, 103, 107, 117]
- **Further develop the school's provision of the Foundation Stage by :**
 - ensuring that all teachers understand the use and implications of the stepping-stones and Early Learning Goals in planning activities and lessons;
 - improving assessment so that it is firmly based on the stepping-stones and that the information gained is used to formulate individual targets and programmes for all children especially the higher attainers;
 - improving short-term planning to indicate in detail what different groups of pupils will experience and learn and ensuring all activities available to children are carefully planned;
 - ensuring that there are more regular planned opportunities for children to link their oral work more closely to their written work;
 - implementing the school's plans to provide an accessible, safe and secure outdoor play area with large apparatus to develop children's climbing and balancing skills.

[paragraphs 6, 16, 53-66]
- **Continue to delegate further responsibilities, which will enable staff to become more effective members of the management team thus fostering a greater sense of teamwork.**

[paragraph 47]

In addition to the key issues, the governors should consider the following additional less significant issues for inclusion in the action plan:

- reviewing the schemes of work in the non-core subjects in order to ensure that learning develops systematically year to year; [paragraphs 8, 17, 26]
- providing more opportunities for pupils to develop and apply their mathematical knowledge in problem-solving; [paragraphs 8, 17, 76]
- ensuring that ICT is actively and regularly used to support subjects of the curriculum; [paragraphs 8, 17, 99]
- considering ways of strengthening opportunities for pupils' spiritual and cultural development through the curriculum; [paragraphs 32, 35, 80]

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	25
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	18

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number		4	8	9	4		
Percentage		16	32	36	16		

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 four percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	103
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	32

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.8
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	6	8	14

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	2	2	4
	Girls	8	7	8
	Total	10	9	12
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	71 (71)	64 (59)	86 (94)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	2	4	4
	Girls	8	8	8
	Total	10	12	12
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	71 (71)	86 (94)	86 (94)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	3	9	12

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	1	1	1
	Girls	9	7	9
	Total	10	8	10
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	83 (57)	67 (64)	83 (79)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	1	1	1
	Girls	9	9	8
	Total	10	10	9
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	83 (57)	83 (64)	75 (64)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

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

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	95	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	3	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

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

Teachers and classes**Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	5.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19 : 1
Average class size	26

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	111

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	0
Total number of education support staff	0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	0
Number of pupils per FTE adult	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000 - 03
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£

Total income	316 160
Total expenditure	288 160
Expenditure per pupil	2 484
Balance brought forward from previous year	6 000
Balance carried forward to next year	28 000

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2.14
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3.43

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

104

Number of questionnaires returned

18 (17%)

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	94	6	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	83	11	0	0	6
Behaviour in the school is good.	61	33	0	0	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	28	61	6	6	0
The teaching is good.	56	39	6	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	56	39	6	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	94	6	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	67	33	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	44	50	6	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	61	17	0	22	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	78	22	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	56	28	6	0	6

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Strengths:

- There are good procedures for settling children into school;
- Provision for children's personal, social and emotional development.

Areas for development:

- Not all activities are well planned;
- The monitoring of children's experiences is not sufficiently rigorous to ensure that all children experience fully the wide range of activities on offer;
- Resources are limited, especially large construction materials and apparatus for climbing and balancing within a secure environment.

54. When the school was last inspected different criteria were in use. No clear judgement was made about the quality of provision for the youngest children. The overall quality of provision for the children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory, with some good features and some weaknesses, especially when children are taught as a mixed-age Reception/Year 1 class. When children start school, their attainment covers the full ability range and is broadly in line with that of children of a similar age. However, not all have had pre-school experience prior to starting school. The entry testing data and teachers' own assessments confirm this attainment profile. All children, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress and, by the end of the Foundation Stage, most are on course to meet the nationally agreed outcomes in nearly all areas. The exceptions are in their personal, social and emotional development, where children often exceed the expectations for their age and in early writing skills, which are below expectations. Overall, children are satisfactorily prepared for the next phase of learning. However, their achievements are limited by weak planning, insufficient monitoring, uninspiring accommodation and limited resources to deliver a stimulating curriculum. For example, there are few big books and a lack of large climbing apparatus.
55. There are eleven children in the Foundation Stage who are taught in a class with Years 1 pupils. Arrangements for starting school are good and positive links are established with the parents. They are well informed and are encouraged to take an active interest in their children's learning.
56. Although there is no Foundation Stage scheme of work to provide support when planning, children receive a satisfactory curriculum. They have access to a wide range of learning opportunities which covers all areas of learning and is based on the Early Learning Goals. For the majority of time children in the mixed-age class are taught by a full-time teacher whose knowledge of the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. For three mornings, she has the support of well-trained and experienced Foundation Stage teachers whose main focus is literacy, language and communication, and mathematical development. Planning for these separate sessions is good and the needs of children are generally well met. However, when children are taught as a mixed-age class the needs of the youngest children are not always met. This is partly because daily lesson plans do not always make clear what skills the children will acquire from the range of activities on offer.
57. Records are sometimes kept for children who have taken part in the adult focused activities, but there is no systematic method of recording children's use of, and progress in, the different areas, for example, the computer, writing or the role-play areas. Whilst many informal observations are made, few are written down, so it is difficult for staff to remember which children have had experience of the planned activities. There is room for more incisive assessment matched against the stepping stones of the Early Learning Goals to help increase the rate of progress of the more able children.

Personal, social and emotional development

58. The provision for personal, social and emotional development is good. Most children make good progress and by the end of the Foundation Stage, many attain standards above those expected in this area of learning. All children come into the classrooms happily and confidently, and part easily from their parents and carers at the beginning of the day. They respond well to classroom routines such as listening quietly to the teacher during registration, putting their hands up when they want to contribute to a discussion and responding when their attention is required. They demonstrate independence in selecting activities and show an eagerness to explore new learning situations. Although the majority of children are interested in what they are doing, concentrate and persevere in their learning, a few children with limited concentration lose interest, and drift away without completing the task. As a result, they do not gain fully from the activities on offer. All children have very good relationships with adults and other children. They are confident and friendly and are beginning to develop an appropriate understanding of right and wrong. For example, when playing together in the sand tray they ask permission to exchange toys and show consideration to children who want to join them when using the puppets in the 'Puppet Theatre'.
59. Teaching is good in this area of learning. Children are managed very well and adults have clear expectations of their behaviour. The teacher and support staff plan carefully to help children extend their social skills. They have a very encouraging and consistent approach. Adults provide good role models, particularly when they talk to and question the children. All value each child's contribution. However, lesson plans do not always make clear what skills the children will acquire and monitoring is not always implemented or sufficiently rigorous.

Communication, language and literacy

60. By the end of the Foundation Stage, children attain standards that meet the Early Learning Goals for children of this age in speaking and listening and early reading. Although some children reach the expected standards in early writing, many do not. Overall, children very much enjoy listening to stories and sharing books. When listening to the story, 'You can't beat a Cheetah', children listened attentively and were absorbed by the story. Most use a growing vocabulary with increasing fluency to express their ideas in the role-play area set up as the 'Puppet Theatre'. Children enjoy looking at books and understand how books are organised. They know that print tells a story, handle books correctly and know, for example that the pictures usually help to make sense of the story. The good emphasis on phonics prepares children well for their early reading skills. Less able children successfully identify initial sounds associated with the letters of the alphabet and know that 'jade', 'jelly' and 'jump' start with the letter 'j'. More able children know that thumb begin with the 'th' sound and are well on the way towards becoming independent readers by the time they start Year 1. Children take books home to share with their parents and this is much appreciated by parents. However, the range and quality of big books available is not sufficiently stimulating to encourage children to show interest in books. Children's writing shows that they know print goes from left to right. Several write their names independently and, when writing their 'news', many form recognisable letters. Although many children enjoy using the writing area there is insufficient adult support and guidance in developing written work. Overall, there are not enough planned or self-initiated opportunities for children to practise their early writing skills independently or to be supported by an adult in other areas of learning, for example, through play opportunities in 'writing' postcards, shopping lists and letters or recording work in science and mathematics.
61. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Teaching is good when children in the Foundation Stage are taught separately. Adults interact suitably with the children, exploiting many opportunities to increase their vocabulary. They use praise well to build up confidence and self-esteem. Teachers develop the children's love of books and good questioning encourages children to think about the events and characters in the stories read to them. The teaching of basic skills is good and children take part in the school's literacy programme, which has been suitably adapted

for this age group. However, there are missed opportunities to extend children's early writing skills. Earlier work shows the children have made slow progress when compared with their prior attainment. The work provided does not build well enough upon the previous work and there are not enough planned opportunities for writing independently or for different purposes.

Mathematical development

62. Most children attain standards that are in line with the level expected by the end of the Foundation Stage. They accurately order numbers to ten and perform simple addition and subtraction activities. Number activities are thoughtfully planned and help children to use their knowledge of sharing, for example, when they use play dough to make 'food' for the dolls' picnic and share it equally among the three dolls. Earlier work indicates that more able children handle numbers competently and identify missing numbers between one and 20. Children accurately match numbers and shapes, sequence patterns and nearly all correctly form numerals. They confidently name squares, triangles and circles and identify identical shapes in a picture and recognise three-dimensional shapes such as cube, cone and sphere. They are aware of concepts such as 'more than' and 'less than' when looking at quantity, and 'taller than' and 'shorter than' when making direct comparison of two lengths. Most children know the month of their birthday and can name the days of the week. They make satisfactory use of ICT to support their mathematical development.
63. The quality of teaching of mathematics and the provision for the development and awareness of mathematical language is satisfactory. Teachers have a developing understanding of the Foundation Stage and use methods adapted from the National Numeracy Strategy. Although this helps to familiarise children with what will follow when they begin the National Curriculum, the time given to some discussion periods and whole-class activities is sometimes too long, and children with limited concentration start to lose interest. Group activities are well planned and many good opportunities are provided for children to undertake practical mathematical activities such as when using party food to introduce simple division. Probing questions are used well to encourage children to think and answer clearly before the adult reinforces their understanding by careful explanations. Although adults make good use of incidental opportunities to reinforce learning in mathematics, other opportunities are missed. For example, there is not always sufficient intervention using targeted questioning by adults to encourage children to apply their developing mathematical skills when using sand and water or in the role-play area.

Knowledge and understanding of the world.

64. Provision for children's development in this aspect of the Foundation Stage curriculum is sound and most children reach the level expected by the end of the Foundation Stage. Children are curious and interested in their surroundings, and enjoy exploring the new experiences offered in the Reception/Year 1 class. Good opportunities to work with Year 1 pupils have helped the children to gain good scientific knowledge. Their earlier work and previous planning show, for example that they know that pushing and pulling things can make objects start or stop moving. They use construction equipment competently to construct recognisable models and have good opportunities to practise skills in cutting and joining materials, as seen in their puppets. They realise how they have changed since they were babies and early geographical skills are developing well when they investigate parking in the local area and draw simple maps. Many children use the computer well to support their learning. Most know the function of the buttons on the keyboard and operate the mouse skilfully when using the different tools to create attractive fireworks pictures using a graphics program.
65. Teaching is satisfactory rather than good, because monitoring is not sufficiently rigorous to ensure that all children experience fully the planned activities. The support staff are very well deployed and use skilful questions to probe the children's understanding. They listen to what children have to say, and through careful questioning, attempt to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world. Their sensitive use of praise and encouragement raises the children's confidence and self-esteem, and results in them having a positive attitude and response to learning.

Physical development and creative development

66. Evidence in the two other areas of learning was much more limited due to timetabling arrangements. Despite the limitations on outdoor play facilities in the Foundation Stage, children's physical and creative development is in line with the expected standards by the end of the year. During the inspection, there were no observations of any planned outdoor physical development activities. Whilst children have regular physical activity in the hall and staff make good use of the playground outside the classroom, there is no dedicated enclosed play area with suitable large climbing and balancing equipment to promote children's physical development. Children use pencils, brushes, scissors and other small, tools with increasing confidence and skill. They cut and paste at the level expected for their age have opportunities to draw and explore a range of materials.

ENGLISH

Strengths:

- By the end of Year 6, some pupils achieve well on their starting attainment levels;
- Test results have been carefully analysed to show strengths and weaknesses in the subject and the information well used to target support.

Areas for development:

- Standards of work in writing in all years;
- The presentation of written work and pupils' handwriting;
- Consistency in the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school.

67. In 2002, results in national reading and writing tests at the end of Year 2 were well below average. However, the majority of pupils achieved levels that were expected of them and the proportion of pupils who attained the higher Level 3 was similar to the national average in both reading and writing. Results were similar in 2001. The school's test results reflect the fact that the number of pupils taking the tests is small and their attainment levels when they start school are extremely varied. In addition, a high proportion of pupils need support for their special educational needs.

68. In the 2002 English tests at the end of Year 6, the proportion of pupils attaining the expected Level 4 or the higher Level 5 was above the national average. Results in English tests have shown an upward trend over the past two years. The school's analysis of individual pupils' progress over time clearly shows that nearly all pupils achieved at least satisfactorily on the levels they attained at the end of Year 2. Some pupils achieved well on their starting levels, attaining Level 4 at the end of Year 6, when they had not attained the expected Level 2 at the end of Year 2. Year 6 test results are affected by the high turnover of pupils through Years 3 to 6. In 2002, only seven of the twelve pupils who took the tests were the same pupils who took tests at the end of Year 2 at the school. In addition, the proportion of pupils in the group with special educational needs was very high. In the 2002, nine pupils in Year 6 were supported for their special educational needs. In this context, the school's test results are commendable.

69. Observed standards are currently below expectations overall due to the large number of pupils with special educational needs in Years 2 and 6. However, all groups are achieving at least satisfactorily. Higher attaining pupils, for example, are achieving above the expected standards. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when higher attaining pupils were judged to be underachieving. All pupils reach the expected standards in speaking and listening. In lessons and work samples, while pupils in all attainment groups are working at appropriate levels, overall standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 reflect the high proportion of pupils with low prior attainment levels, or who are supported for their special educational needs.

70. Standards in speaking and listening are in line with expectations. In lessons where opportunities are given to develop speaking skills, pupils need some support to formulate their ideas and get

started, but contributions and responses are generally as they should be. For example, in a Year 2 English lesson where the teacher played the role of the grandma from the book being used for the lesson, pupils pretended to be reporters and posed questions to her about what took place on her visit to London. This lesson was good development of earlier learning, where pupils were thinking about how to change statements into questions. Pupils made good progress through the lesson and were able to ask short, but suitable questions in their reporter role. In reading, standards are below expectations. Pupils in both Years 2 and 6 develop systematically the skills necessary to breakdown words and read them accurately and apply this skill in learning in other subjects. However, when asked questions about the text, they find difficulty with recall. Reading skills are developing, but reading for meaning is not yet at the appropriate level. Reading for acquiring information is underdeveloped.

71. The school's analysis of standards has appropriately highlighted the weakest area of work to be writing. Curriculum planning has been amended accordingly, teaching and learning has been observed and evaluated, and pupils now have suitable targets for improvement. A good start has been made in improving handwriting in the Reception class and in Years 1 and 2. In the Reception class, children are introduced to *cursive flicks*, and this leads to more accurately joined handwriting by the end of Year 2. Some pupils in Years 3 to 6 use an appropriately joined handwriting style, but, in general, handwriting skills are below average in these year groups. Throughout the school, there is insufficient attention paid to the general presentation of work. Pupils have no clear guidance of how work in English should be presented, which form of date to use, how titles and headings should be underlined, or how to use a margin to organise lists or record numbered answers. In lessons, teachers did not make their expectations about presentation clear enough. In discussion with pupils, it was obvious that they themselves did not feel their work was neat and tidy. A higher attaining boy in Year 2 quickly altered his method of recording answers using numbers in the margin, and was pleased by the neater look of his work. This lack of attention to the appearance of work in English is not conducive to good attitudes and high standards. Moreover, pupils who could possibly attain better than Level 4 at the end of Year 6, are not able to do so if they do not use a joined handwriting style and set their work out well.
72. Teaching and learning in English are satisfactory overall. Most teachers have responded positively to recent evaluations of their work and there have been improvements. The common strengths of teaching are now the use of a clearly introduced learning intentions to ensure that all pupils understand what they will learn and why; an appropriate match of work to various attainment groups; good use of questioning to target and challenge individual pupils and positive relationships. During the inspection, very good teaching and learning was observed with Year 1 pupils and in the Year 5 and 6 class. In these lessons, teachers had very high expectations about how pupils would listen, concentrate and behave, used very suitable activities that kept pupils interested, demonstrated good subject knowledge and kept the lessons lively. In the Year 1 lesson, the teacher used photographs taken in an earlier lesson to talk about the order of activities. Pupils participated confidently in discussions using the appropriate language to denote time. This was well consolidated by the *big book* story, where they accurately spotted past tense and *ordering* words. The teacher asked very useful questions of individual pupils so check their understanding or challenge them to think harder. She made quick and accurate assessments of those pupils who did not understand as well as others and addressed her questioning and explanations to them. All pupils were ready and able to carry out the independent written activity as a result of this very good initial learning.
73. In a very good lesson with older pupils, a very good introductory activity ensured pupils' good attitudes and high levels of concentration from the start of the lesson. Pupils worked with partners to note the features of play scripts that are different to other texts. The teacher assessed their previous learning and worked with those pupils who needed particular support to consolidate learning. A very effective practical activity developed pupils' speaking and listening skills and held their interest and concentration levels. Pupils listened with great enjoyment as the teacher and a student teacher demonstrated a spontaneous conversation. They then recorded sections of their

own spontaneous conversations and used them to create play scripts. Their attention and attitudes remained as positive in the writing section of the lesson, because they felt confident in their knowledge of play script conventions and were enjoying the work.

74. The subject is well managed and the co-ordinator provides suitable leadership. There has been an appropriate focus on observing lessons and clear feedback has been given to teachers about the quality of their work and how they can improve. Pupils' work has been scrutinised and the co-ordinator has a clear understanding of strengths and weaknesses in standards. However, her role in guiding developments and ensuring improvement has been more focussed on the Reception class and Years 1 and 2.

MATHEMATICS

Strengths

- Well targeted adult support within the class;
- Assessment and recording procedures.

Areas for Development

- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to use mathematics in everyday situations and to apply their mathematical skills across the curriculum.
75. At the time of the last inspection, standards in mathematics were in line with those expected nationally in all aspects of mathematics. Attainment is now below that which is expected nationally. However, when considering prior attainment for all pupils including those with special educational needs, progress is satisfactory and sometimes good. Within the school the size of the cohorts are small with a wide range of levels of attainments. The high pupil mobility factor affect standards within the school, added to the fact that there are significantly high proportions of pupils with special educational needs. Pupils apply the skills that they have learned in number to other subjects, for example science and design and technology. Evidence from observations and the scrutiny of work show that the National Numeracy Strategy is embedded and some pupils are using and applying their mathematical skills satisfactorily in other areas of the curriculum. However, there are limited opportunities to develop investigative and problem solving skills. There is clear evidence of successful work in number throughout the school. Work on shape, space and measures are covered, but lack the rigour and planning for pupils of differing levels of attainment.
76. A very good start is made in Year 1 when the pupils are taught as a single year group. The very good, well planned teaching ensures very good learning. The planning provides for the needs of the very differing levels of attainment in the group. In a practical lesson which developed their understanding of number, pupils worked well together in pairs and in groups on work that was both challenging and enjoyable. They successfully evaluated their own strategies. In Year 2, pupils have a good understanding of odd and even numbers to at least 30 and use appropriate mathematical signs correctly. The learning is enhanced by well directed support. In a Year 2 lesson, for example, the challenge set for the able pupils had them wanting to finish their task during their break. There is a dip in mathematical learning in Years 3 and 4 due to less effective teaching, poor planning which does not meet the wide range of pupils needs. In Years 5 and 6, good learning is achieved because of very good pupil management and by the work being carefully planned to meet the needs of all.
77. Pupils who are gifted mathematically have been identified, and the co-ordinator provides ideas and support for their learning. Within the schools' cluster there is a group providing high attaining pupils in Year 3 with challenging activities in mathematics.
78. Pupils make at least satisfactory progress throughout the school except in Years 3 and 4. Work in pupils' books indicates that in these years teaching lacks rigour and pupils make less progress in their learning. Pupils sometimes complete the tasks they have been set, but do not understand the mathematics they have applied.

79. Overall, the teaching of mathematics is satisfactory, with some good practice. Mathematics has been a focus for improvement within the school. With training from the Local Education Authority consultant, teachers' understanding of the curriculum and how to support the learning of pupils of all levels of attainment has improved. Teachers generally have good subject knowledge and are clear about what they are going to teach. They are enthusiastic and the teaching of number was very good in the lessons observed. Although assessment procedures are good the use of regular on-going assessment to inform planning, is variable. Some teachers use pupils' individual targets well when setting work, for example, in Year 1. During the inspection, very little use was made of ICT to enhance pupils' learning and this is a weakness. Other than in Years 3 and 4 where there is lack of rigour, when consideration is given to the level at which pupils entered the school, the high mobility of the pupils and the relatively high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, overall pupils achieve satisfactory in mathematics.
80. The recently appointed subject co-ordinator is well qualified to lead the subject and has made a good start in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning to help raise standards. Clear assessment procedures are now in place to rigorously monitor pupils' learning. Those making insufficient progress are quickly identified and support provided.

SCIENCE

Strengths:

- Pupils are given some good opportunities to discover things for themselves.

Areas for development:

- Standards by the end of Year 6 are below national expectations;
- Teachers' subject knowledge is insecure in some aspects;
- The use of assessment information and the monitoring of teaching and learning to improve standards of pupils' work;
- Standards of presentation.

81. Pupils' overall attainment is below that expected nationally at the end of Years 2 and 6 but is slightly better than the results of the 2002 teacher's assessments for Year 2 pupils and the National Curriculum test for Year 6 pupils which were well below national expectations. Slowly improving standards are partly due to greater focus on experimental and investigative work. Low standards are partly because of the school's concentration on numeracy and literacy with insufficient time allocated to teaching the subject. They are also due to the higher than average percentage of pupils with special educational needs, the underdeveloped literacy skills and the high level of mobility in the school. Although the present pupils in Years 2 and 6 achieve satisfactorily from below average levels on entry their progress is sometimes limited. This is because teachers do not make sufficient use of assessment information to plan work to meet the wide range of ages and levels of attainment in the mixed-age classes.
82. Pupils in Year 2 are becoming familiar with experimental and investigative approaches and are developing the skills of scientific enquiry, observing carefully and recording their results. They recall with enthusiasm their investigations on the effects of push and pull on objects and confidently describe how to make things speed up or change direction. For example, they know that when they pushed the car harder the faster it goes. Most know that the height of the ramp, the surface of the ramp and the amount of push will affect the distance the car will travel. Although more able pupils have discussed ways in which the test may not have been fair, they recall little about work covered at a higher level. Pupils accurately sort materials according to different properties, including texture and appearance, but only the higher attaining pupils recall that magnets attract some metals and that some changes are reversible. Some pupils struggle with understanding that substances change due to the effect of heating and cooling, and how to make simple circuits.

83. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a satisfactory understanding of how to plan, make predictions, conduct and record experiments in a logical manner. This was seen in an experiment investigating the rate of evaporation of water over a period of time placed in different locations. Pupils are able to explain clearly what they think will happen and why. More able pupils understand why the test must be fair and that, if certain parts of the experiment were to change, their results would be different. Examination of earlier work shows that Year 6 pupils have an appropriate understanding of many aspects of the statutory curriculum. They know the differences between solids, liquids and gases, and are able to explain the processes of sieving, filtering and dissolving. They confidently measure and compare forces in Newton, recording their results on bar charts. However, recorded work is often poorly presented and does not sufficiently reflect the knowledge and understanding gained through oral work.
84. The quality of teaching and learning, including that for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Since the last inspection there has been an appropriate emphasis on developing pupils' investigative skills. However, analysis of previous work, teachers' plans and discussions with pupils indicate that there are some weaknesses, which limit the progress that pupils make. Planning, does not take sufficient account of the range of levels of attainment both within single and mixed-age classes, with the level of activity often identical for all pupils and sometimes beyond what lower attaining pupils, especially, could be expected to understand. For example, the present Year 2 class, which has a higher than average percentage of pupils with special educational needs, was expected to know that *'the size of the shadows is dependent on the distance of the source of light'* and learn about *'reflection and reflective objects'*. Although some teachers' subject knowledge is sometimes insecure about statutory requirements, the work of pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4 shows that many interesting tasks are well chosen, with a good balance of direct teaching and opportunities for pupils to apply their enquiry skills to find things out for themselves. A good example of this was where pupils in Year 2 were taught about the importance of fair testing and went on to compare the speed of cars on different slopes, applying their newly acquired knowledge well.
85. The school is being successful in gradually raising standards through its overall commitment to improving the quality of teaching since the local education authority's review in 2002. Nevertheless, the headteacher who has recently assumed responsibility for the subject recognises the need for more systematic, rigorous checking of teaching and learning, greater use of assessment information to plan work to meet the of all pupils in the mixed-age classes and of ICT to enhance learning. Across the school, pupils' work is marked regularly but the teachers' comments do not often show the pupils how to improve standards, quality or presentation of their work. Resources are adequate and good use is made of the local environment. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' moral and social development, as they consider environmental and health issues.

ART and DESIGN

Strengths:

- The programme of learning opportunities is well planned.

Areas for development:

- Ways of tracking how well pupils are doing and the standards they attain.

86. As at the time of the last inspection, standards in art and design are in line with expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and pupils' achievements are satisfactory. Learning opportunities in art and design are planned from a good scheme of work that combines the most recent national guidance and a previous programme of study created by the co-ordinator. As a result of this programme of study pupils are introduced to a variety of artists and develop good knowledge and understanding of their work and creative styles. Pupils' artistic skills and knowledge of materials and methods are developed systematically, but there is no system for recording when skills have

been mastered so that future experiences can be appropriately planned.

87. Only one art and design lesson was observed during the inspection, where teaching and learning were unsatisfactory. Art displays around the school were of a satisfactory quality, but it was not clear how much adult support had been given to pupils, or in what circumstances the work had been created. A mini-gallery on display in the school hall was of good quality, but organised and displayed by the art co-ordinator only. Pupils offered very little evidence in discussion about the skills they were acquiring in art, only about the tasks they had completed. It was therefore impossible to fairly judge the overall quality of teaching and learning at the school. In the Year 3/4 lesson observed, despite a good start where interesting information about sculptors and their work was used, teaching and learning were unsatisfactory overall. This was because no new artistic skills or materials were introduced and the pupils had no opportunity to use their creative initiative. All pupils used the same materials to create work of a uniform nature. They made *mini sculptures* using pipe cleaners secured to a base that had been prepared by the teacher. Some pupils tried to add interest to their work, for example by adding goal posts to their sculpture of a footballer, but the scope for originality was minimal. Pupils enjoyed the activity however, and behaved well.
88. Leadership and management in art and design are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has compiled a portfolio of moderated work in the past, and recognises that this now needs to be updated so that there is clear evidence of the standards pupils attain. The *mini gallery* on display in the hall each term is an effective way of demonstrating the new skills and knowledge acquired by pupils. At present, this work is not assessed against National Curriculum attainment levels, but does provide examples of pupils' artistic knowledge and the techniques they are using.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Strengths

- There are good links with other subjects.

Areas for development

- Resources are limited to provide for the needs of the curriculum;
- The role of the recently appointed co-ordinator is underdeveloped.

89. As at the time of the last inspection standards in design and technology are in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, and progress is satisfactory. Pupils in Year 2 have a satisfactory understanding of the principles of designing, making and evaluating the quality of their work and how the work could be improved. When designing puppets they successfully used the work of the book illustrator, Quentin Blake for inspiration. They made their designs, listed the requirements for the design and amended their original designs as necessary. They made good evaluations of how to improve their work. Pupils are capable of working individually, in pairs and collaboratively in groups, which they did to produce a very impressive '*Joseph's Coat of Many Colours*'.
90. Although no lessons were seen in Years 3, to 6, a range of design and technology activities could be seen in the very good display of Years 5 and 6 work, and the work attempted in Years 3 and 4. Pupils in Year 6 confidently explained how they had planned their work and talked about their ideas. They had made a range of musical instruments and this involved them in making choices about the materials to be used, the type of construction, the tools to be used and finally, the aesthetic qualities of the finished product. Learning was good and a high standard of work achieved.
91. Although the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, good teaching was observed during the inspection. All pupils make good progress generally, with the less able well supported by the classroom assistants. Good teaching was evidenced in Years 5 and 6 by the quality of the work

seen and the level of understanding that pupils had achieved. From evidence of past work, it could be seen that pupils of all levels of attainment achieved a satisfactory level of attainment by the end of Year 2 and Year 6.

92. The subject co-ordinator has only recently assumed responsibility for the subject, has already assessed the quality of work in all year groups and is building up a useful folio of photographic evidence showing the progression of skills. Pupils' work is assessed at the end of each topic and procedures are satisfactory. Design and technology is a developing area within the curriculum.

GEOGRAPHY

Areas for improvement

- Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6;
- Leadership and management of the subject.

93. Standards are below those expected nationally at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection, but some evidence was gained from the limited amount of pupils work, teachers planning, school displays and discussion with teachers and pupils. This was the same position at the time of the last inspection. The achievement of pupils is unsatisfactory.

94. Previously, geography lessons in Years 3 to 6 were taken by a part-time teacher but due to recent staff changes the subject is now taught by the class teachers. Pupils' written work indicates unsatisfactory standards. The subject is taught through half-termly topics alternating with history. Evidence showed that this arrangement does not ensure the systematic development of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. There has been limited coverage of some aspects of the curriculum and the needs of pupils of differing levels of attainment are not met. There was some map work seen across the school, but it was at a unsatisfactory level. Pupils in Year 2 studied life on an island. There were few pieces of work, but each pupil had drawn their own map of the island, some of which were of a good standard. Work seen from class Years 5 and 6 was at an unsatisfactory standard with much of the work was poorly presented and incomplete. Throughout the school pupils have had limited opportunities to develop their enquiry skills, but a good start has been made in Years 5 and 6 with pupils using ICT to research information on mountains.

95. Leadership and management are underdeveloped. A new co-ordinator has recently been appointed. There are satisfactory assessment procedures in place, but the results are not consistently used to plan work to meet the needs of the pupils. The previous co-ordinator monitored teachers' planning, but had no opportunity to observe teaching and learning.

HISTORY

Areas for development

- Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6;
- Leadership and management of the subject.

96. Standards in history are below expectations by the end of Years 2 and 6. As no history lessons were observed during the inspection, judgements have been made based on discussions with pupils and samples of work. In both cases, it was evident that, because pupils are not taught historical skills and knowledge in a systematic and progressive way, their understanding is inconsistent and sometimes inaccurate. In discussion pupils were hesitant when responding to questions and muddled events from different periods. Some pupils corrected themselves, but they were not able to say how they could find out for themselves and whether their evidence would help them to form a definite view. There were very few examples of pupils' work and, from those available, it was

apparent that learning opportunities were not regular enough to ensure appropriate rates of progress. Teaching and learning is clearly unsatisfactory.

97. Leadership and management underdeveloped. Due to staff changes, history is currently co-ordinated by the headteacher. This has been a fairly recent arrangement and, at present, it is apparent that few developments have taken place due to the school's focus on the core subjects. A new teacher has been appointed for September who will take on co-ordinator's role.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Strengths

- Pupils have good attitudes to learning;
- The support staff make a valuable contribution to pupil's learning.

Area for development

- Planned opportunities to use ICT skills to enhance learning in other subjects;
- Not all staff have had the necessary training to make the best use of the available resources;
- Teaching is not monitored so that those with less confidence do not always receive the right sort of support for their work in the classroom;
- The existing assessment procedures are broadly satisfactory, but do not enable teachers to assess pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding with sufficient accuracy.

98. The previous inspection reported that standards of attainment in information and communication technology (ICT) were below national expectations and progress was unsatisfactory because pupils were not given a sufficiently broad experience. Since then the school has made good progress. National initiatives have made a difference to the provision of equipment and the training of teachers. An ICT suite has been established, the optional national scheme of work has been adopted and teachers' confidence is improving. Consequently, standards by the end of end of Years 2 and 6 are in line with national expectations and pupils are achieving well in relation to their prior attainment. All aspects of the subject are covered and pupils have sufficient opportunities to practise, refine and develop their ICT skills to the expected level. Pupils' previous work shows that, although some use is made of computers to access information and support learning, the use of ICT has yet to make a significant impact on pupils' learning in all subjects of the curriculum.
99. In Year 2, pupils learn how to control the movement of a floor robot along a particular route using a sequence of commands. Many are confident users of computers. Discussion shows that pupils know how to log on and off the computer, know how to save and retrieve their work and have basic knowledge of word processing, for instance how to resize text or change fonts. Good links are made with art and design. For example, pupils make effective use of various programs and, using a variety of tools and shapes such as the 'spray can' and 'geometric shapes', they create attractive designs on '*Joseph's Coat of Many Colours*' and warm colour pictures in the style of Mondrian. Younger pupils show familiarity with the keyboard functions and many confidently use a mouse for pointing, selecting, dragging and moving items around the screen. They clearly understand that drawings can be created using a graphics program and printed out, and are delighted with their finished work.
100. By Year 6, many pupils work with relative independence on the computers and have a developing understanding of the uses of ICT in the world around them. They are beginning to use the computer to store and present data on their pulse rate, in their science work and have become a little more sophisticated about what they do with the appearance of text. For example, they successfully and easily change the font, size and colour to enhance their work. Most explain clearly how they used the Internet to search information sources and to select and print relevant information linked to their work in science and geography. Although standards in control and monitoring elements of the subject, such as electric lights or motors, monitoring temperature or

simulations to help them investigate relationships, are weaker due to limited equipment, standards in text and graphics are good. For example, pupils explain with a good degree of clarity the processes they use to create a multi-media presentation of their own version of *'Who wants to be a Millionaire'*.

101. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, with some good teaching seen during the inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress due to the good support they receive. Teachers have at least a satisfactory knowledge of the aspects that they deliver and many plan extra sessions in the computer suite with their class to further extend and reinforce their pupils' skills. Where teaching is good, high standards of work and behaviour are promoted and, as a result, pupils respond by working hard and learning well. This was well demonstrated in a Year 1 lesson on control technology. The teacher gave precise instructions and introduced correct vocabulary very systematically which ensured that pupils were successful when inputting data to program the 'Roamer' to move around the different objects on the carpet. The pace was brisk, which kept pupils on task, and praise was well used to motivate and encourage participation in the lesson. There was an appropriate focus on relevant vocabulary and questions were posed to check pupils' understanding. An area of weakness in planning is that, although objectives are clear for the teaching of specific ICT skills, short-term plans do not identify when ICT will be used to support other subjects.
102. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory overall, with many good features. The co-ordinator ably assisted by a classroom assistant, offers advice and support to colleagues in planning and teaching. However, the monitoring of teaching and learning has still to be established in order to identify precisely where support is required. Priorities since the last inspection have focused on improving staff skills through a range of courses and in-house workshops, and this has had a clear impact on the standards being achieved. The next phase in the development of the subject is to make wider use of computers and greater use of assessment information to inform planning to meet the needs of all pupils. Hardware is adequate, but the use of the older computers in the classrooms is not as well planned as those in the suite and is not used as effectively to support learning.

MUSIC

Strengths

- All pupils have the opportunity to learn to play a tuned musical instrument;
- Good links are made with other subjects.

Areas for development

- Leadership and management in the subject, to ensure that pupils continue to achieve at least satisfactorily.

103. By the end of Years 2 and 6, standards in music are at the level expected nationally. At the last inspection, standards were judged to be above expectations by the end of Year 6. Since this time, a change in staff has meant that music is no longer taught by a specialist. However, class teachers follow an appropriate scheme of work and pupils' achievements are satisfactory.
104. The overall quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory. Only one lesson was observed and in this the teaching was good. This lesson was well planned, gave opportunities for pupils in Year 6 to practise singing and instrumental techniques, developed their skills in reading score music and gave them a chance to practice and perform. As a non-specialist, the teacher made very good use of the skills of the most confident singer to lead the class in a singing warm-up. This was an effective way of extending the skills of the most able pupil, while enabling all others to practise their singing and enjoy the activity. Pupils enthusiastically sang an African type chant. This linked with their studies of African art and made a sound contribution to their understanding of other cultures. The singing was tuneful and of a satisfactory standard.

105. During the same session, all pupils practised playing the recorder. Those who were more confident in reading music chose a song to practise independently, ready for performance. Those who needed further support in developing skills worked with the teacher to learn a set piece, using three notes. All pupils made good progress in developing skills and a good number played their recorders to the whole class during the plenary session. Pupils evaluated each other's performances, sensibly suggesting appropriate ways to improve. Learning for some pupils could have been better if the teacher had had more specialist instrumental skills. Sounds created on the recorder were sometimes not tuneful or accurate, and pupils were not shown exactly how to improve their performance. At times, pupils would have benefited from clearer demonstration of how to achieve a perfect note and reminders of note durations to create the correct rhythm.
106. The headteacher has managed the co-ordination of music satisfactorily over the recent past. However, she is not a specialist and has been unable to lead and develop other members of staff since the specialist music teacher left. There are clear plans to improve the provision and the school will work with other schools in the local cluster to provide a range of musical activities involving specialists with greater expertise. Additional music tuition for violin and brass instruments continues, and pupils achieve well in individual or small group lessons.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Strengths:

- Very good leadership;
- Good provision for extra-curricular activities.

Area for development:

- Systems for assessing pupils' attainment and progress.

107. As at the time of the last inspection standards are above national expectations. Since the last inspection, the school has had a new hall built which has helped in the provision of physical education.
108. Due to timetabling arrangements only one lesson in physical education (PE) was observed and as a result no secure judgements can be made on the quality of teaching. However, the teaching of ball skills was good in the one lesson seen and pupils showed great enthusiasm for their work. Planning was clear and a good pace of activity was sustained. Pupils were given suitable challenges, which increased in difficulty, and they were encouraged to strive to improve their performances. When working in paired or group activities they co-operated well. Most pupils are capable of good directional throwing of a ball and catching safely. They are becoming skilful at controlling a ball. They are able to dribble the ball keeping it close to their foot.
109. Throughout the school, pupils achieve well. Pupils who have special educational needs are supported appropriately and encouraged by their peers and make good progress. Pupils are able to assess their own performance and those of the other pupils. Classroom assistants help to ensure that all pupils reach their full potential. Gifted and talented pupils are encouraged to join clubs within the school and links are formed for them to further develop their skills with sporting clubs.
110. The subject is well managed by an enthusiastic co-ordinator. An assessment system is being developed, but is not fully in place. Resources are very well organised and of a good standard. There is a clear policy for physical education and a good scheme of work in place, which ensures that pupils enjoy a good, varied programme of activities. There are suitable opportunities for pupils to participate in physical activity through a good range of clubs and appropriate opportunities to participate in competitive team games. Photographic evidence shows that pupils have had a wide range of experiences in dance, gymnastics and games.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Strengths:

- The subject contributes well to pupils' moral, spiritual and cultural development;
- There are good links with literacy and the development of writing skills in the work seen in Years 3 and 4.

Areas for development:

- The co-ordinator has insufficient opportunities to observe teaching and learning;
- Teachers' subject knowledge is insecure in some aspects;
- The amount and quality of recorded work.

111. Standards of attainment by the end of Years 2 and 6 are broadly in line with the expectations set out in the locally agreed syllabus and have been maintained since the previous inspection. Pupils of all ages, including those who have special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in gaining acceptable levels of knowledge and understanding about religions and from religions. Overall, the subject contributes well to pupils' moral, spiritual and cultural development.
112. Across the school, pupils develop a satisfactory knowledge of the practices of some of the major world religions, with an appropriate emphasis given to the study of Christianity. In Years 1 and 2, there is very little evidence of recorded work as much of the learning is based on discussion. By the end of Year 2, teachers' plans show that pupils discuss rules for living and rules for the wider community and the world. They make their own rules such as, 'always keep promises'; 'don't tell lies' and 'be kind all the time'. Most are aware that Jesus is a special person for Christians and that the special book telling stories about his life and work is called the Bible. They know that books, such as the Torah and the Bible, have special significance for Jews and Christians and that care and respect need to be shown when handling these books. After examining a Torah scroll, pupils successfully designed their own and recognised that Hebrew letters are different from English. Overall, insufficient opportunities are provided for pupils to express and record ideas and explore meaning through writing and drawing in order to help them to retain knowledge and apply their literacy skills.
113. By the time pupils leave school at the end of Year 6, most have a suitable understanding of some of the customs, practices and objects of religious interest used by Muslims and are beginning to know some of the main features of a Christian church. Analysis of pupils' work shows that they reflect on how Christian beliefs influence their actions and identify positions of authority which influence their own lives. They understand that world major religions have differences, but also many similarities. Most have a good basic knowledge of Islam and know that Muslims learn the words of the Koran by heart and recite rather than read them. Pupils listen to a recording of the recitation of the Koran. They know that every recitation begins with the 'Bismillah' which is Arabic and means 'in the name of Allah, the compassion, the merciful'. They explore the meanings of 'compassionate' and 'merciful' and discuss with sensitivity the values and beliefs of Muslims and when might people need to act with compassion and show mercy. However, in most year groups there is insufficient evidence of recorded work.
114. Evidence from the two lessons observed, pupils' work and discussions about their achievements indicate that teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers have the developing confidence to enable them to interpret and deliver the curriculum. In a Year 1 lesson, for example, the teacher chose the material carefully to deliver the main messages. The story 'You can't beat a cheetah' was read in a lively and interesting way, which captured and sustained the pupils' attention. In this session, effective use of questioning enabled the teacher to extend pupils' learning and good opportunities were provided for pupils to reflect on and contribute their own ideas about 'the qualities which make someone a friend'. In Years 5 and 6, the teacher's subject knowledge was less secure and, as a result, pupils were not very clear about what they were going to learn about religious buildings and their learning was limited. In both lessons, teachers managed class discussions well and made good use of questioning to check and extend pupils' knowledge. There

is little evidence to show, however, that sufficient use is made of on going assessment to improve planning to meet the needs of pupils of all levels of attainment in the mixed-aged classes.

115. Pupils' response to the subject is good. Younger pupils enjoy listening to stories and to one another. They ask and answer questions thoughtfully and participate well in discussions. Although they are attentive listeners, the majority do not recall their previous work well. Most contribute to discussions, listen carefully to their class teachers and to each other, tolerating and respecting the views of others.
116. The headteacher has recently assumed responsibility for the subject and is keen to make further improvements. She has identified appropriate priorities for development, such as increasing resources and implementing procedures to check what pupils know and understand. A recently adopted computer programme provides very useful guidance to help teachers plan. It clearly identifies which aspects will be taught and shows learning outcomes related to the locally agreed syllabus. However, this has not been adapted to take account of the different age groups in the mixed-aged classes in order to ensure that pupils' learning develops systematically as they move through the school. Although teachers' plans and pupils' books have been monitored, the checking of teaching and learning to ensure that pupils are receiving the full breadth and balance of the curriculum and to provide support to teachers does not take place. Overall, work in religious education does not make an effective contribution to pupils' literacy skills. Pupils are not encouraged to write independently and work is not always recorded. There are too few links between religious education and the literacy hour, and limited use is made of ICT to enhance learning in the subject. The school is developing the resources for religious education and teachers are beginning to make use of them. Very good use is made of resources within the locality, for example, through weekly visits to the local church and links with the parish priest. The school has a good base from which to develop the teaching and learning of religious education.