

INSPECTION REPORT

NEROCHE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Iminster

LEA area: Somerset

Unique reference number: 123673

Headteacher: Mr W Grace

Reporting inspector: Mrs Anne Johns
18579

Dates of inspection: 30 September- 2 October 2002

Inspection number: 248284

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

| | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Type of school: | Primary |
| School category: | Community |
| Age range of pupils: | 4 – 11 years old |
| Gender of pupils: | Mixed |
| School address: | Broadway Ilminster Somerset |
| Postcode: | TA19 9RG |
| Telephone number: | 01460 52664 |
| Fax number: | as above |
| Appropriate authority: | The governing body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Mr S Wilson |
| Date of previous inspection: | November 4 th 1997 |

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members | | | Subject responsibilities | Aspect responsibilities |
|--------------|---------------|----------------------|---|---|
| 18679 | Mrs A Johns | Registered inspector | Science Art Music | How high are standards? How well are the pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? |
| 8937 | Mr H Allen | Lay inspector | Equal opportunities | How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents? Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development |
| 32136 | Mrs L Brookes | Team inspector | Information and communication technology Design and technology The Foundation Stage | |
| 25203 | Mr R Cooke | Team inspector | Mathematics Religious education Physical education Special educational needs | |
| 1085 | Mr J Laver | Team inspector | English History Geography | How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? |

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REPORT CONTENTS

| | Page |
|---|-----------|
| PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT | 7 |
| Information about the school | |
| How good the school is | |
| What the school does well | |
| What could be improved | |
| How the school has improved since its last inspection | |
| Standards | |
| Pupils' attitudes and values | |
| Teaching and learning | |
| Other aspects of the school | |
| How well the school is led and managed | |
| Parents' and carers' views of the school | |
| | |
| PART B: COMMENTARY | |
| HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS? | 12 |
| The school's results and pupils' achievements | |
| Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development | |
| HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT? | 15 |
| HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS? | 17 |
| HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS? | 18 |
| HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS? | 20 |
| HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED? | 22 |
| WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER? | 24 |
| | |
| PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS | 25 |
| | |
| PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES | 30 |

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

There are 156 girls and boys on roll, which is more than at the time of the previous inspection. The school, which is smaller in size than most primary schools, was built in 1973 and has increased from five to six classes this term. It is situated in the village of Broadway and draws its pupils from a wide range of backgrounds. Attainment on entry is broadly average, with a range of ability, including several higher attaining children. The pupils are admitted at the beginning of the year in which they are five, initially on a part-time basis. Most children have had pre-school provision at the local playgroup. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. There are no pupils from ethnic origin backgrounds and no pupils who speak English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is also below average and no pupils have a statement of special educational need. Since the last inspection there have been several staffing changes. Pupil mobility is below average. The school has recently been awarded by Investors with People.

The inspection took place within two weeks of a very tragic and traumatic incident in the immediate neighbourhood of the school. A six-year old pupil of the school and her mother were shot and killed by a man who then committed suicide close by. Several pupils and parents were witness to these events and subjected to fear for their own lives. The funeral of the little girl and her mother took place on the Friday before the inspection began. Staff and governors were unanimous in their decision to go ahead with the inspection as arranged.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Neroche Primary School is an effective school, which is committed to continuous improvement and has many positive features. There is a very positive ethos in the school, which is supported by a high level of pastoral care and mutual respect, which ensures a good learning environment. There is a good level of inclusion.¹ Standards are above average in mathematics, science, art and physical education and broadly average in other subjects. Teaching, leadership and management are good; the headteacher provides very clear and purposeful leadership and is very well supported by governors and staff. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards are above average in mathematics, science, art and physical education.
- Teaching is good overall with very good teaching in Reception and for the oldest pupils.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher and governing body are very good and are very well supported by the strong and supportive staff team.
- Relationships are very good with a high level of pastoral care.
- There is very good provision in the Foundation Stage² where children have a secure, stimulating and happy start to their school life.
- There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities. Music is an exciting and important part of the curriculum.
- The partnership with the community and other educational institutions is very good and has a positive impact on the learning.

What could be improved

- Standards in writing, especially for more able pupils.
- The role of subject co-ordinators in checking the work of the school.
- The quality of marking throughout the school.
- Policies and guidelines require updating to ensure a consistent approach to the school's work.

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

¹ Inclusion is the term used when a school seeks to promote all groups of children in its educational provision.

² The Foundation Stage applies to children from three years of age to the end of the Reception Year in the primary school.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in November 1997. Since then there have been many changes including most teachers and the headteacher. There is now a stable staffing situation and there have been several positive initiatives, which are beginning to have impact, particularly in relation to standards. More pupils achieve the higher levels in national tests. Limited improvement has been made in developing provision for multicultural awareness and developing pupils' understanding of Christianity and other world religions. The governors and headteacher are now involved in checking the quality of teaching and learning. Many staff with subject responsibilities are new to the post, so more needs to be done to increase their role in this respect of the school's provision. Lessons are now planned using national guidance and also take account of information from assessments of pupils' attainment and progress, although more needs to be done to ensure work is always suitably challenging for the more able pupils. Teaching has improved so that the youngest pupils now make good progress. The school has made satisfactory improvement overall since the last inspection. There has been recent good improvement, due to the very good leadership and good quality of teaching. There is very good capacity for further improvement.

STANDARDS

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

| Performance in: | compared with | | | |
|-----------------|---------------|------|------|-----------------|
| | all schools | | | similar schools |
| | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2001 |
| English | D | B | B | C |
| mathematics | D | D | B | D |
| science | D | E | C | E |

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

In Year 6 in 2001, when compared with all schools, standards in English and mathematics were above average and in science they were average. When compared with similar schools they were average in English, below in mathematics and well below in science. Over time, standards have improved with more pupils achieving higher levels. Unvalidated results for 2002 indicate similar results but with a further increase in the higher levels in each subject. At the end of Year 2 in 2001, results in reading were average and in writing and mathematics they were well above average overall. Unvalidated results for Year 2 in 2002 indicate that 87 per cent achieved the expected level in writing although no pupils achieved a higher level. In mathematics all pupils achieved the expected level for the age group and results in science continued to improve. There is considerable variation each year due to the relatively small cohorts of pupils. This explains the difference between inspection findings in English and the national test results in Year 6. On the basis of inspection evidence, standards are above average in mathematics, science, art and design, music and physical education. Standards in English, history, geography, Information and communication technology and design and technology are average. Standards in writing are not as good as they could be, particularly for more able pupils. Standards in religious education are broadly in line with the locally agreed syllabus. The school set challenging targets for the national tests at age eleven in 2002 and these were exceeded in English and met in mathematics. Most pupils currently make good progress, including pupils with special educational needs, because of the effective support that they receive and the current good quality of teaching. Children in Reception make good progress in lessons and are in line to achieve the standards expected by the end of the Foundation Stage in each area of learning, with a significant number achieving beyond this in communications, language and literacy and personal, social and emotional development.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|--|
| Attitudes to the school | Very good. Pupils are enthusiastic about coming to school. |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms | Behaviour is good overall. There are some lapses at lunchtime when there is less supervision. |
| Personal development and relationships | Very good. There are very positive relationships in the school and pupils willingly accept responsibility. |
| Attendance | Attendance is good. |

The very good relationships and the supportive and caring ethos of the school were very clearly demonstrated.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

| Teaching of pupils in: | Reception | Years 1 – 2 | Years 3 – 6 |
|------------------------|-----------|-------------|-------------|
| Quality of teaching | Very good | Good | Good |

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

Most teaching was good with no unsatisfactory teaching. Most teaching was good with some very good and excellent teaching. This has a very positive impact on the progress which the pupils make. In mathematics, science, music, art and design and physical education the teaching was good. In English, history, design and technology and religious education it was satisfactory, although some teachers are less confident about teaching writing, which results in slightly lower standards in writing. No judgement was made in information and communication technology or geography as insufficient teaching was seen to make a valid judgement. The most successful teaching had very clear planning which met the needs of all pupils. Lessons were lively and captivated the pupils' interest. Very effective class management ensured that all pupils worked very well and made very good progress. A useful plenary session reinforced the learning and led well into the next session. There were a few lessons, which although satisfactory overall had specific weaknesses. In these lessons the more able pupils did not have enough challenge. The pace was too slow and pupils, although still well behaved, lost interest and did not make as much progress as they could. Teachers did not always have high enough expectations of what pupils could achieve with their writing. The quality of marking is unsatisfactory, as it does not help to improve the pupils' knowledge and understanding. In numeracy the teaching is good. The school meets the needs of all pupils, except for more able pupils in writing.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect | Comment |
|--------|---------|
|--------|---------|

| | |
|---|--|
| The quality and range of the curriculum | The curriculum is well planned so that all subjects are given an appropriate allocation of time. Extra activities, in and out of the classroom, provide exciting opportunities to broaden pupils' education. Music is an exciting and important part of the curriculum. |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs | Good. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support, which helps them to learn effectively. |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | Good. The provision for social development is very good. Pupils have a clear understanding of right from wrong. Provision for the pupils' cultural development is satisfactory overall, but more attention needs to be given to developing their understanding of cultures other than their own. |
| How well the school cares for its pupils | Good. They receive a high level of pastoral care. The school provides a very caring environment where each individual is valued. |

The school promotes effective links with parents and the community. There are very strong links with other schools, which has a positive impact on the pupils' learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|---|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | There is good leadership and management overall. The headteacher provides very good leadership and is very well supported by the strong staff team. The role of co-ordinators has not yet been developed sufficiently but staff are eager to develop it. |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities | The governors fulfil their responsibilities well. They are very well informed and are keen and supportive. They fulfil their role as critical friend very well and many visit school regularly. However, some statutory policies and procedures need attention. |
| The school's evaluation of its performance | Satisfactory. The school makes use of data, for example, to identify what it does well and where improvement is needed. |
| The strategic use of resources | The school makes satisfactory strategic use of resources. The principles of best value are applied appropriately. |

Accommodation is satisfactory, although rooms are quite small for the numbers of pupils. There is not a designated area for the youngest children to play outside and there are insufficient large wheeled toys for them.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

| What pleases parents most | What parents would like to see improved |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching is good and children make good progress. Children enjoy school. The school promotes positive values and attitudes. Parents feel welcome in school and that their views are valued. The school provides a very high level of care for the children. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents would like closer links with the school and more information about how their children are getting on. They would like homework to be set on a more regular basis. They would like a wider range of extra curricular activities. Several parents are concerned that the lunch-hour is too short especially for Years 3-6. |

The inspection team agrees with all the positive views of parents. They agree with parents that homework should be set more consistently. The school does promote good links with parents, but is

reviewing recent changes in parent/teacher meetings. The quality of information provided for parents is inconsistent. The team considers that the range of extra curricular activities is very good particularly for the size of school. The governors are monitoring recent changes to the length of the lunch-hour.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The school has made satisfactory progress in improving standards since the previous inspection. Trends in improvement over the past few years indicate overall improvement in all core subjects, with more pupils achieving higher than expected levels. The generally small size of the cohort means that considerable variation in standards is possible each year. The pupils have had disruption due to several staff changes, which has had an impact on standards, but there is now a settled staff team in place. The school has set challenging school targets in English, mathematics and science and has made good progress in achieving these targets.
2. In English in Year 6 in the 2001 national tests, the results were above the national average and in line with those of schools in a similar context. In the unvalidated 2002 national tests, almost 33 per cent achieved the higher level. Over three years the trend in standards of achievement for pupils aged seven and eleven have risen faster than the national average. The 2001 tests showed that by the age of seven standards were in line with national expectations for reading and well above in writing, although no boys achieved the higher levels in writing or spelling.
3. In the national tests in mathematics in 2001 in Year 6 the results were above the national average but below average when compared with similar schools. In the unvalidated 2002 tests, standards fell slightly, although over 25 per cent of pupils achieved the higher level. The 2001 tests showed that standards were well above average at the age of seven when compared nationally, with 45 per cent of pupils achieving the higher level. The unvalidated results for 2002 show that all pupils achieved the expected level with 26 per cent achieving the higher level.
4. The results in the 2001 national tests in science in Year 6 were about average compared with those nationally but well below average when compared with similar schools. The unvalidated results for 2002 indicate a similar standard but with 39 per cent of pupils achieving the higher level. There is considerable variation in results each year due to the relatively small cohort of pupils. In the national tests in 2001 at the age of seven, standards were about average when compared with those nationally, with 45 per cent of pupils who achieved the higher levels, which is well above average. Unvalidated results in 2002 show that the overall number of pupils who achieved the expected level has increased although fewer pupils achieved the higher levels.
5. The school has begun to track results to provide useful information for target setting, although this is still at an early stage. Results show some past variation in the results of boys and girls; for example in English, but during the inspection no differences in the performance were observed between boys and girls in any subject. In lessons teachers ensure that boys and girls are given equal attention.
6. Most children enter school with broadly average attainment, and most have had some pre-school provision. There is a range of ability, with several more able pupils. During the Foundation Stage most children make at least satisfactory progress in their learning and are in line to achieve the early learning goals³ in communication, language and

³ The early learning goals set out what most children should achieve by the time they reach the end of the Reception Year in the primary school.

literacy, mathematical development, personal and social development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development. A significant number of children are likely to achieve beyond expectations in communication, language and literacy and personal, social and emotional development. An analysis of work from the previous Foundation Stage indicated that standards in writing were below expectations. The school acknowledges this and has already put measures into place to help ensure improvement; for example, purposeful play to reinforce early writing skills. The inspection took place very early in the school year; due to the very good teaching with high expectations most children were making very good progress. A significant number of children are likely to achieve beyond the early learning goals³ by the end of the Foundation Stage, particularly in communications, language and literacy, and personal, emotional and social education.

7. Standards of work achieved in English, based on current inspection findings are average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress, overall. Inspection findings differ from the results in the national tests in 2001 and 2002, but reflect the current cohort of pupils, which contains several pupils with special educational needs. A significant number of pupils, especially the more able, do not make sufficient progress in their writing. Standards in writing are variable with too much work which contains frequent errors in spelling and grammar. Standards in speaking are good; many older pupils are confident speakers and enjoy debate. Standards in listening and in reading are average.
8. Current standards in mathematics at the age of eleven and seven are above average. In Year 2 pupils are confident at using number facts and they respond quickly to mental arithmetic questions. In Year 6 pupils have a good understanding of place value and can multiply and divide whole numbers by ten or 100.
9. On the basis of evidence gathered during the inspection, standards in science at the age of seven and eleven are above average. Standards have been maintained in Year 6 and have improved in Year 2 since the previous inspection. Throughout the school pupils are keen scientists and they enjoy exploring and investigating.
10. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are in line with national expectations, which was the finding of the previous inspection. Progress in the previous inspection was judged unsatisfactory in Year 6 and this is now satisfactory. The school has benefited from a specialist co-ordinator who also works in other local schools. Year 6 pupils make good use of the Internet for research and are assembling a very useful flexible database. There is limited use of ICT in the classrooms which limits the pupils' progress. The standards in art have improved and are above expectations at seven and eleven. In physical education standards are above expectations as they were at the time of the previous inspection. In design and technology, history and geography standards are in line with expectations. In religious education standards are broadly in line with the locally agreed syllabus, although the pupils' knowledge about Christianity and other religious beliefs is more limited. Music plays a vibrant and important part in the life of the school. Not enough was seen in all aspects to make a sound judgement on standards, overall, during the inspection, but from the available evidence it is likely that standards will be above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.

11. An analysis of pupils' past work indicates satisfactory progress. In most lessons during the inspection the progress was good because the majority of teaching was of a good standard and teachers had high expectations of what the pupils could achieve. Pupils, especially more able pupils, do not always achieve as well as they could with their writing. There has been satisfactory improvement in standards and teaching. However, the regular monitoring of teaching and learning is underdeveloped and needs to be strengthened to ensure that the best practice is shared and that more consistent use of marking, assessment and homework throughout the school in order to help to continue the improvement made.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. Pupils' attitudes behaviour and personal development are very good and have been maintained since the previous inspection. Levels of attendance remain good at 95% and above the national average for similar types of school.
13. Parents report that their children enjoy coming to school and enjoy their work. This is confirmed by the children's smiling faces as they run through the playground to their classrooms in the morning. When asked what they liked best about the school many pupils replied "lessons"! In nearly all cases pupils begin lessons wanting to learn and determined to do well. They respond very well to enthusiastic teachers and learning support assistants and are eager to answer questions when asked. Pupils are generally able to sustain concentration very well even when lessons are less interesting. Pupils show consideration for others at all times by helping one another when working in groups, supporting each other when they find the work difficult. Pupils move quietly around the school for example when going to the hall, outside for games or to the library for quiet work or to use the computers and there is the minimum of disruption to fellow pupils who are in other lessons.
14. Parents are generally pleased with behaviour at the school and are confident that there are no incidents of bullying. They also consider the school helps their children become more mature and responsible. Both by observation and in discussions with pupils, it is obvious they have a very clear understanding of right from wrong and consider it important to take account of the feelings of others. This is reflected in the very good behaviour in classrooms, at break times and in the dining hall. Behaviour is less good during lunchtime play where a few of the younger pupils get carried away in the less structured environment and this can disrupt others who are playing in friendship groups or enjoying quiet activities. There have been no exclusions during the past year.
15. Pupils from all classes also take on monitor duties such as taking registers to the office and handing out and collecting up items during the lesson when asked to do so by teachers and learning support assistants. Most of the pupils in the Year 6 have assigned monitor duties. They greatly enjoy the extra responsibilities they are given such as being in charge of music or the overhead projector during assemblies. The Year 6 pupils also enjoy their role as playground buddies to younger pupils who can go to them if they are upset or have no one to play with. Pupils' social skills are well developed with pupils displaying great courtesy to each other and staff but also to any parents who are around school at the start and end of day and any visitors to the school. Pupils have many opportunities to mix with their peers at other local schools when they enjoy activities such as football, athletics, dance, art, music, netball, athletics and story telling sessions. Pupils are also encouraged to consider the wider community and those less fortunate than themselves by raising money for charities such as World Vision. There is good provision for pupils to develop their social and moral understanding in lessons. Regular opportunities for reflection foster spiritual

development, and the wide range of music and art activities effectively support pupils' cultural awareness.

16. Pupils' enthusiasm for school is reflected in the good levels of attendance. There is a prompt start to the day and lessons throughout the day generally start on time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. A key issue in the previous inspection was to improve the teaching where it was unsatisfactory or poor. In addition there was the need to improve classroom management for the youngest pupils and those in Years 1 to 2, and to improve lesson planning. The teaching has improved in the school and was good overall during the inspection, with no unsatisfactory teaching. The teaching in the school meets the needs of all pupils except in writing, where more able pupils are not challenged enough. Overall, the school is successful in ensuring that all pupils are fully involved and included in lessons and other activities.
18. In mathematics, science, music, physical education and art and design the teaching was good. In English, history, religious education and design and technology it was satisfactory. No judgement was made in information and communication technology or geography as insufficient teaching was made to make a valid judgement.
19. The quality of teaching has a positive impact on the quality of learning in the school. Teaching was at least good in 23 out of 37 lessons. It was at least very good in 11 lessons with one excellent lesson. In the Foundation Stage it was mainly very good and in Years 1 to 2 and 3 to 5 it was mainly good. In Year 6 much of the teaching was very good. The school has the potential to increase the amount of very good teaching, by sharing the very good practice which already exists in the school.
20. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress throughout the school because of the effective teaching. The overall quality of learning in the Foundation Stage and Year 6 is very good, and it is mainly good in other year groups. An analysis of earlier work from last year shows that progress over time was slower, particularly with regard to writing. The school has had several staff changes but now has a stable staff who are committed to improving their teaching and improving standards. In a few lessons in Years 1 to 2 and 3 to 5, the progress of more able pupils slows; this is when there is insufficient challenge for the higher attaining pupils and teachers' expectations are not so high, for example, in writing.
21. The teaching in the Foundation Stage is very good, overall, with teaching which is at least good in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development. The teacher has a very clear understanding of young children and their needs. The curriculum is very well suited to their needs with a range of relevant and stimulating activities, which capture the children's imagination and interest. This includes a range of purposeful play activities, which help to develop early literacy and numeracy skills. The teacher ensures all the children understand what is expected so that they feel confident and secure. High expectations of attainment and behaviour ensure that the children make at least good progress in the lessons. There is a good balance of direct teaching and self-chosen activities. Planning is very thorough and ensures that all children are challenged. A very important emphasis is placed upon personal and social skills, which is consistently reinforced by all staff who provide very good role models. In an excellent lesson, very thoughtful questioning helped the children to develop very good problem

solving skills and independence. Class management was very effective, resulting in very good progress during most lessons.

22. In Years 1 to 2, the majority of the teaching is good. In the most successful lessons there are clear objectives, which are shared with the pupils, skilful questioning such as in a Year 2 science lesson which made the pupils think deeply about temperatures, and a useful plenary session which reinforces the learning. In Years 3 to 6 the teaching was mainly good with very good teaching in Year 6. The teacher's own enthusiasm; for example in a 'thinking skills' session related to history and design and technology, inspired the pupils to want to do their best. They concentrated very well and thoroughly enjoyed the task. In another lesson the subject matter was difficult, but because the teacher explained it clearly the pupils understood and achieved very well. Very effective class management ensured that all pupils worked well throughout the lesson. During a lunchtime music session led by a peripatetic music teacher, the exciting and excellent teaching resulted in a high level of enjoyment and very good progress in developing the pupils' skills, confidence and self-esteem.
23. In Years 1 to 2 and 3 to 5 there were examples of good teaching, but also a few lessons which although satisfactory overall, had some weaknesses which affected the progress pupils made. In these lessons the more able pupils did not always have enough challenge. The pace was too slow and consequently some pupils lost interest. Teachers did not always have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve with their writing. In a few lessons the subject matter was not always communicated in an interesting way and pupils, although still well behaved, did not concentrate as well. The quality of written marking is unsatisfactory as it is not evaluative and does not help pupils to realise how they can improve. Although behaviour is generally good, in a few lessons the behaviour policy was not adhered to and behaviour was not as good.
24. The teaching of numeracy skills is good and this has a positive impact on the progress that pupils make. The teaching of literacy skills is satisfactory overall, but teachers have less confidence in teaching writing and the quality of the teaching of writing is variable, which has a negative impact on standards in writing. The teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve in writing are not always high enough. Consequently, pupils do not always do their best.
25. The teachers are well informed about the different levels of achievement of their pupils and in most classes appropriate tasks are set accordingly. Where there is additional support, learning assistants are provided with support worksheets which outline the support required during the lesson. The learning assistants provide useful feedback to the class teacher by adding comments about the pupils' progress. Liaison between class teachers and learning assistants is good.
26. Learning assistants and class teachers provide good support for the pupils with special educational needs during the main activities parts of lessons, either by working with individuals or groups or by circulating and giving support where and when it is needed. However, they sometimes play a passive role during introductory and plenary parts of lessons and this time could be used more effectively.
27. The use of homework to support learning is satisfactory overall, but it is inconsistent. Some teachers send helpful information home for parents about homework, but this is not the case in all classes. Homework is not always sent home on a regular basis and so it does not support the learning as well as it could. During most lessons the teachers make helpful assessments of the pupils' work by making useful comments about what they are achieving and how it could be improved. There has been some

monitoring of teaching and learning with helpful feedback mainly by the headteacher. Many subject co-ordinators are new to their role and have not yet monitored the teaching and learning in their subjects to help maintain and improve standards, or to help ensure that agreed policies and schemes are being followed consistently. They are keen to develop their roles and the school has allocated time to enable this to happen.

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

28. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum for pupils of all ages. Some older pupils also benefit from additional subjects like Latin and French. The concentrated teaching of information and communication technology is effective in improving pupils' computer skills, but the use of computers across the curriculum is relatively undeveloped. The curriculum for religious education is broadly satisfactory, but past evidence indicates limited coverage of Christianity and other religions. The school is now addressing this issue. Overall, pupils have good opportunities to take advantage of what the school offers. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, enabling them to make good progress. The provision of specialist music teaching is a strength. Pupils also benefit from tennis coaching. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, enabling them to have full access to learning opportunities. The school has mostly appropriate strategies in place for extending pupils' literacy and numeracy skills throughout the school, although extended writing skills are not consistently encouraged, especially for more able pupils. A strength of the curriculum is the link that has been established with local schools, enabling, for example, the sharing of expertise in subject areas such as music. The provision of personal, social and health education is satisfactory. It is taught partly in the context of "circle time", although there is no policy or co-ordinated programme. The planning of most aspects of the curriculum is thoughtfully addressed, to ensure, for example, that pupils in mixed-age classes receive their full statutory entitlement to humanities subjects in a "rolling programme". Similarly, the structure of the school day is constantly monitored to ensure that the curriculum is taught effectively.
29. Provision for enriching the curriculum through extra-curricular activities and community involvement is very good and is strength of the school. There is an extensive range of extra activities, particularly for older pupils, and there is a good take up for activities such as art, gymnastics, soccer, netball and recorders. Pupils value the opportunity to get involved in the production of a show. Community involvement is good and developing, for example, the use of computer facilities by outsiders, and workshops in information technology are provided for older pupils by a local computer firm. Curriculum planning has improved since the previous inspection.
30. Overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and has been maintained since the previous inspection. Provision for social development has improved and is very good. There has been limited progress in improving opportunities for the consideration of other cultures, but cultural provision remains satisfactory overall.
31. Provision for spiritual development is good, overall, although the opportunity to explore religious beliefs and their impact is more limited. Pupils have the opportunity to explore and discuss values and the way in which beliefs have impact on people's lives. During the day there are quiet times when pupils can think and reflect. There is very good opportunity to explore human emotions and feelings and a very positive ethos where all

pupils are valued and respected. The pupils' contributions and questions in lessons are listened to and valued, by their peers and by adults.

32. The provision for moral development is good. All adults in the school are fully committed to ensuring that pupils know the difference between right and wrong. Pupils have a clear understanding about what is expected of them. Relationships in the school are very good and staff provide very good role models. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own actions and are encouraged to think about the impact of their actions on others. At lunchtime older pupils are 'on hand' to support anyone who may have a problem and they take this responsibility very seriously. The provision for social development is very good because there is a strong sense of community and belonging. There are very frequent and well-used opportunities for pupils to work together. The range of clubs also successfully promotes social development as pupils enjoy participating in the varied activities.
33. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory, overall. Pupils appreciate their own culture through different areas of the curriculum and they experience visits in the locality which enrich their learning. The pupils' knowledge of other cultures is more limited and there is a lack of books or displays that foster respect and understanding of other cultures. Cultural development is fostered well by the range of exciting musical activities in school. The school succeeds in recognising and nurturing pupils' talents, for example; through some very high quality art work.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

34. The school has maintained its good practice since the previous inspection and makes good provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety.
35. Parents consider this to be a very caring community school where a high priority is given to the physical and emotional well being of pupils. Inspection findings strongly support this. Pupils feel valued and understand they can talk to their teacher, learning support assistant, lunchtime supervisors or headteacher if they have a problem or are upset for any reason. Senior pupils are also encouraged to talk out and resolve problems amongst themselves and they are able to do this very successfully. Teachers and support staff know their pupils well and the strong, caring and supportive school ethos enables pupils' personal development to be monitored effectively.
36. There is a common approach across the school from all staff, including non-teaching staff, to creating an atmosphere of warmth, security and well being where pupils feel safe. Child protection procedures are secure and all staff have a clear understanding of the need to report any concerns about pupils' welfare to the teacher responsible or the headteacher. There is an adequate number of staff trained in first aid within the school. However, the procedures for the recording of incidents, particularly minor ones, are not always followed. The school has difficulty in appointing lunchtime supervisors and needs to continue to strive to appoint additional staff. The school currently relies on the local authority to carry out formal risk assessments and safety audits. It is planned that the headteacher and governor with responsibility for health and safety matters will be more involved in routine tasks, so that the school can become even more proactive in identifying and rectifying potential hazards. The school places a very high priority on creating the right environment for learning and this is reflected in the school buildings being maintained in a clean, bright and safe condition and the school and grounds being kept as secure as possible.

37. The school is aware of the importance of good behaviour and positive pupil attitudes in creating the right environment for learning. There is a good community feeling within the school that encourages pupils to be kind and considerate to one another. As a result, incidents of bullying are very rare. Pupils respond well to staff expectations that they are well behaved at all times. However, the absence of any consistently applied whole-school rules and the fact that the behaviour policy has not been reviewed for some considerable time does mean that there are some inconsistencies in behaviour management from class to class that could be confusing for pupils as they progress through the school. Teachers are not consistent in their behaviour management; positive reinforcement is used as the preferred means by most but not all teachers. The school's overall effectiveness in promoting and encouraging good behaviour added to most pupils' desire to be good and do well within a happy and orderly community contributes very significantly to pupils' progress.
38. In order to ensure consistency of the good practice in many aspects of pupils' welfare, health and safety, the school needs to ensure practice is accurately reflected in school policies and that other school documentation and statutory requirements are met in terms of the policies the school is required to have. For example, the school does not currently have a race equality policy.
39. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are satisfactory with the school emphasising the importance of good attendance to ensure pupils' full educational opportunities. The school has very recently introduced a computerised attendance recording and monitoring system that will enable the patterns of absence to be analysed. However, the school needs to review registration procedures that were changed at the time of the introduction of the new system, as they no longer conform to statutory requirements.
40. Formal procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are currently underdeveloped. However, despite the current lack of a formal personal, social and health (PSHE) curriculum, there are many examples of good practice in occasions such as circle time, assemblies and other times during the school day that demonstrate the school's commitment and priority to this aspect. This is particularly so in the case of senior pupils who are very well prepared for the next stage of their education. Responsibilities to help them become more independent are well planned and their capacity to cope or need for help is regularly reviewed by their class teacher. Consequently, they set a very good example for younger pupils and demonstrate maturity beyond their years. During the inspection they were able to discuss in a mature way the tragic events that had recently affected the school, reflecting positively on the support they had received from all the adults at the school, many people with former associations with the school, the local community and specialist agencies. At the same time they articulated their responsibility to support fellow classmates as well as other pupils lower down the school.
41. The school's procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory, overall, and improving, although the marking of pupils' work is inconsistent and does not help to develop pupils' learning. Procedures are good in the Foundation Stage where they are used well. Teachers are now more aware of how to assess pupils against national criteria than at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils with special educational needs are assessed appropriately. Records are kept of all pupils' progress and these are particularly good in English, giving a clear indication of how individual children attain appropriate levels as the result of targeted assessments. Optional national tests are used in English, in addition to the statutory ones, as a means of

assessing pupils' progress. The school uses data to analyse, for example, the relative performance of boys and girls in an area like writing. Having analysed the relative performance of boys and girls, the school has taken remedial action to improve the boys' skills. Assessment procedures are less well developed in non-core subjects, and the planned portfolios of pupils' work in various subjects have not yet been compiled. The school is making increasing use of assessment data for teachers to set appropriate targets for pupils as they move through the school. Targets are realistic, based on past achievement, and pupils' progress is monitored. As a result, information is used to provide extra support where necessary, for example in providing booster classes in mathematics and in providing additional literacy support for some pupils. However, effective strategies are not fully in place to help other pupils improve their performance, particularly in writing.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

42. Most parents view the school very positively and consider the school works closely with them. Parents generally are comfortable with approaching the school with any questions or problems they may have. Overall, the impact of the school's links with parents is good, which is the same as that at the last inspection.
43. The school values and acknowledges the significant contribution parents can make to their children's learning both in school and at home and works hard to facilitate this. Parents appreciate the open door policy and parents who are able to take and collect their children to and from school make good use of the opportunities to speak informally to the headteacher and class teachers both at the beginning and the end of the school day. Parents confirm they are happy to telephone the school to discuss any problems.
44. The school start of day has recently changed and this was done following consultation with parents. However, there is little consultation with parents on other matters that concern them. For example, parents do not have any input in the school development plan and there is no evidence that all parents were consulted with regard to the homework policy that is currently being developed. The parent questionnaires associated with the inspection indicated a significant number of parents felt their children do not have an appropriate amount of homework. The inspection team agree that the setting of homework is inconsistent in some classes.
45. The format of the recently designed school prospectus is very good and it is accompanied by many photographs of activities that take place within the school that parents can relate to. A number of newsletters are sent home each term that keep parents informed of forthcoming events or celebrate some of the achievements of the school. The governors' annual report to parents is of a good quality and is easy to read. However, some statutory information is missing and the school needs to ensure facts such as levels of unauthorised absence, information about school security and the steps the school has taken to prevent disabled pupils being treated less favourably than other pupils is contained within the report.
46. Parents receive curriculum information each term informing them of topic work that will be covered and homework that can be expected. However, the standard of information sent out varies from teacher to teacher being very good in most cases but which can also be poor. The parent questionnaires associated with the inspection indicated a significant number of parents felt they did not have a close working relationship with the school and the poor quality of curriculum information some parents receive from their child's class teacher could partly account for this. The quality of information some parents receive is inadequate to enable them to support their children's learning at home.

The quality of annual reports for parents on their children's progress is variable depending upon the teacher, with most being good but the information some parents receive being unsatisfactory. The best quality reports inform parents of what individual pupils can do and the progress they have made during the year. These reports also contain details of the progress pupils have made over the year in their personal development and targets for the future. The parent questionnaires associated with the inspection indicated a significant number of parents felt they are not well informed about the progress their children make at school. The quality of information some parents receive in annual reports and particularly in relation the progress their children are making is poor and could account for the views expressed by some parents. The school only has one parent consultation evening each year and this may be a contributory factor to some of the dissatisfaction expressed by some parents. The school needs to ensure that the very good practice of most teachers in producing high quality information for parents is repeated across the school. Parents of children with special educational needs receive very good information on strategies they can adopt to help their children with work at home as well as more opportunities to discuss their child's progress.

47. The parent questionnaires associated with the inspection also indicated a significant number of parents felt the school did not provide sufficient extra-curricular activities for their children. Inspection findings did not support this view as opportunities for pupils to take part in activities outside the school day were judged as very good compared with similar schools, particularly in the case of older pupils.
48. The school is very fortunate to have an active Parents and Friends Association (PFA) that has raised considerable funds to purchase extra resources for the school such as books for the library as well as generally improving the learning environment. The strength of the PFA in such a small school reflects the confidence of the local community in the school and the quality of education it provides.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

49. The leadership and management are good, overall. The headteacher provides very effective, purposeful leadership with a clear vision for the school. He is very well supported by the staff, governors and parents and there is a shared vision for further improvement. The inspection took place at a very difficult time for all involved in the school. The very good quality of leadership ensured that the daily life of the school was maintained as smoothly as possible in a secure, caring and supportive environment.
50. A key issue in the last inspection was to improve procedures for involving staff and governors in monitoring the curriculum, teaching and learning. The school has made satisfactory progress in relation to this. The headteacher and governors have developed their monitoring role, although it now needs to be more specific. Many co-ordinators are new and have not yet had time to develop their monitoring role. This means that there are some inconsistencies in areas such as marking, agreed behaviour strategies, homework and the use of assessment. There is currently no consistent system for monitoring planning or analysing pupils' work. The school has adopted or adapted the Qualifications and Curriculum authority (QCA) guidance. There are some useful policies but many need updating and revising in order to provide all staff with up-to-date guidance, which can be followed consistently. Policies that are needed include racial equality, homework, marking and personal, social and health education.

51. The school has developed the use of data to measure the effectiveness of the school, although it is in the early stages. Inclusion is generally good: the school strives to ensure that all pupils are included in the educational provision.
52. The school development plan is a useful working document for moving the school forward. Targets for improvement are more closely linked to standards. There is a set of aims, which are reflected in the work of the school.
53. The governors are very keen and very supportive of the school. They are well informed and have developed their role of critical friend very well. They visit the school regularly to ensure that they have first-hand information and knowledge and are fully aware of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Governors with responsibility for specific areas take their responsibilities seriously and provide good support for staff. The governor with responsibility for special educational needs meets twice termly with the co-ordinator. The governing body is well informed, supportive and effective in its role with regard to special educational needs. There are some areas of strategic responsibility, which need addressing urgently such as the racial equality policy.
54. The management of special educational needs is very good. The co-ordinator's time is used well and she has a clear view of what is happening throughout the school. The co-ordinator has personal contact with all of the pupils with special educational needs and a sound understanding of their needs. The school policy for special educational needs has recently been reviewed and updated and provides helpful guidance. Pupils identified as having special educational needs have clearly written and up-to-date individual education plans with clearly identified targets. There are termly reviews that involve class teachers, the pupils themselves and the parents. The pupils are aware of their own targets and contribute to formulating and agreeing them.
55. The school employs five learning assistants who provide effective support throughout the school. The deployment of support staff is appropriate and effective. The use of computers for special educational needs administration and for supporting the pupils with special needs is an area for future development.
56. There are sufficient suitably qualified staff to teach the age range of pupils and all subjects of the National Curriculum. The headteacher does not have currently a class commitment, which enables him to provide effective support where needed. For example, by giving extra support to groups of Year 5 and Year 6 pupils in mathematics and English. The support staff work closely with the teachers to provide effective support. Induction procedures, although currently informal, are effective and ensure that new staff settle quickly into the school team. There is a good system for performance management with targets linking into the school development plan.
57. Budgets are based on the needs identified in the school development plan. The finance committee monitors the budget on a regular basis. Care is taken to obtain good value on all purchases and the principles of best value are applied satisfactorily. The smooth and effective day-to-day management of the school by very efficient administrative staff, supports the teachers well and is carried out with the minimum disruption to teaching. At the end of the last financial year the school had a carry forward of £27,082. This was due to the ongoing priority of wanting to maintain six classes. The expenditure per pupils is above the national average. Taking into account the standards achieved and the overall quality of education provided, including the good quality of teaching, the school provides good value for money.

58. The overall range and quality of learning resources are adequate, although there are insufficient large wheeled toys for the Foundation Stage. There is a lack of books which reflect a range of cultures and beliefs and promote respect and understanding. The accommodation is satisfactory, although children in the Foundation Stage do not have their own designated area. Plans are underway to rectify this. The school makes the best use of the available space.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

59. In order to build upon the many strengths and continue the improvements made, the headteacher, governors and staff should:

- (1) Improve the standards in writing by:

developing the teachers' confidence in teaching writing;
raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve so that all pupils are fully challenged;
developing the use of information and communication technology, particularly in literacy.
(Paragraphs 7,10,23,72,and 107)

- (2) Improve the quality of marking throughout the school.
(Paragraphs 23 and 73)

- (3) Produce and implement agreed up-to-date policies and guidance on important aspects of school life, such as, racial equality, homework, the marking of pupils' work and personal, social and health education.
(Paragraphs 38 and 40)

- (4) Continue to develop the role of subject co-ordinators as identified in the school development plan.
(Paragraphs 27,50 and 83)

The following areas were also identified and should be considered by the school:

- Attend to any health and safety issues which have been identified.
- Develop the provision for multicultural awareness and the pupils' understanding of Christianity and other world faiths as identified in the locally agreed syllabus for education.
(Paragraphs 33 and 73)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

37

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

29

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

| | Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|------------|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| Number | 1 | 10 | 12 | 14 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Percentage | 3 | 27 | 32 | 38 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

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

Information about the school's pupils

| | |
|--|--------------|
| Pupils on the school's roll | YR – Y6 |
| Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils) | 156 |
| Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals | 2 |
| Special educational needs | YR – Y6 |
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs | 0 |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | 15 |
| 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 | 6 |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving | 2 |

Attendance

Authorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 4.1 |
| National comparative data | 5.6 |

Unauthorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 0.0 |
| National comparative data | 0.5 |

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

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

| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| | 2001 | 9 | 11 | 20 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | Reading | Writing | Mathematics |
|---|----------|---------|----------|-------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | | | |
| | Girls | | | |
| | Total | 17 | 17 | 19 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 85 (83) | 85 (88) | 95 ([100) |
| | National | 84 (83) | 86 ([84) | 91 (90) |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|----------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | | | |
| | Girls | | | |
| | Total | 17 | 19 | 18 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 85 (79) | 95 (92) | 90 (100) |
| | National | 85 (84) | 89 [88) | 89 (88) |

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

Data for boys and girls is omitted as there were fewer than ten boys.

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

| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| | 2001 | 7 | 9 | 16 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above | Boys | | | |
| | Girls | | | |
| | Total | 14 | 13 | 14 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School | 88 (92) | 81 (75) | 88 (83) |
| | National | 75 (75) | 71 (72) | 87 (85) |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above | Boys | | | |
| | Girls | | | |
| | Total | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School | 75 (79) | 81 ([67) | 88 (75) |
| | National | 72 (70) | 74 (72) | 82 (79) |

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

The data for girls and boys is omitted as there were fewer than ten boys or girls

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 | 128 | 0 | 0 |
| White – Irish | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| White – any other White background | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Mixed – White and Black Caribbean | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Mixed – White and Black African | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Mixed – White and Asian | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Mixed – any other mixed background | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Asian or Asian British - Indian | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Asian or Asian British - Pakistani | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Black or Black British – Caribbean | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Black or Black British – African | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Black or Black British – any other Black background | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Chinese | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Any other ethnic group | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| No ethnic group recorded | 0 | 0 | 0 |

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

| | |
|--|-------|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 7.1 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 24.75 |
| Average class size | 30.2 |

Education support staff: YR – Y6

| | |
|---|----|
| Total number of education support staff | 4 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 88 |

Financial information

| | |
|----------------|------|
| Financial year | 2001 |
|----------------|------|

| | £ |
|--|---------|
| Total income | 310,807 |
| Total expenditure | 317,940 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 2,106 |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 34,215 |

Recruitment of teachers

| | |
|--|---|
| Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years | 2 |
| Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years | 3 |

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 156 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 48 |

Percentage of responses in each category

| | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school. | 60 | 35 | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| My child is making good progress in school. | 48 | 40 | 6 | 0 | 6 |
| Behaviour in the school is good. | 27 | 63 | 4 | 4 | 2 |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home. | 10 | 54 | 21 | 6 | 8 |
| The teaching is good. | 33 | 52 | 2 | 0 | 13 |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on. | 21 | 42 | 31 | 2 | 4 |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 48 | 44 | 4 | 2 | 2 |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best. | 38 | 52 | 4 | 0 | 6 |
| The school works closely with parents. | 17 | 52 | 25 | 0 | 6 |
| The school is well led and managed. | 38 | 46 | 4 | 4 | 8 |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible. | 33 | 60 | 4 | 0 | 2 |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. | 19 | 42 | 33 | 2 | 4 |

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

60. The educational provision in the Foundation stage is very good and children receive a stimulating, happy and secure start to their education. Standards are generally in line with expectations for this age, given that the inspection took place in the very early days of the children's entry to the school. Children are admitted to the school in the year in which they are five, starting part-time and gradually increasing to full-time attendance. At the time of the inspection one group of children was just starting part-time attendance. Information from baseline assessments is used to evaluate standards on entry and to ensure progress towards the early learning goals. By the end of the Reception year, most children are in line to reach the nationally expected standard in all of the recommended areas of learning, with many likely to achieve beyond this, particularly in communications, language and literacy and personal, social and emotional development. Work from the previous year indicates that standards of writing in communication, language and literacy were below that expected. This area is now receiving an important and successful emphasis, for example; through good quality purposeful play activities involving early writing skills. A strength of the provision is the way in which the early years' teachers and their support staff work in partnership with each other. Overall improvement has been good since the previous inspection; teaching is now very good with well-planned activities.
61. The quality of teaching is at least good in each area of learning, with some very good and excellent teaching. Consequently the children make at least good progress in lessons. This includes any children with special educational needs and also higher attaining children. No teaching was less than satisfactory. There is an effective mix of direct and self-chosen activities including imaginative play in the 'Three Bears' Cottage'. Planning is very thorough and takes into account the needs of all the children. There are high expectations of the children's behaviour and attainment and the children respond very well. Time and resources are used very well to support the learning. Relationships are very good, which helps the children to settle quickly and calmly into school.

Personal, social and emotional development

62. Children make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development, which is well developed and is a particular strength. The strength lies in the good relationships between adults and children and the way in which staff know each child personally and are able to cater for their individual specific needs. This makes the children feel important and valued. They work together in a friendly and supportive manner and show respect for each other, adults and visitors. They are well behaved and sustain concentration when working. They play well with others, share and take turns. This was evident in an activity where children worked co-operatively to build a bear's den. Children respond well to adults. They are learning to follow instructions, to listen carefully to what they are told and they begin activities eagerly and with good enthusiasm. Children take responsibility for a range of duties including taking the register back to the office and tidying up at the end of sessions. In physical education lessons they deal independently with their clothing. The teacher and support assistant provide very good role models for the children. They help the children to feel confident and to feel special.

Communication, language and literacy

63. Children make good progress. They are lively and articulate and eager to talk to adults and share their experiences. There are well planned opportunities for developing speaking and listening skills in each area of learning. Children take part in discussions and answer questions confidently, with a good vocabulary. Through carefully chosen stories they recognise an increasing number of words in familiar contexts and making basic links between sounds and letters. They enjoy listening to stories and readily share books with each other and adults. For example, children were eager to look at the extensive range of books provided on the theme of 'Bears'. Talk is used to good effect by adults, showing that they value what all children have to say and questioning is used well to extend learning. Supplies of paper, pens, pencils and crayons are available and children are encouraged to write freely. In the past there has not been enough emphasis on early writing and steps have already been taken to rectify this.

Mathematical development

64. Most children are likely to achieve the standards expected at the end of the Foundation Stage and are already making good progress. The school's strong focus on developing mathematical skills extends to the early years. Structured activities, together with very good teaching, have a positive impact on standards. Sand and water, building bricks, computers and other resources are used to reinforce the learning. Children play activity games to reinforce counting skills and are becoming familiar with mathematical vocabulary. In the 'Three Bears' Cottage' they develop their early number skills through counting and sorting activities. Activities are accurately pitched at the level and interest of the children, for example; they greatly enjoyed describing and identifying the properties of different shapes with the help of the hand puppet Hattie the Hedgehog who had been 'naughty' and hidden some of the shapes. They concentrated well and they made good progress in their learning. Children are beginning to write numerals with correct formation. Computer programmes are used effectively to reinforce mathematical concepts.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

65. Children enter the school with a good understanding of the world around them. They are developing an awareness of the pattern of the days of the week, months of the year and the seasons. Good use is made of the school's extensive grounds and rural location to promote awareness of nature. They use construction apparatus with growing confidence. In an excellent observed lesson they used large building blocks to make a suitable bear's den, independently selecting resources to make a waterproof roof and a comfortable bed. They use tools appropriately to make jam sandwiches, porridge for the bears, and food from play dough. Computer skills are developing well; children use programs independently and control the mouse to 'click and move' items.

Physical development

66. Children make good progress. They handle pencils, brushes, scissors and glue tentatively at first, but quickly become confident users with careful guidance by staff. Their fine manipulative skills are developed appropriately through regular opportunities to use scissors, small equipment and pencils and crayons. Although classroom space is limited, there is a spacious hall for physical activity and children develop an awareness of space, themselves, and others, learning to move with confidence, safety and imagination. They experiment with transporting beanbags without using their hands and throwing them in the air to a prescribed height. Although there are spacious outdoor

areas, a dedicated activity area for the youngest pupils has yet to be developed and the range of large 'ride-on' equipment is currently limited. Good use is made of the hall to compensate for the current lack of outdoor equipment.

Creative development

67. The stimulating environment makes a strong contribution to standards. There are many opportunities for children's self-expression in drawing and painting and through the use of building bricks and construction equipment. Children attempt self-portraits and results are usually recognisable with details such as ears, eyes and noses. Teachers make a feature of displaying work to encourage pride, self-esteem and achievement and appreciation of each other's efforts. Children use modelling materials to roll, pull and manipulate, being observed making play dough 'food'. They successfully arrange and stick shapes to make brick walls for the bears' house and play in the house 'cooking' meals and making telephone calls. They sing together frequently and respond very well to the singing of 'routines' in order to establish these routines in their minds. There is regular provision for good quality imaginative play and children take different roles with a high level of confidence for the early stage in the term.

ENGLISH

68. Overall provision in English is satisfactory. Levels of attainment have been variable, partly because of the small numbers who take the national tests each year. The 2001 tests showed that the standards of pupils by the age of seven were in line with national expectations for reading and well above in writing, although no boys achieved the higher levels in writing or spelling. The unvalidated test results for 2002 showed that no pupils attained a Level 3 in writing. The 2001 test results for pupils by the age of eleven were above the national average and in line with those of schools in a similar context. In the unvalidated 2002 tests, almost a third of pupils achieved the higher Level 5. Over the previous three years, standards of pupils between the ages of seven and eleven have risen faster than the national average.
69. The inspection showed that current overall standards of pupils in English are satisfactory for pupils between the ages of five and eleven. The difference in these findings and the national test results is due to the different cohort of pupils. The great majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve satisfactorily in relation to their prior attainment. However, a significant number of pupils, especially the more able, do not make sufficient progress, particularly in writing. The significant gap in attainment between boys and girls shown in recent test results is no longer evident, especially amongst older pupils.
70. Pupils begin Year 1 with overall standards in line with expectations, although the standard of writing is relatively weaker than that of reading, speaking and listening. Pupils currently in Year 2 show good standards of speaking, with many responding clearly and confidently to questioning or talking confidently about their work. Similarly, many pupils in a Year 1 lesson spoke very clearly when discussing how to do instructional writing as in making a recipe, and higher achievers used an unusually wide range of words such as "ingredients". Listening skills are more variable, although they show satisfactory improvement. Standards of reading are in line with expectations: many pupils read with appropriate fluency and accuracy, although a minority are more hesitant and have fewer strategies for decoding less familiar words. Although standards of writing are in line with expectations overall, there are a significant number of pupils who make more limited progress in learning to write independently and accurately. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 do expand the range of their writing and the breadth of their

vocabulary, with some pupils making imaginative use of vocabulary such as “good as gold”. However, whilst basic punctuation improves, and some pupils learn to write in a consistent joined-up script, spellings and the quality of presentation are inconsistent, although satisfactory, overall.

71. Between the ages of seven and eleven pupils of all levels of ability continue to achieve satisfactorily in developing the various English skills. Many pupils read with pleasure: they demonstrate appropriate fluency, expressiveness and accuracy and can talk clearly about their reading interests. They listen well and show a good standard of speaking. Older pupils in particular demonstrate confidence in debate, as when pupils in Year 5 and 6 discussed recent events in the world in a lesson on journalistic writing. Standards in writing, although broadly average overall, are more variable. The range of writing widens as pupils move up through the school, with imaginative stories and poems, book reviews and grammatical exercises. Some more able pupils write imaginatively about an event such as the discovery of Tutankhamun’s tomb. Creative writing such as “The Green Bottle” shows a developing awareness of how to use dialogue and a range of idioms. However, the progress of more able pupils varies and some pupils do not make enough progress. Their work sometimes contains frequent errors in spelling and grammar, although they do learn to write in increasingly complex sentence structures.
72. The overall quality of teaching in English is satisfactory. Where the teaching is most effective, teachers help the pupils to make good gains in learning through high expectations, good use of resources, incisive questioning to extend and reinforce understanding, and a strong emphasis on developing pupils’ vocabulary. For example, Year 5 and 6 pupils were introduced to a series of texts on the Great Exhibition of 1851, complementing their work in history. The text was challenging, and used to widen pupils’ vocabulary effectively. Basic resources were used well, with pupils then working at different text levels appropriate to their ability, enabling them all to increase their understanding of journalistic techniques and to adapt their own style of writing. The good relationships which teachers have with pupils lead to good motivation: pupils co-operate well and, as a result, in the best lessons they achieve well. Good relationships and effective monitoring and feedback to pupils were evident in a lesson, which enabled Year 2 pupils to improve their ability to join sentences using a wider range of connectives. Where the teaching is less effective, the teachers’ expectations are insufficiently challenging, especially of the more able, and sometimes there is too much teacher direction. For example, when pupils read out their work, sometimes the teacher does all the evaluation, instead of giving pupils the opportunity to analyse the strengths and areas for improvement for themselves or each other. Teachers are less confident in teaching writing which limits the progress which pupils make. The quality of marking is variable: overall it is unsatisfactory since the marking does not give pupils a clear idea of how well they have achieved or how they can improve.
73. Leadership and management of English are satisfactory. The school now monitors teaching and progress more effectively, and has identified areas for improvement. The literacy assessment files are a useful tool for assessing pupils’ progress. Additional literacy initiatives are in place to help lower achievers in Years 3 and 4, and they are also being developed for younger pupils. Targets have been set for pupils’ improvement, although there is not yet sufficient rigour in improving the quality of writing across the curriculum. Although assessment information is being increasingly used to analyse pupil performance, the quality of everyday marking is unsatisfactory, and not helping pupils to achieve their targets. The use of computers as an aid to literacy is undeveloped. English makes a good contribution to spiritual, moral and social provision, for example by providing frequent opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively, and by developing a

love of language particularly through poetry. There are few opportunities taken to widen pupils' multicultural understanding through the use of texts from other parts of the world.

74. Standards in English have not improved significantly since the last inspection. However, measures to monitor progress and develop strategies to improve achievement are in place, so English is a developing subject. Overall there has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection.

MATHEMATICS

75. Current provision for mathematics in the school is good. At the time of the last inspection attainment at age seven was in line with that expected of pupils of this age. At age 11 attainment was above that normally expected. Current inspection findings indicate that attainment at seven and eleven is above that which is normally expected of pupils of this age and pupils throughout the school make good progress. In the national tests in mathematics in 2001 in Year 6 the results were above the national average but below average when compared with similar schools in relation to free school meals. There is a problem when comparing with similar schools, as it is difficult for the school to identify all pupils who may be entitled to free school meals. In the unvalidated 2002 tests, standards fell slightly, although over 25 per cent of pupils achieved the higher level. The 2001 tests showed that standards were well above average at the age of seven when compared nationally, with 45 per cent of pupils achieving the higher level. The unvalidated results for 2002 show that all pupils achieved the expected level with 26 per cent achieving the higher level. Results in the unvalidated Year 2 national tests in 2002 indicate more boys than girls achieving national standards. This may be a reflection of standards in only one cohort. The school is appropriately taking note of this data in its analysis and planning. The school has been successful in reversing a decline in standards that followed the last inspection.
76. The pupils in Year 1 have good understanding of putting objects in order of size. They know how to estimate answers and can measure hand sizes using cubes. Most of the pupils in Year 2 use addition and subtraction to ten to solve money problems accurately and quickly. A significant number of the pupils in Year 2 achieve standards above those normally expected at this age. They provide reasons for their answers and explain their reasoning. Year 3 and 4 pupils make satisfactory progress in estimating and measuring lengths of curving lines and achieve satisfactory standards. They estimate measurements correctly. Year 6 pupils accurately position decimal points on an ungraded metre stick and most can multiply three digit by two digit numbers containing a decimal point. They correctly use a grid method for long multiplication with decimals. A significant number of the pupils achieve standards above those normally expected at this age. Most pupils have a good understanding of fractions and percentages and enjoy the challenges which are presented to them. Pupils apply their knowledge and use their mathematical skills with confidence and can identify strategies needed to solve mathematical problems.
77. The quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good. The teachers plan well with appropriate work for the pupils of different levels of achievement. Higher attaining pupils are suitably challenged to take their learning forward. The teachers ensure that questions are asked at appropriate levels so that all the pupils can respond. Firm, fair control ensures good behaviour. The teachers use praise and encouragement well to ensure that all the pupils feel confident and able to respond to questions. There is effective use of information and communication technology to support the pupils' learning. These factors have had a significant impact on raising standards in Years 1 and 2. The setting out and presentation of the pupils' work is variable. Presentation is sometimes unsatisfactory and squared

paper is not always used appropriately to help the pupils' understanding of place value. There is good inclusion of all the pupils in question and answer sessions and by teachers ensuring that there is appropriate work at all levels of achievement. Good classroom control and high expectations ensure that there is good development of the understanding of codes of behaviour and social conduct.

78. The quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 is good, overall. In a very good lesson with the oldest pupils there was a brisk pace and high expectations of pupil behaviour and work. This ensures that the pupils develop socially and morally by working well together and learning what is and what is not acceptable behaviour. Teachers plan the lessons thoroughly and use appropriate worksheets to take the pupils' learning forward. The very good quality of teaching of the oldest pupils is having a significant impact on reversing a decline in standards that followed the last inspection at the age of 11. All the pupils are included in each aspect of the lesson. In less satisfactory lessons the pace of lessons is slower and pupils do not make as much progress. Throughout the school the marking is inconsistent and there is insufficient use of constructive comments to take the pupils' learning forward. The presentation of the pupils' work, although generally satisfactory, varies in quality.
79. Throughout the school the pupils work well together and are encouraged to talk about what they have been doing. In one class of older pupils the other pupils are patient and supportive while average and below average achievers are engaged in demonstrating to the rest of the class. Most of the pupils in Years 1 and 2 behave well. High expectations and appropriate work keep them on task. The pupils show confidence in speaking in front of others and respond well to questions. In one lesson on measuring the pupils participated eagerly and were keen to check each other's counting. The behaviour of pupils in Years 3 to 6 is mainly satisfactory and sometimes good. The pupils behave and respond well where the pace of the lesson is brisk and there are appropriate challenges for pupils at different levels of achievement.
80. Display is used effectively to support learning in some classrooms, but good practice is not consistent throughout the school. Some classes lack number lines, charts and clock faces. The appropriate statutory curriculum is in place and teachers' planning shows that there is breadth, balance and relevance in the subject provision. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good throughout the school.
81. The deployment of teaching assistants is well planned in most lessons so that the pupils at all levels of achievement are given appropriate help. The management of numeracy is good. The headteacher, the co-ordinator for Years 3 to 6 and the numeracy governor have useful plans for taking the subject forward.
82. The school uses assessment on entry to school and teachers' assessments to set targets for pupils at the age of seven. Data is used to track and analyse pupils' progress. Individual level targets are set for the end of each year including Year 6 and support is deployed where appropriate. The school does not yet analyse test data to identify aspects of strengths and weakness within the subject, but has identified this and the setting of individual and group targets as areas for development. The management team recognises that there are inconsistencies in the presentation of pupils' work, in teachers' marking and in the day-to-day assessment by teachers in classrooms. These are areas for development. At the present time day-to-day assessment is not used consistently and effectively throughout the school to inform future planning.
83. Systematic processes for the effective monitoring of teaching and learning have not yet been fully established. This was a key issue in the last inspection and is now being

addressed. The recently appointed co-ordinator has an appropriate action plan which provides time to focus on standards and work for two half-days per term for the next two years, with details of actions to be taken. The school policy for mathematics is currently due for review. Resources for the delivery of the numeracy curriculum are satisfactory and are well distributed throughout the school.

SCIENCE

84. The school makes good provision for science. The results in the 2001 national tests in science in Year 6 were about average compared with those nationally but well below average when compared with similar schools. The unvalidated results for 2002 indicate a similar standard but with 39 per cent of pupils achieving the higher level. There is considerable variation in results each year due to the relatively small cohort of pupils. In the national tests in 2001 at the age of seven standards were about average when compared with those nationally, with 45 per cent of pupils who achieved the higher levels, which is well above average. Unvalidated results in 2002 show that the overall number of pupils who achieved the expected level has increased although fewer pupils achieved the higher levels.
85. Standards based on current inspection findings at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are above average. Pupils have responded well to the very good quality of teaching and they develop inquisitive minds and become keen investigators. Since the previous inspection standards have improved at the age of seven and have been maintained at the age of eleven.
86. In Year 2, pupils cover all aspects of the curriculum and record their work in written and pictorial form. They have good knowledge about living things and materials. They carry out investigations, for example, testing the temperature of water and noticing differences. They give sensible explanations of their findings. This is very well supported by their teacher by the clear explanations and high expectations. They record their work in tabular form and have a very good understanding of how to do this. They have a good range of scientific vocabulary. They know why a healthy diet and exercise are important. Younger pupils in Year 1 use their senses very well to explore food. The work links very well with their current topic and consequently they are very interested and concentrate well.
87. In Year 6, pupils make sensible predictions and explain their reasons very well. They hypothesise in a sensible way, working very well together. They understand why a fair test is necessary and their diagrams and drawings indicate that this is used well in their work. They understand the properties of different materials and develop a thorough understanding of physical processes. They make accurate diagrams of electrical circuits, persevering very well at this challenging task. In Years 3 and 4 pupils make accurate predictions about keeping things cold and they make clear evaluations about whether the test is fair. Throughout the school, pupils develop good skills of scientific enquiry.
88. The quality of teaching is very good, overall. In three out of four observed lessons it was very good. This has a very positive impact on the progress which the pupils make. In all the lessons they develop keen scientific skills and a thirst to find things out. Teachers plan very thoroughly for the range of ability and they make the work interesting which stimulates the pupils' enthusiasm. Even when the subject is a difficult one as in a Year 6 lesson, the teacher explains the task very well and consequently the pupils persevere well. Teachers have high expectations and current work shows that standards of presentation have improved. The quality of learning is good in Years 1 and 2 and also in

Years 3 to 6. Teachers use open-ended questions very well and lessons have a brisk but appropriate pace. Tasks are very well matched to the age and ability of the pupils, for example, in Year 1, practical work is linked to the topic on the Three Bears. Pupils record their reactions to different flavoured porridge and explain their preferences.

89. In all lessons there was very effective class management which meant that all pupils knew what to do and produced their best work. The relationships with the teachers are very good and consequently pupils feel confident and want to have a go or give an answer. In most lessons the teachers' questions resulted in a sea of hands as enthusiastic pupils responded. The very good quality of teaching has ensured that pupils have positive attitudes and they enjoy science lessons. Behaviour is good throughout the school. Pupils are courteous, polite and respectful to each other and to the staff.
90. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the effective support which they receive. Boys and girls are equally involved in lessons and achieve equally well. There is appropriate use of ICT to support the learning. Science lessons make a good contribution to pupils' moral and social development as pupils frequently work together and sensibly share equipment. They recognise safety rules, for example, in Years 2 and 3 pupils handle delicate thermometers with care. They respect each other's views and have time to reflect upon what they have found out.
91. The current co-ordinators have been appointed recently. They are full of enthusiasm and know exactly what is necessary to maintain the improvement made. As yet they have not monitored the teaching and learning but have been allocated time for this during the term. Past work indicates significant variation in presentation, the marking of work and the use of on-going assessment. The school makes appropriate use of the Qualification and Curriculum Authority (QCA) guidance in addition to the school's own skills programme.

ART AND DESIGN

92. There is good provision for art and standards have improved since the previous inspection, when they were judged to be in line with those expected nationally. The standards in art are above those expected nationally at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress with their art work. Three lessons were observed during the inspection in addition to the analysis of much work and photographic evidence from the previous year.
93. By the end of Year 2, pupils have used a wide range of materials and resources. They use colour well to produce an attractive effect and develop good skills in pattern making. Last year the pupils created very good quality work in the style of Aboriginal artists. Very careful sketches show a high level of thought and care. Attractive work in the hall in the style of Paul Klee demonstrates a good understanding of different techniques. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 show good progression in their skills, for example, in creating more intricate patterns, and in very good observational drawings. Photographs show attractive and exciting sculptures, which were created in the style of Andy Goldsworthy in Neroche Forest. Older pupils in Years 5 and 6 develop very good drawing skills and make good use of the computer to develop their range of skills. By the end of Year 6 they have a good awareness of light, dark, form and texture and this is evident from the range of displayed work. The range of work shows increasing skills in colour blending and using different methods to create the desired effect.

94. The teaching in the three observed lessons was good, and throughout the school pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. Teachers provide helpful encouragement and are enthusiastic about the activities, which stimulates the pupils' confidence and interest. Learning is supported well by questions which encourage the pupils to evaluate and improve their work. The pupils concentrate very well and thoroughly enjoy art and design activities. There is an exciting range of cross-curricular work, which also stimulates the pupils' interest and thinking. There is an impressive range of work in different medium, which indicates the importance which art has in the school. Information and communication technology is used effectively to support the learning. The use of professional artists' work to emphasise the main aim of the lesson and to stimulate attractive work is successful.
95. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic about the subject, but has not had opportunity to monitor the curriculum. There is a good range of resources, including a kiln and these are well used by staff. The subject contributes satisfactorily to the cultural provision in the school, for example, Aboriginal art, work related to Egypt and Africa. The policy and scheme have been revised and produce useful guidance for the staff. The weekly art club provides further opportunity for pupils to develop their skills in an enjoyable way.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

96. The provision for design and technology is satisfactory and ensures that pupils achieve appropriately in the subject. The programme promotes a suitable range of skills. Standards of attainment by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are at least in line with expectations for pupils' age. This reflects the standards at the previous inspection. In many classes this subject takes place alternately with art and design. For this reason, only one lesson was observed during the inspection. The analysis of the limited work available shows that most pupils have at least satisfactory knowledge, understanding and skills and make at least satisfactory progress.
97. In Year 1, pupils design interesting posters. In Year 2, pupils evaluate and improve their work. In Years 4 and 5 the current topic is designing and making moving toys. There was ample evidence that pupils had produced careful drawings, plans and sketches for their toys, and had researched background information well. Models on display showed good quality construction and some inventive and original ideas and thought. Examples include spiders, sea monsters, ball and cup toys and aircraft. In two examples, aeroplanes were designed to rotate in the air round a control tower.
98. By the end of Year 6, pupils approach design and technology tasks positively and demonstrate good knowledge and understanding and production skills. A very good lesson on creative thinking was linked to the current topic of designing and modelling a Victorian room that is lit in some form by electric light. Pupils used the Internet and books to research Victorian interior design and used their findings to design their own interiors. Working in groups of four they produced good quality sketches and diagrams and are now about to start the actual construction. There is great enthusiasm for the project and pupils are trying to find ways of using electricity other than for lighting, for example, for a 'glowing' fire. Photographs on display show good quality work when last year's Year 6 pupils designed Faberge eggs and devised methods of transporting them safely.
99. Based on the available evidence, the quality of teaching and learning is at least satisfactory. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject which underpins the

thorough planning. Tasks are presented in a challenging way, but with methods that make learning fun. There is a good level of inclusion, with boys and girls challenged to produce their best work. The subject contributes well to social development as pupils have frequent opportunities to work together. Work on display, in photographs, and in children's work indicates good coverage of all aspects of design and technology. Displays are used well to support and celebrate learning and achievement.

GEOGRAPHY

100. There was limited evidence of geography available during the inspection, and no lessons could be observed. Although no overall judgement can be made on the quality of teaching, the evidence from work seen and from talking to pupils demonstrates that standards of pupils of all ages are in line with expectations. Pupils do comparatively little writing, but they do develop some basic mapping skills. Pupils between the ages of five and seven learn to identify the different regions of Planet Earth, and develop an awareness of the various geographical features of particular places such as the seaside. Between the ages of seven and eleven they extend their knowledge and understanding by studying different holiday destinations and considering the features of a particular region such as the River Severn valley in more depth. Pupils also learn about the characteristics of different climatic regions such as desert and rainforest. All the time pupils make satisfactory progress in developing an appropriate geographical vocabulary, whilst studying a range of features such as mountains and waterfalls. Pupils develop an awareness of the citizenship dimension by considering issues of environmental change and protection.
101. Leadership and management are satisfactory. A coherent policy and scheme of work have been put in place, although the use of information and communications technology is undeveloped. Attainment and progress in learning of pupils between the ages of seven and eleven are no longer above national expectations as they were at the time of the previous inspection, although there have been improvements in planning and the structure of the programme. Overall there has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection.

HISTORY

102. Overall provision in history is satisfactory. Standards of pupils between the ages of five and eleven are in line with expectations in the key areas of knowledge and understanding and the development of historical skills. Pupils of all levels of ability, including those with special educational needs and higher achievers, make satisfactory gains in learning in relation to their prior attainment, although extended writing skills are relatively undeveloped.
103. Between the ages of five and seven pupils learn some basic information about individuals such as Florence Nightingale and begin to appreciate their historical significance. Work on timelines, for example, to show changes in the nature of seaside holidays over the past one hundred years, shows a basic but developing awareness of chronology and change over time.
104. Between the ages of seven and eleven pupils develop a wider range of skills satisfactorily. For example, when learning about Ancient Greece, they develop map skills as well as learning about key events and features of everyday life such as religion and education. By comparing schools in Ancient Greece and their own education they continue to develop a sense of both continuity and change across time. There is also a good contribution to cultural development in an historical context in work done on the

Aztecs. Older pupils begin to develop an understanding of cause and consequence to an appropriate level, as when studying the impact of the Second World War on the home front, for example, the impact of evacuation on children. However, higher achievers do relatively little extended writing.

105. No history lessons were observed with younger pupils, but the quality of teaching for those between seven and eleven, whilst variable, is satisfactory overall. The teaching is particularly effective where the teacher has challenging expectations, to which the pupils respond well, and strategies cater for the needs of pupils with a wide range of ability. For example, in a lesson on the Victorians, the teacher managed to get pupils to analyse the difference between fact and opinion by giving the pupils an active learning task which helped them understand not just factual evidence but also the uncertainties of historical interpretation. Pupils enjoyed the challenge. The teacher also gave good feedback to pupils, and used questioning effectively to get them to consider the issues involved in analysing and evaluating evidence. Where the teaching is less effective, expectations are insufficiently challenging, with higher ability pupils spending too much time on undemanding tasks such as drawing, which do not increase their historical skills or understanding.
106. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Thought has gone into the issues involved in teaching mixed-aged classes, and a coherent policy and scheme of work have been put together. The use of information and communications technology is undeveloped. The standards demonstrated during the previous inspection have been maintained, and although there is still sometimes a lack of challenge, there is now more structure to the history programme. Overall there has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

107. The school's provision for information and communication technology is satisfactory overall. A strength is the programme which is devised and taught by the current co-ordinator. At present there is limited use of computers in the classroom. Across the school, standards in information and communication technology are in line with national expectations. Overall, standards have improved. At the time of the last inspection pupils made satisfactory progress by the end of Year 2, but progress was unsatisfactory at the end of Year 6. This has been successfully addressed through the introduction of a local initiative. The school is currently part of a group of five local primary schools who share one information technology co-ordinator. This has had a positive effect on standards in the subject. No specific lessons were observed during the inspection. The focus on the subject is on Fridays when groups of pupils use the five computers in the library. Apart from the use of the computer in Reception, which is frequent and regular, only one example of pupils using the computers in the library suite was observed. This was part of a mathematics lesson to support the less able pupils. Displayed planning shows what each class will be doing this term with the subject's co-ordinator and records are kept of work achieved by each class.
108. Planning and examples of work show that by the end of Year 2, pupils have made satisfactory progress. Photographs show last year's Reception and Year 1 pupils using a 'roamer'. Information technology logbooks have been devised and are currently under revision to make them simpler to complete. Records show that children have used text, graphics and sound work, for example, 'I can play a tape to myself or others'. In Year 4 a classroom display shows that pupils have successfully used a program to make their own patterns. The display records the process in stages and is illustrated by the pupils' work. In Year 6, pupils are planning a flexible database using the 'Flexitree' program. A

display illustrates current progress and notes that photographs and pictures are to be added as the task progresses. Work shows that they can use e-mail confidently and make use of the Internet to find out information. Pupils will soon be involved in using desktop publishing to produce a school newspaper. Shortly before the inspection, current Year 6 pupils, together with some from last year, attended a residential weekend ICT course with the co-ordinator, which was much enjoyed. Pupils have positive attitudes to ICT and enjoy using the computers.

109. Information technology features specifically in the planning for Reception and Year 1 classes but in other classes it features only as part of the overall co-ordinators plans. However, a displayed rota in Year 6 shows that children are able to use the computer in the classroom at specified times and during the lunch break.
110. Co-ordination of the subject is very good. Tasks for pupils to record their own progress have been devised. For example, they complete an ICT Skill Profile and complete progress checks, which are carefully monitored. However, although the direct teaching of ICT is successfully developing pupils' skills in this subject, there are limited opportunities for its daily use in the classroom, for example, in writing, and this is an area which requires development.

MUSIC

111. There is very good provision for music in the school. The previous inspection indicated that standards were above average by the end of Year 6 and in line with those expected nationally at the end of Year 2. Two lessons were observed during the inspection and it was not possible to see all aspects of the subject. No music was observed in Year 2 and there is insufficient evidence to make a valid judgement on standards for this age. By the end of Year 6, standards are likely to be above those expected for this age. In addition to the lessons, music was observed in assembly and during peripatetic lessons.
112. In Year 1, pupils begin to recognise beat and rhythm. They use their voices in different ways and begin to recognise the different ways that sounds are made. They listen well to music and can say why they like it. Their singing skills are at about the level expected for their age. In Year 6, pupils have a good understanding of beat and rhythm and demonstrate this well by using the beat of a well known tune to create a pentatonic tune. They are familiar with musical terminology. At playtime they show that they are keen and enthusiastic by wanting to remain indoors to compose and play music. An analysis of a very useful assessment folder indicates that over time all aspects of music are covered and that many pupils achieve a level above that expected for their age.
113. Music is taught by a music specialist and also by several peripatetic staff. The teaching in observed lessons was good, with very clear, helpful planning and a thorough explanation to the pupils which helped them to make good progress in the activity. Lessons had an appropriate pace with enough time for pupils to practise and improve. Tasks helped pupils to meet the objectives. There was a good level of participation with all pupils involved. Pupils behaved well and sustained their concentration during the lessons. Assessment is used well to inform future planning. During the lunchtime a peripatetic teacher led an excellent session in singing. This was an exciting and vibrant session, which inspired the pupils to want to perform well. It also made a very good contribution to social development as initially the pupils were shy and reluctant to perform, but because of the skilled teaching by the end they were keen to have another go! In addition they had made very good progress in their singing.

114. Music is a vibrant and exciting part of the school curriculum. Staff give generously of their time, for example, in organising recorder clubs. The school has recognised that boys are more reluctant to be involved in musical activities and promotes extra activities to involve boys, such as playing the bow psaltery. Many pupils have instrumental lessons during the week. The subject is well managed by the co-ordinator who promotes the subject to a high level. There is an adequate amount of resources, although the school would benefit from more resources from different cultures. An increase in the range of resources from different cultures would help to develop pupils' understanding of cultural diversity. Pupils make appropriate use of information and communication technology to develop their musical skills.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

115. The school makes good provision for physical education. At the time of the last inspection standards in physical education (PE) at the age of seven and at the age of 11 were above those normally expected of pupils of this age and the pupils were making good progress. The school has made satisfactory progress since the time of the last inspection and has maintained the good standards and progress of pupils identified at that time. During the present inspection it was possible to see only two lessons. Judgements are based on these two lessons, together with discussions with the headteacher, teaching staff and pupils, and general observations around the school.
116. In Year 1 the pupils show good understanding of safety aspects. They demonstrate good control of their body movements and show a good understanding of their own performance and the effects on their bodies of energetic movement. They get on and off apparatus and move around in different ways. They evaluate their performance and improve their skills. The pupils in Years 5 and 6 develop a variety of skills as they move through a range of activities. The scoring of points for their group encourages the pupils to be focused and to achieve high standards. In Years 5 and 6 the pupils develop accurate skills in throwing, skipping, dribbling with balls and hockey sticks and balancing on a beam. They develop skills in working as part of a team and in appraising the performance of themselves and others. In both lessons observed the pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress.
117. The quality of teaching in Year 1 is good. The teacher demonstrated clearly what she wanted the pupils to do as a warm up activity. Instructions were clear and reflected a well-planned lesson. Various pupils are used for demonstrating good practice. Good use is made of support staff. The use of time is satisfactory with the pupils having time to reflect on their own performance at the end. A little less time could be taken up, however, with distributing bags and changing at the beginning. The quality of teaching in Years 5 and 6 is very good. The teacher delivered a very well-planned and organised lesson despite having to change from an outdoor to an indoor activity because of inclement weather. The teacher has high expectations of the pupils' behaviour and work and exercises quiet, firm control in all parts of the lesson. The pupils respond by behaving well, staying focused and exercising good control over their body movements.
118. In Year 1 the pupils engage well in the initial discussion. They behave and follow instructions well throughout the lesson. In Years 5 and 6 the pupils prepare sensibly and quietly for the lesson and set out apparatus in a responsible way. The pupils respond well to instructions and behaviour is good. In Year 1 the pupils show responsibility for the safety of themselves and others. They work well in groups and show interest when their peers are selected to demonstrate good practice. In Year 5 and 6 the pupils work well together and co-operate in recording their group's scores. In a minor dispute the pupils act sensibly when given responsibility to sort the problem out themselves.

119. There are satisfactory arrangements for the management and delivery of the curriculum. The policy is in need of review as there is a strong focus on gymnastics and games in some classes, but not enough attention to dance. Resources are satisfactory, but some large apparatus is heavy and dated. Small apparatus is appropriately replaced as necessary from the annual budget. The school accommodation is good with a suitable hall and plenty of outdoor space. Swimming is taught in Year 6 and parents contribute to transport costs as well as to the hire of the swimming baths. There is good attention to safety and all pupils are included.
120. The school makes very good provision for extra-curricular sport. Parent governors are involved in cricket and soccer coaching, and teaching and support staff help with netball, hockey and gymnastics. The school takes part in a number of inter-school tournaments with four other schools and is the current holder of four winners' trophies. The school also takes part in a soccer league involving other schools. Tennis coaching is currently offered to older pupils. Physical education makes a good contribution to the provision for social and moral development.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

121. The school makes satisfactory provision for religious education, overall. At the time of the last inspection the pupils' attainment in religious education was judged to be in line with that of pupils of a similar age. Pupils were judged to be making satisfactory progress. Progress in acquiring knowledge and understanding of other major world faiths was, however, unsatisfactory. The report also stated "there is some confusion between the content of religious education and that of social and moral education." In the previous year's work there was limited evidence that these two issues had been addressed. The school is now taking steps to ensure that these two issues are fully addressed during the current year.
122. In the present inspection, the scrutiny of the pupils' work, discussions with the pupils and observations of lessons and display work indicate that the pupils' attainment in religious education is broadly in line with that outlined in the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. The pupils' progress in the development of knowledge, skills and understanding in religious education is broadly satisfactory.
123. The quality of teaching in religious education is satisfactory, but there are some weaknesses in the delivery of the agreed syllabus. Teachers plan their lessons thoroughly and exercise good management skills, but there is a lack of religious content in some lessons. In the most satisfactory lessons the religious context underpins the teaching so that the pupils learn how the example of a religious leader can be compared to examples set by others. The lessons are well planned and objectives are shared with the pupils at the beginning of the lesson. There is a clear focus on the religious context and the pupils write and record appropriately, extending their knowledge and understanding of religion. In one lesson, for example, the pupils learned from religion that leaders have particular qualities that people emulate and they learned about religion in discussing why people followed Jesus.
124. The standard and amount of work in the pupils' books from the past year is sometimes unsatisfactory, with written work sometimes unmarked and variable presentation. The presentation of work at the time of the inspection had improved to a satisfactory level.
125. Throughout the school the pupils display satisfactory behaviour in religious education lessons and respond well to the teachers' instructions. They work well together and individually and join in discussions with enthusiasm. The subject promotes moral

development well and all pupils are equally included. In religious education lessons the pupils are well supported by the teachers and support staff.

126. The school uses the Somerset Agreed Syllabus, which identifies the expectation of the coverage of Christianity and two other faiths. There is limited evidence of coverage of this over time. The recently appointed co-ordinator is keen to develop her role and has good plans for taking the subject forward. She has attended useful training, audited the school's resources and updated the school policy for religious education. The teaching staff are aware of the contents of the Somerset agreed document, but past work indicates insufficient focus on religion or the links with religion required to underpin all aspects of the planning and teaching of religious education. The development of pupils' written work, especially in Years 3 to 6, is an essential area for development.

127. The school has an adequate supply of teachers' resource books for teaching about other faiths, but there are very few information books on other faiths in the school library. There are a few displays in classrooms related to religious education, but little evidence of displays related to our present multicultural society.