

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ASHCOTT PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Ashcott, Bridgwater

LEA area: Somerset

Unique reference number: 123678

Headteacher: Mr Simon Dore

Reporting inspector: Mr John D Eadie  
20191

Dates of inspection: 14<sup>th</sup> - 17<sup>th</sup> October 2002

Inspection number: 248485

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Ridgeway  
Ashcott  
Bridgwater  
Somerset

Postcode: TA7 9PP

Telephone number: 01458 210464

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Appropriate authority: The Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr M Ellington

Date of previous inspection: 15<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> December 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
20191	J D Eadie	Registered inspector	Educational inclusion Mathematics Information and Communication technology Music	Information about the school The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well the school is led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9644	M Whitaker	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
23647	G Cooper	Team inspector	Provision for pupils with special educational needs English Geography History Physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
28686	E Walker	Team inspector	Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage Science Art and design Design and technology Religious education	

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Ashcott Primary School is situated in the village of Ashcott, some three miles from the Somerset market town of Street. It draws its pupils from the village and other smaller surrounding villages, some of these coming by bus. The village of Ashcott comprises a higher proportion of bungalows and smaller houses than one would expect to find and the number of children in the village is falling. There are currently 101 pupils from the ages of four to eleven in the school, of whom 10 are under the age of five in a mixed-age Year 1 and Reception class. All the pupils are of white British heritage. There are two Traveller pupils on roll. Eleven pupils are identified as having special educational needs and the majority of these have specific learning difficulties. One pupil has a statement of special need. Most children have below average attainment on entry to the school. The school won a Department for Education and Skills School Achievement Award in 2001 for the improvement in performance in the National Curriculum tests.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

Ashcott Primary School is a very good school. In common with many small schools standards are variable over the years but as noted above the trend has been upwards. Pupils achieve well, due to the exceptionally rich curriculum that they are enjoying. The provision for their personal development is very good and the school takes many opportunities to encourage this. The quality of teaching is very good overall and the leadership and management of the school are very good. The school gives very good value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- The school is very well led and managed. There is very good teamwork in the school and all adults are fully committed to the education of the pupils.
- The quality of teaching is very good overall.
- The school provides an enriched, broad, balanced and relevant curriculum.
- The immediate environment of the school, visits out of school, visitors into school and links with other schools make a significant contribution to enriching the opportunities for the pupils.
- The provision for the pupils of Reception age is very good.
- The provision for the pupils' personal development is very good. The provision for their cultural development is excellent.

#### **What could be improved**

These areas for improvement should be read in the context of this being a very good school; they do not represent weaknesses, rather they are pointers to refine further the very good practice that already exists.

- Assessment practice is not sufficiently refined to enable the teachers to make effective use of the results in order to raise the pupils' achievements.
- The more able pupils are not always sufficiently challenged.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school was last inspected in December 1997, and has made good progress since then. Apart from the improvement in standards noted above, all the key issues from the last report have been addressed well. For example, the school now provides parents with very good information on the curriculum that their children follow. There is a strong commitment to continual improvement and the school is well placed to continue to move forward.

## 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
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	C	B	D	E
mathematics	C	B	E	E
science	C	B	D	E

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

As is common in a small school, results in the National Curriculum tests are variable, although in recent years the trend has been upwards. The poorer results in 2002 are largely due to the relatively low proportion of higher levels gained in the tests. Standards at the end of Year 2 in the tests this year were significantly better, being well above average in mathematics, above average in reading and average in writing. Targets set for the tests at the end of Year 6 in 2002 were very challenging and were not met. Standards at the end of Year 6 in mathematics, science, art and design, geography, history, information and communication technology (ICT) and music are above levels normally found. This is largely due to the very good and well-planned curriculum opportunities that the pupils are enjoying. During their time in the school most pupils make good progress and achieve standards above those expected for their abilities.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	The pupils enjoy coming to school and have very good attitudes to their work. The efforts they make have a significant impact on their good achievement.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in and around the school is good. There was one exclusion last year, but this was the first for many years.
Personal development and relationships	The pupils are developing well into responsible young citizens. Relationships at all levels in the school are very good.
Attendance	Rates of attendance are above the national average. Almost all pupils arrive at school punctually and lessons start on time.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching and learning is very good overall. The teaching of English is good and of mathematics is very good and the pupils learn the basic skills of literacy and numeracy well. The contribution of other adults to the quality of the provision for the pupils is very good. For example, the help given by the school's own learning support assistants and teachers from the association of small schools enhances the pupils' learning very well. There are a number of general strengths in the teaching and learning. The teachers use a good range of strategies. These involve and interest the pupils and benefit their learning. A particular strength of these strategies is the teachers' use of questions to make the pupils think. They also enthuse the pupils with good use of learning resources. The very good relationships that the teachers have with their pupils ensure a calm environment in which the pupils find it easy to learn. There are a few minor areas for development in teaching. Although the teachers usually meet the particular needs of the pupils in their classes, there are occasions when the more able are not sufficiently challenged. There are also occasions when the teachers do not make best use of the assessments of the pupils' attainment to help each pupil progress to the next stage of learning. Homework is not often used effectively to extend the pupils' learning.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The planned curriculum is very good and fully meets statutory requirements. It is particularly broad, balanced and very relevant for the pupils. The range and number of extra-curricular opportunities is excellent.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good provision is made for the pupils with special educational needs. The support for them is used well and very relevant individual education plans are created for these pupils.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good provision is made for the pupils' personal development. Excellent provision for their cultural development is significantly enhanced by the links with a school in Kenya.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school is a very caring, safe and happy environment for the pupils and has a good racial inclusion policy. A great deal of assessment information is collected, but this information is not used consistently to plan the next stage in each pupils' learning.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	The parents have very positive views of the school and there is an effective partnership between parents and school.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very clear educational direction for the school. All adults in the school form a good team and give very good support to the leadership of the school. The school is very well managed at all levels and applies the principles of best value very well.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil their responsibilities well. They are knowledgeable and well-informed and are very supportive of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school is good at evaluating its strengths and areas for development.
The strategic use of resources	There are sufficient teachers and a good number of support staff. Resources for all subjects are good although some books in the library are out of date. The school has an excellent range of outdoor learning spaces, although the two mobile classrooms are not satisfactory learning environments. All resources available to the school are used well.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The teachers have high expectations of their children.</li> <li>• The school is helping their child become mature and responsible.</li> <li>• The teaching is good.</li> <li>• The headteacher and teachers are approachable.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> <li>• Their children are making good progress.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school working more closely with parents.</li> </ul>

As can be seen in earlier sections of this report, the inspectors wholeheartedly agree with all positive parental comments. However, the judgement of the inspection is that there are very good links with parents and that these links are effective.

## PART B: COMMENTARY

### HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

#### The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Standards of work seen in the inspection in mathematics and science are above average by the end of Year 6. In English they are average. The pupils of all ability levels achieve well during their time in the school. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

Strengths in standards achieved are:

- standards in mathematics, science, art and design, geography, history, and music are above average by the end of Year 6. In ICT they are well above average;
- the purpose and organisation of the pupils' writing;
- the pupils generally make good progress;
- the pupils' abilities in applying and using their mathematics and their skills in investigative and experimental science;
- the progress made by children in the Reception class.

Areas for development are:

- some aspects of the pupils' speaking and listening skills;
- attention to detail, for example spelling, in writing.

2. Standards in the subjects of the curriculum seen in lessons and in the scrutiny of pupils' work are displayed in the following table:

<b>Standards</b>	<b>At the end of Year 2</b>	<b>At the end of Year 6</b>
English	Average	Average
Mathematics	Average	Above average
Science	Average	Above average
Art and design	Above average	Above average
Design and technology	Average	Average
Geography	Average	Above average
History	Average	Above average
ICT	Above average	Well above average
Music	Average	Above average
Physical education	Average	Average
Religious education	Average	Average

3. From a below average starting point, the children in the Reception class make good progress to attain expected standards across the areas of learning by the time they start the subjects of the National Curriculum in Year 1. The only area of learning where this is not the case is in communication, language and literacy, where their starting point is lower than in other areas of learning. This progress is largely due to the well-planned and diverse activities that support the expected standards for these children.

4. The results in the National Curriculum tests in Year 2 in 2002 show standards in mathematics to be well above average, in reading they were above average and in writing they were average when compared with all schools nationally. When compared with schools with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, standards were above average in mathematics and below average in reading and writing.

5. In the National Curriculum tests in Year 6 in 2002, standards were below average in English and science and well below average in mathematics when compared with all schools nationally. These results go against the trend shown in recent years, and were largely due to the lower proportion of higher levels gained in the tests. When compared to schools with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals the results were well below average in all three subjects.

6. As can be seen in the above table, standards are above average in a number of subjects by the end of Year 6. The major reason for these standards is the extremely rich range of opportunities planned by the school and enjoyed by the pupils. These opportunities interest and engage the pupils and ensure that progress is good throughout the school. However, there are occasions when more able pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable as the teachers are not always aware of exactly what stage of learning they are at.

7. The pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Some of those who enter the school with levels of knowledge, skills and understanding below expectation for their age make sufficient progress to catch up with other pupils. Some go on to achieve standards that match the standard expected when they are eleven.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

8. The pupils' attitudes to school are very positive, representing an improvement upon the good attitudes noted in the previous inspection report. Behaviour is good, as was the case at the last inspection. The pupils' personal development is very good, an improvement on the good situation noted in the previous inspection report. Relationships, as at the last inspection, are very good.

Particular strengths in this area are:

- the pupils' involvement and interest in their lessons;
- their highly enthusiastic support for school activities;
- their sense of belonging, as members of the school community;
- the pupils are outgoing and friendly with visitors;
- they treat school property and resources with care and are especially respectful of the natural environment surrounding the school;
- the younger children respond quickly to the expectations of their teachers and their classroom routines;
- the care older pupils show to younger ones;
- the pupils' readiness to accept duties in school;
- their awareness of the needs of others, both in their own community and further afield;
- the relationships between pupils of all ages;
- the positive rapport in all classes between pupils and staff;
- the pupils' willingness to work co-operatively in pairs and groups, and to evaluate each other's work fairly.

There is one area for development:

- whilst the great majority of pupils are attentive in lessons, there is a minority in all classes who display inattention and a degree of immature silliness.

9. The pupils are keen to take part in the wide range of opportunities offered. For example, a group of Year 6 pupils were lavish in their praise of the Action Track project, in which they co-operate with other small village schools to put on a song-and-dance show at the nearby Secondary School. The pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in all the activities provided by the school. Good help from learning support assistants and from tasks that are specifically designed for their needs keep pupils on track in their learning. They are helped to concentrate and to be involved.

10. Play is lively but no challenging conduct was observed. The pupils comply readily with the requirements of lunchtime supervisors. There has been one exclusion over the preceding twelve months. The wide range of out-of-school activities helps to promote positive relationships, as the pupils see adults in a variety of roles. The school itself is a model of co-operative working and adults present good role models. The school is an inclusive community. All pupils, regardless of ability, background, family lifestyle or gender are fully involved in all activities.

11. The pupils respond very well to the freedom they are given to organise themselves and their work. For instance, they maintain their own logbooks recording progress in ICT. The Gems groups meet regularly for lunch and other activities. All pupils are in 'Gems groups and each of these groups contain pupils from across the age range. These groups elect the representatives to the School Council, so giving each pupil a sense of community and citizenship. The School Council has a budget, thus confronting them with financial reality. They have to consult with their peers on how to spend the money. The pupils organise fund-raising activities for a variety of charities, including the support of the school's link with a village in Kenya, thus developing their awareness of other societies.

12. The children in the Reception class are well supported to develop their personal and social skills. They listen well to each other and to adults and are keen to be involved in the wide range of activities planned for them. They generally behave well and enjoy the orderly atmosphere created in their classroom.

13. Attendance is good, as it was at the time of the previous inspection. Unauthorised absence continues to be insignificant. The pupils arrive punctually and the school day has a prompt, businesslike start.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?**

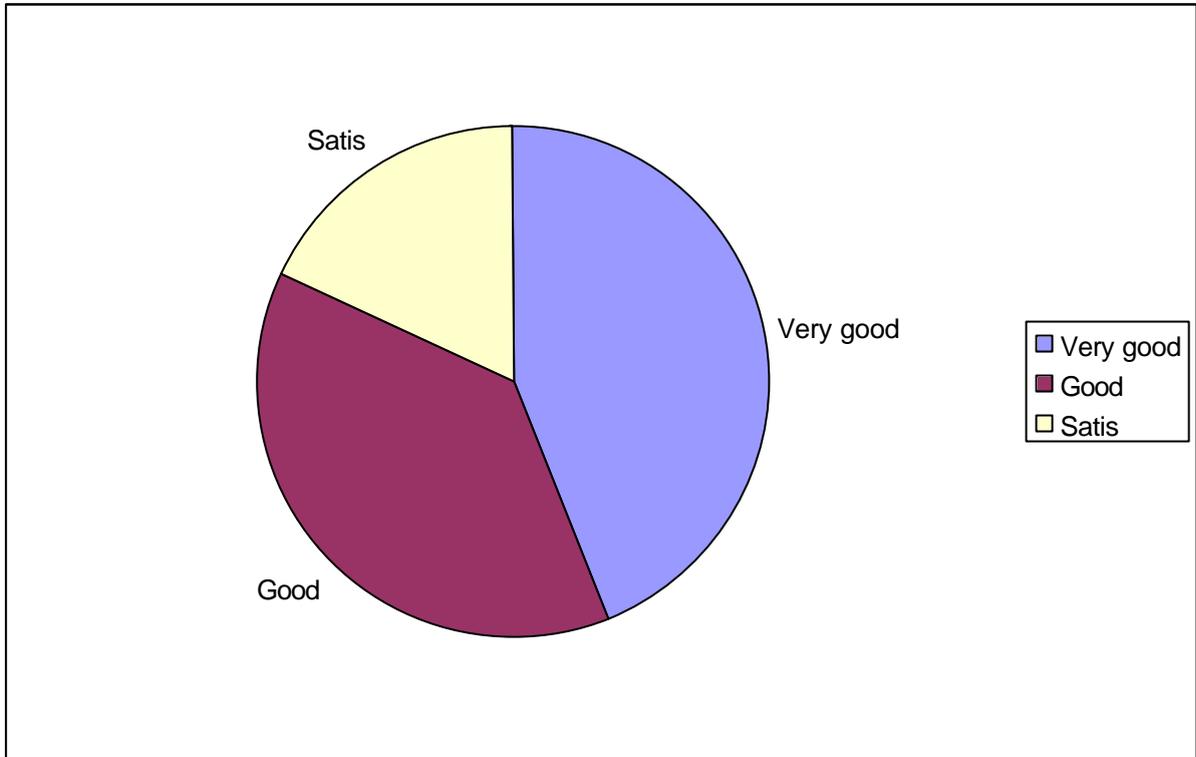
14. The quality of teaching and learning is very good overall. This represents an improvement since the last inspection, when the quality was good.

Strengths in teaching and learning are:

- the teachers' knowledge of the subjects they are teaching;
- the teachers' planning;
- the relationships that exist in the classrooms, creating an environment conducive to learning;
- the use of visiting teachers, for example from the association of small schools;
- the use of resources to retain the pupils' interest and enthusiasm;
- the contribution of support staff and other adults to the pupils' learning;
- the good range of strategies used by teachers to give the pupils a good variety of opportunities;
- there is some good, supportive and perceptive use of marking;
- the teachers generally make good use of questioning.

Areas for development are:

- the pupils' awareness of their own learning;
- some use of day-to-day assessment does not allow the teachers to plan effectively for the next stage in pupils' learning;
- the use of homework to support the pupils' learning.



15. The above chart shows clearly the high proportion of very good and good teaching. The consequent quality of learning is therefore also very good in lessons. However, the pupils are only making good progress, not very good progress through the school. This is because the assessment procedures are not precise enough to enable the teachers to measure accurately what the pupils have learnt and what they need to learn next. The quality of teaching is very good in the Reception class and in Years 3 to 6 and good in Years 1 and 2.

16. There are a number of general strengths in the teaching. Those that have most impact on the pupils' learning are the teachers' planning of their lessons and the support given by learning support assistants and other adults. The planning includes clear direction for any other adults who are available in the lesson. For example, in many lessons the teacher has a book in which she has put precise instructions for other adults as to what their responsibilities are and which pupils they are to work with. This ensures that the support that they provide is targeted and therefore most effective. Further very good practice is that the book leaves space for the assistant to comment on the effectiveness of the learning of the pupils with whom they have been working. This very good working together of all adults makes a significant contribution to the pupils' learning. Very good use is made of the association of small schools, of which the school is a member. For example, the teachers in these schools share their expertise. During the inspection a very good dance lesson was observed where a specialist teacher, whose expertise is shared by the member schools of the association, taught the bulk of the lesson. The pupils benefit greatly from these experiences and respond to them, learning very well.

17. All adults have very good relationships with their pupils, thus creating a purposeful working atmosphere in all classes. The good humour evident in these relationships was exemplified in a lesson in Years 5 and 6 where a pupil who appeared puzzled and was asked whether he “was on the case”, was confident enough to admit that he hadn’t been listening.

18. The teachers use a very good range of strategies in their lessons. They also make very good use of the resources available. These ensure that the interest and enthusiasm of the pupils is retained and that very good levels of concentration are maintained. A very good example of this was during linked lessons in mathematics and ICT in Years 3 and 4. The teacher made very good use of the interactive whiteboard to introduce the concept of a tree diagram in ICT. In the mathematics lesson she had a good range of two- and three-dimensional shapes, which she used in a game in which the pupils were thoroughly involved. In this lesson there were regular changes of activity so that the pupils were kept interested. This all ensured that the pupils learnt very well. A further example of the way the teachers meet the needs of the pupils in their classes is the way that they use questions. They know their pupils well and ensure that the more able receive challenging questions, whilst using questions very sensitively to reinforce learning for pupils who are less secure in their knowledge.

19. There are some minor areas for development in teaching. The pupils do not have sufficient knowledge of their own learning. Although there are good systems for pupils to assess their own progress, these are not consistent across subjects or consistently used. Although the objective for learning is often displayed in lessons, the teachers do not always draw attention to it, and neither do they always return to it at the end of the lessons so that the pupils can judge the effectiveness of their learning. The teachers generally meet the needs of their pupils very well, ensuring that they all do work appropriate to their abilities in lessons. However, there are occasions when work is not planned at a sufficiently challenging level for the most able. Although much of the marking of the pupils’ work is very good, being developmental and perceptive, particularly for the older pupils, the teachers do not always make best use of their day-to-day assessments of the pupils’ achievements to plan for the next stage in their learning. Homework is not used very effectively to support the pupils’ learning.

20. The teachers are conscious of the learning needs of pupils with special educational needs. Consequently, they prepare individual plans for learning so that the pupils work to clearly identified targets. Learning support assistants are given responsibility for specific pupils and are guided well to give these pupils help with their learning.

## **HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS OR STUDENTS?**

21. The curriculum is very good. It fully complies with the legal requirements to teach the National Curriculum. Religious education is taught according to the local agreed syllabus. The school has maintained and developed the strengths identified at the previous inspection. The provision for the pupils’ personal development is very good overall and is excellent for their cultural development. This provision is significantly better than it was at the time of the last inspection.

Strengths in the curriculum are:

- the pupils enjoy a very full and enriched curriculum;
- the school is adept at making connections between different subjects to ensure that best use is made of available time;

- very good arrangements are in hand to provide for the personal, social and health education of pupils. They are encouraged to be aware of the needs of society through citizenship;
- the school has excellent provision for activities out of normal school hours;
- excellent use is made of links with other schools and with the community;
- the school is very good at using its grounds and the local environment to develop skills of investigation in pupils.

An area for development is:

- the one weakness in the planned curriculum is that there is no specific planning for the further extension of learning for more able pupils.

22. The curriculum is broad and well balanced. Planning is extensive through policies that give a strong sense of purpose and direction to all staff. The school is determined that the curriculum should be relevant to pupils. A great deal of attention is paid to local studies and the use of the immediate environment. The way the school uses the environment to broaden and deepen curricular experience is outstanding. Older pupils have regular access to binoculars to study at close quarters the wealth of bird life in the school grounds. Great respect is shown for the environment. For example, the grass could not be mown until the young toads had migrated. The pupils understand why this was the case. The pupils have many visits out of school and regular visitors to the school bring specific expertise to bear on the curriculum. In discussion with pupils they identify the work they do out of school and the work they do with visitors as highlights in their learning. The size of the school necessitates mixed age classes. These are well planned for as the teachers plan specifically for the difference in age in lessons. The curriculum is planned on a two-year cycle to prevent repetition or gaps and fully includes all pupils. The Traveller pupils are fully integrated into all school activities due to the sensitive way in which the curriculum is planned.

23. Because literacy and numeracy are well planned for, pupils acquire a good range of basic skills in reading, writing and number. These skills are put to good use as pupils learn to be young scientists, historians and geographers. A great deal of the work they do involves them in using skills in practical contexts. For example, in literacy lessons pupils learn how to investigate historical sources, making notes and presenting their understanding in a logical and meaningful fashion. They use numeracy skills in mapping the school grounds, measuring accurately and learning how to 'triangulate' under the watchful eye of a visiting surveyor.

24. Although teachers work hard at their planning, the development of learning stems almost naturally from projects. For example, all pupils are aware of village life in Tigoi in Kenya where the school has a vigorous and active link. Older pupils, particularly, are sensitively aware of the differences between village life in Somerset and village life in Kenya. Work in science on the water cycle has been made more relevant because pupils know about accessibility to water and the use of water in homes in Kenya as well as in their own homes. Within their planning, the teachers make arrangements to meet the needs of different pupils. This is often done through planning extension tasks, matching tasks to the needs of those who have special educational needs and planning support during lessons. The pupils with special educational needs are clearly identified by the school. They have good plans for their individual learning needs. Targets are thoughtfully developed to support their learning. However, there is no specific planning for pupils with the potential for higher attainment. For example, in mathematics, higher attaining pupils are expected to get through the same task as others – tasks that confirm what they already know and can do - before going on to an extension task.

25. The school has excellence of practice in those areas of the curriculum that enrich and sustain it. Many well-attended lunchtime and after-school clubs illustrate the commitment of staff. Clubs are good examples of the intention of the school to be inclusive. For example, the computer club is specifically for pupils who do not have a computer at home, to ensure that they are not disadvantaged compared with others. The netball club welcomes boys and girls right across the age range of Years 3 to 6. The current extensive range of activities represents outstanding provision given the age range of pupils and the size of the school. Excellent links are maintained with partner schools. There are good arrangements for transfer to the next stage of education for which pupils and parents are well prepared. The school plays a full part in its consortium of small schools and the local Secondary School Federation. Links with other schools have led to significant initiatives that enrich the curriculum. For example, pupils are currently enjoying the lessons given by a visiting dance teacher provided through the consortium. In geography, a very good skills and knowledge booklet has been developed with partner schools. Gifted and talented pupils attend special provision days in subjects across the curriculum.

### ***Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development***

26. Cultural development is excellent. There are many strengths in the school's provision. For example, the promotion of traditional English culture through the country dance club and its performance on the cathedral green at Wells. The pupils are made aware of their own local heritage by visits to Somerset's Rural Life Museum and to the withy-growing areas of the Somerset Levels. Studying both the religious and historical significance of the village church further enhances their appreciation of their own culture, whilst the appreciation of other European traditions is developed through the French club. The school has some excellent links which help the pupils understand cultures different from their own. For example, there is a very worthwhile and active link with a village in Kenya and very good use is made of the fact that one of the staff has a relative by marriage who is Chinese. In a community which is virtually monocultural, the school works extremely hard to make pupils aware of the views, beliefs and lifestyles in other cultures. The pupils' spiritual development is very good. They have a very good appreciation of the spirituality of nature, as expressed in their work with the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds on the nearby Somerset Levels, and in their valuing the school environment, with its pond, bird table, arboretum and willow tunnel. The work done on Christianity, through visits to the village church broadens the pupils' understanding of the Christian faith and they are given a good appreciation of other faiths, such as Hinduism and Judaism. The spiritual quality of some whole-school assemblies is very good, with opportunities for reflection, and the pupils respond sensitively to the atmosphere so created. As well as the planned opportunities to encourage spirituality, such as assemblies and the daily prayers, the school seizes opportunities to help pupils reflect; for example, before a music lesson, pupils were taken outside to listen to birdsong.

27. Moral development is very good. The pupils have a well-developed sense of right and wrong as was demonstrated by a group of Year 6 pupils discussing the school's behaviour procedures, which all agreed were fairly implemented. The school emphasises the promotion of confidence and self-esteem, thus providing pupils with a framework within which they may make value judgements. A parent who had moved to the area during the Summer holidays was especially impressed by the fact that Year 6 pupils wrote to her child before she arrived and kept a lookout for her on their first day at the Secondary School, thus easing the difficult transition to a new school. Social development is very good and is promoted particularly effectively by involving pupils in the multi-age Gems groups. The pupils are given responsibilities, such as looking after the music for assemblies and getting out and putting away play equipment at break time. Opportunities are also provided for pupils to work collaboratively in pairs, groups and teams. The involvement of the pupils in activities outside school, such as representing the school in sports teams or in drama productions and in charity fund-raising activities also help to develop their social skills.

## HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

28. There are good procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare. The school's procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very good. These standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

Strengths in this area are:

- the teachers' high expectations;
- the consistency with which the behaviour policy is implemented by teachers, learning support assistants and lunchtime supervisors;
- the extent to which good relationships, positive adult role models and a stimulating curriculum aid good behaviour;
- a clear set of sanctions and rewards which are understood and appreciated by the pupils;
- the training of lunch time supervisors in behaviour management and the provision of toys, games and activities for break time use;
- a great deal of assessment information is gathered;
- there are some good systems of pupils' self-assessment.

An area for development in this aspect is:

- to use the wealth of assessment information collected to plan more precisely for the next stage of learning of each pupil.

29. The headteacher is the designated person for child protection purposes and all staff are aware of the action to be taken in cases of concern. The premises working party of the governing body is responsible for health and safety and are thorough in ensuring all necessary checks are made and that all the necessary procedures are in place. For example, the class teacher has made a preliminary visit to the outdoor activities centre to be used by Years 5 and 6 on their residential visit, to satisfy herself as to its suitability.

30. Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are sound. Registers are examined weekly and letters are sent to parents who have failed to explain an absence. Instances of unsatisfactory attendance are rare and when they occur the services of an education social worker are available. Whilst some families do take holidays in term-time, the incidence is not so great as to cause a problem, nor is lateness an issue. There are no procedures for making an immediate check on the whereabouts of an unexpectedly absent child.

31. In the event of unacceptable behaviour, including bullying, records are kept and cases monitored for recurrence. The rare instances of bullying are dealt with by the headteacher and through personal, social and health education lessons. The parents are brought in at an appropriate stage and, where necessary, behaviour targets are set for pupils. The school's culture of inclusion and respect for others means that racist remarks are virtually unknown.

32. There is good support for the pupils' personal development. The pupils' record cards note personal development as well as academic progress. The small size of the school and the very good relationships between staff and children ensure that every child's development is well known to someone.

33. The school has good strategies for assessing the academic performance of its pupils. Satisfactory use is made of assessment information. However, the wealth of data often obscures what pupils should do next. This is particularly the case for higher attaining pupils who are not necessarily aware of what they need to do to make even greater progress. Targets based on teachers' assessments are set as a result of analysis of the available data. However, there has been some mismatch of teachers' assessments and the outcome of National Curriculum tests suggesting that although teachers have a good understanding of what pupils can do and understand, the information is not used rigorously. Assessment is

used to identify those pupils with special learning needs and it is well focused on their targets. Some use of assessment is made when preparing tasks for pupils of different abilities. However, assessment does not sharply focus on the precise and specific learning needs of individuals. This means that pupils do not always know what they need to do next to make greater progress. It also means that teachers do not always plan tasks that challenge and inspire pupils of different prior attainment. This is particularly the case for higher attaining pupils who complete tasks common to most pupils in the class, tasks that they find routine and comparatively easy. The initial identification of special educational needs is accomplished by effective use of baseline assessment when pupils begin full time school. Teachers' observations of progress are also used. Regular use of reading tests and other tests supports further assessment where concerns are expressed. Discussions between staff and parents take place where learning needs are identified.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

34. The school has created very effective links with parents, as was the case at the previous inspection. At that time some parents felt that there was insufficient information about the curriculum - these concerns have been addressed very well.

Particular strengths include:

- regular, serially-numbered newsletters, giving good notice of school events and couched in plain, jargon-free language;
- advance information regarding the topics the children will be studying;
- curriculum booklets – these are easy-to-read booklets which help parents to help children in areas such as numeracy and reading. Other booklets are written by children, for children, welcoming the newcomer to school;
- the approachability of class teachers and the headteacher.

There are no areas for development in this area.

35. The school provides termly opportunities for parents to meet staff. The headteacher estimates that at least 80 per cent of parents attend such meetings. The pupils' reports are satisfactory; each subject of the National Curriculum is addressed separately and there is comment upon the child's personal development; statutory requirements are met. Whilst reports focus upon the subject matter covered in the year and the child's response to it, they contain little by way of objective evaluation of attainment and effort.

36. The school fully meets the requirements for pupils with special educational needs and the involvement of their parents. Parents are a full part of consultations and reviews.

37. Parents make a good contribution to the work of the school. A number of parents help in classrooms and provide additional supervision for school visits. There is a vigorous parent-teacher association which raises funds for the school and acts as a social link between school, parents and community. Parents help with one-off projects, such as garden or pond maintenance. There is less evidence, however, of parents becoming actively involved in pupils' work at home. There is, for instance, little evidence of parental comment in pupils' home-school reading records or in the homework books used by older pupils.

38. Parental views of the school are very positive. In the pre-inspection OFSTED questionnaire, 16 per cent of parents did not consider that the school worked closely with parents. However, inspection evidence shows that links between school and parents are both good and effective.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

39. The quality of leadership and management of the school is very good overall.

Standards in this area have been maintained since the last inspection.

Strengths in leadership and management are:

- the headteacher provides caring and very effective leadership for the school;
- there is very good teamwork between all staff;
- the finances of the school are very well managed and are used well;
- the governing body is knowledgeable, very supportive and effective;
- the school applies the principles of best value very well;
- the environment of the school is very varied and used well;
- there is a good number of teachers and support staff;
- there are very good resources for most subjects.

Areas for development are:

- the mobile classrooms are unsatisfactory and compared unfavourably with the rest of the accommodation;
- some books in the well-stocked library are in poor condition and contain out of date information.

40. The leadership and management of the school are very good at all levels. The headteacher gives very good leadership and is ably supported by the senior teacher and all other staff. Subject responsibilities have been shared between the small number of teachers effectively and all subjects are managed well. This is exemplified in the very rich curriculum that is provided for the pupils. There is a very good shared commitment to improve and to do the best for the pupils which means that the school is well placed to move forward.

41. The governors have contributed well to the success of the school. They provide very good support and a very good range of expertise, which is used well. They are well-informed about the school and have a very clear understanding of the major strengths and areas for development that the school is addressing. They play a significant role in the management of the school and in planning for future developments. The finance committee of the governing body keeps a very careful overview of the finances of the school and is establishing good practice in planning for the future.

42. The management of special educational needs is good. The co-ordinator is experienced and knowledgeable. She is well placed to support colleagues in the identification and provision for special educational needs. The school makes appropriate arrangements for the spending of its delegated budget for special needs, ensuring the good progress of these pupils.

43. The school's monitoring and evaluation of its performance are good overall. The school has analysed its performance well and identified a number of priorities for development and many good procedures have been put in place to address these. The school has put in place a good system of appraisal and performance management to help in the process of improvement.

44. The school development plan is a good document in planning for future developments. It identifies appropriate aspects for development and is clearly set out with the areas for development established by analysis within school. There are criteria so that the success of areas for development can be measured accurately. All staff, governors, parents and pupils are canvassed on their views before the plan is constructed. The plan contains good detail for the current year as well as a plan for the next two years in less detail.

45. The governors and the headteacher make very good use of all the specific grants available to them. Day-to-day management of finances is very efficient both within school and by the finance committee of the governing body. Finances are clearly linked to educational priorities both in the school development plan and in the day-to-day management of the

budget. The school office is run efficiently, releasing much of the day-to-day administration from the shoulders of the headteacher and other teachers.

46. The school is well staffed. The number of teachers is adequate for the size of the school. They are well deployed to make best use of their talents and experience. The school is able to provide a good number of learning support assistants. They are a good complement to the work in the classroom, particularly in the support they give to pupils with special educational needs. The accommodation is good overall. It is particularly good in the school grounds and the school field. Very good use is made of the accommodation. The two mobile classrooms are unsatisfactory bases for learning, although staff working there make good use of the inadequate facilities. The school has spent efficiently on resources. They are good in quantity and quality giving good support to teaching and learning across the whole curriculum and across the age range of pupils in the school. Although the library is well stocked for the size of school, many books are elderly and some are in poor condition.

47. The school has established very good financial procedures that are based firmly upon the principle of best value. For example, all stakeholders – pupils, parents, staff, governors and community representatives - have been consulted about developments. Taking into account all relevant factors, the school provides very good value for money.

#### **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

48. In order to continue to raise standards, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- (1) ensure that the wealth of assessment information gathered by the school is refined and ordered so that the teachers can:
  - assess more precisely the stage of learning of each of their pupils;
  - measure their progress more accurately;
  - set clear targets for the next stage of each pupils' learning;(Paragraphs: 6, 15, 33, 69, 72, 90)
- (2) ensure that the teachers consistently set high levels of challenge for the more able pupils in their classes.  
(Paragraphs: 5, 6, 19, 24, 33, 69, 72, 80, 104)

In addition to the areas for development above, the governors should consider the following for inclusion in their action plan.

- Give the pupils a greater understanding of their own learning by:
    - extending and refining the present systems of pupils' self-assessment and using them more consistently; involving the pupils more in setting targets for their own improvement;
    - ensuring that learning objectives in lessons are always shared with pupils and returned to at the end of lessons so that the pupils can judge the effectiveness of their own learning.
- (Paragraphs: 19, 74, 80, 94)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	34
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	42

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	15	13	6	0	0	0
Percentage	0	44	38	18	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 about three 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)	101
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	11

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	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.0
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
	2002	8	9	17

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	14	15	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (88)	88 (100)	94 (100)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	14	15	15
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (82)	88 (94)	88 (100)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

Where the number of boys or girls are ten or fewer the individual results are not reported.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	13	13	26

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	10	10
	Girls	11	6	10
	Total	20	16	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	77 (93)	62 (79)	77 (100)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	9	11
	Girls	11	9	11
	Total	20	18	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	77 (71)	69 (86)	85 (79)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

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

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	101	1	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)	5.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.8
Average class size	25.3

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	113

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2001/2002
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	£
Total income	320 374
Total expenditure	296 111
Expenditure per pupil	2 468
Balance brought forward from previous year	15 270
Balance carried forward to next year	39 533

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	0.6
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	0.7

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	101
Number of questionnaires returned	45

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	51	40	9	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	41	50	5	0	5
Behaviour in the school is good.	36	56	4	2	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	37	56	7	0	0
The teaching is good.	53	44	2	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	49	38	11	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	60	36	4	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	58	36	2	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	40	42	16	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	47	44	2	2	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	58	33	2	0	7
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	64	30	5	0	2

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

49. The school has improved the provision well for the youngest pupils since the last inspection. Progress was reported to be good in all areas of learning and this has continued to be the case. The provision for the children with special educational needs is good and the children's needs are considered carefully in all areas of their learning. An emphasis is placed on using communication skills and great attention is given to developing the children's speaking and listening skills together with developing their personal and social skills in all the activities they do. Their skills are as well developed as at the time of the last inspection. The resources for outdoor play and the provision of resources for the wide range of activities are very good. The quality of teaching is very good in all areas of learning.

Strengths in the provision for the Reception class are:

- the range of well planned activities which support the achievement of the expected standards by the time children reach the end of their Reception year;
- the good organisation of and the effective use of the very good resources;
- the early identification of children's needs and stages of development so they can make good progress toward the expected standards;
- good use of ICT to support the children's learning.

An area for development is:

- to increase the pace of lessons so that children can extend their communication and literacy skills.

50. Provision for children is made in the school's class for under fives and five-year-olds. Most of the children have attended some form of pre-school group within the area and significant numbers come from the group which meets in the village. There is a high level of co-operation between the pre-school provision so that children are aware of the school and routines before they enter school. Detailed records about the children's progress through the very early stages of the stepping stones is transferred to school so that appropriate starting points are recognised and planned for. The co-ordinator has worked hard to plan a series of well-integrated themes so that children make good connections in all areas of their learning. All pupils, including those in Year 1 in the class, are well supported by the teacher and the classroom assistant who have devised a broad range of activities which promote learning and engage the children's interest. Their teacher is a senior member of staff and holds a number of other responsibilities throughout the school.

51. The school's assessment of the children's attainment on entry to Reception is based on its own and the baseline profile supplied by the local authority and completed before and during the first weeks after entering the Reception class. This confirms pupils are achieving rather below average levels of attainment in all areas of learning when they enter school. Children make good progress so that by the time they enter Year 1 most will achieve the expected standards in most areas of learning except in communication, language and literacy.

### **Personal, social and emotional development**

52. Provision for the children's personal, social and emotional development is good. There is careful consideration of the routines at the beginning and at end of the day so that the children are confident and secure about what they are going to do and what they have achieved during the day. They gather and talk well with each other and ask questions in a confident manner of all adults about their books or the equipment put out at the beginning of a

session. They play games and complete jigsaws or paint together co-operating, sharing and taking turns. They listen well and make conversation about their game or activity. When they are in the book corner or working at the computer the less able children are gaining confidence in developing their letter sounds or their matching and counting skills. They are keen to achieve the correct letter formation in their writing and are well supported by both teacher and classroom assistant in this aspect of their development.

### **Communication, language and literacy**

53. The children are given many varied and very good opportunities to develop their language skills with each other and with adults who constantly work with them and extend the children's vocabulary. There are very well planned activities including role-play in everyday situations, story telling and puppets so that the children can extend their imaginations and adapt their language in a variety of situations. The children make very good use of water play to develop their language about why their boats float or sink as they load the animals into the ark. The children discuss various alternatives with each other and the teacher, offering ideas about the size and different types of animals so that the boat will not sink.

54. The children are very enthusiastic when they share a big book story. They are eager to elaborate on the planned discussion so that other ideas and information from the pictures are discussed. The teacher makes good use of questions directed to every child so that all the children have an opportunity to offer their thoughts or knowledge about the animals in the story. They make clear links to the theme about animal homes. They are keen to share books with each other and the interesting book corner fosters their interest so they can develop a love of books. They are beginning to recognise letter sounds and enjoy the jingles and rhymes they are learning which confirm the letter sound for the week. They are aware that words match the picture and tell the story and are interested in conveying the meaning of the story through the pictures. The positive and good interaction of the classroom support assistant confirms and extends their interest and delight in books. The high quality and well planned activities which link all areas of learning, focuses on and develops the children's language skills. However, the majority of children are not yet confident in their use of language unless they are using familiar words.

### **Mathematical development**

55. The learning for the children in this area of development is planned very carefully by the class teacher so that the activities can be managed well by other adults. The classroom support assistant engages the children in games to develop the children's counting skills. She makes it fun so the more able children gain confidence in their counting and begin to understand about numbers to 10; they count on and recognise how many more counters they need to make 10.

56. The children are intrigued by numbers and count enthusiastically in a group and relish their success when they count to 20. The teacher uses many variations to build on achievements and ensures those children who are just beginning to recognise the numbers are involved and share in the success. Social skills are well developed as the children wait for their turn even when they know the answer. They applaud each other's success and support each other to recognise patterns and sequences. The teacher encourages the use of mathematical language and the correct use of terms relating to weight and measurement in children's water play. She introduces alternative words so the child enlarges his first response from 'it's a big giraffe' to 'the giraffe is tall and it's larger than the elephant.' The children count the number of animals in the ark and begin to match two of the same animals so they can go into their boats. They discover how and why through the teacher using a range of questions and ideas about whether the boat can float or sink. She extends their

vocabulary into whether the cargo is 'too heavy' or 'is lighter than' so children can begin to make mathematical comparisons.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

57. The children are very interested in the world around them. They enjoy the many and varied activities exploring the theme of homes. They investigate enthusiastically the natural world and recognise various animal habitats which are around the school. The Noah's Ark story is told well and encourages children to discuss where it may have been in the wider world. Earlier work had involved the construction of a castle and how it was used to defend the inhabitants; the children were enthusiastic in their description of its construction and how they had made sure it was safe. They recognised animal homes needed to be safe and why animals need to hide from their predators.

58. The quality of teaching is very good because the well focused planning develops specific areas of learning well within a theme. The children can make links and recognise how to make connections between all areas of learning. For example, the teacher uses a well told story to promote an understanding about different types of animals. The children are encouraged to use clues from the pictures and spoken text to identify the animals. She uses a 'feely bag' to extend the vocabulary children use to describe the animal puppet they have found in the bag. "It's furry and soft and has a hard nose." "It could be a mole." The children related the animals in the story to the puppets. They develop their knowledge even further as a group using the puppets to pose both questions and clues. The teacher and classroom support assistant encourage all children to think about what they had learnt. They children were therefore able to describe a young fox as a cub and an owl as nocturnal. The activities embraced the use of ICT so the children could count and match different types of animals and their homes. They are beginning to control the mouse and use the keyboard to match letters and numbers.

### **Physical development**

59. The staff provide many and varied opportunities so that the children can make use of the very good physical resources in the school. The teachers make sure children take part in a variety of experiences which are carefully matched to their needs and extend their understanding about themselves. The children enjoy taking part in vigorous exercise but are eager to participate in a movement lesson listening carefully and responding well to the rhythm. They use space and co-operate well with each other even when they are "fearsome roaring lions." They are enthusiastic and recognise the difference between exercise and interpreting a movement sensitively and carefully. This is because of the very good teaching by specialists in music and dance which gives the children a good range of experiences on which they can build in preparation for their work in Year 1.

60. There is a good range of outdoor play toys together with the natural area, where the children can explore how to balance, climb and create games and situations. They develop their language and physical skills into games which are interesting and linked to the classroom theme. The classroom assistant supports each child carefully and encourages them to develop their own ideas and independence but ensures they are safe.

### **Creative development**

61. The children are given a wide range of activities which develop their skills and interests. The teacher encourages them to explore a variety of materials and discover for themselves how different materials can be used. The children explore a range of natural materials and a visitor to school encourages them to bend willow so they can add their own

sculpture to the tunnel which is being built in the environmental area. They recognise the routine and limitations of the water play area and are familiar with the need for care; they are self sufficient in putting on their aprons and explore how their model boats can sail and how many blocks are needed to contain the animals. The teacher interacts carefully enabling the children to explore further how the model could be improved and varied so that it performs in different ways.

62. The children can handle large paint brushes to complete the painting of Mr Noah, showing great care not to cross lines and mix colours. They listen carefully to the guidance but suggest alternatives so that their Mr Noah is different from the original illustration. They take pride in their work and are eager to contribute to the finished frieze for the classroom. Their knowledge of loud and quiet sounds is further developed as they play a range of percussion instruments to accompany their song about Mr Noah. The children watch carefully and respond to the teacher's hand signs changing the tones and rhythms. They explore a wide range of toys, puzzles and games which are carefully placed by the teacher to encourage the children to develop the mathematical sorting skills which have been identified. The quality of teaching is very good and the children are making good progress through the stepping stones in this area of learning.

## **ENGLISH**

63. At the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards are average in speaking and listening, reading and writing. Given attainment on entry to school, the pupils achieve well and make good progress. The teachers ensure that pupils with special educational needs are involved in their learning and as a result they make good progress. Teaching is good overall, although it is stronger for pupils in Years 3 to 6 than for those in Years 1 and 2. Since the previous inspection, standards have been maintained and the school has made a strong response to the areas for development identified at that inspection.

Strengths in the subject are:

- the teachers' planning for the literacy strategy;
- the development of literacy skills and their use across the curriculum.

Areas for development are:

- the promotion of opportunities for higher attaining pupils;
- resources in the library;
- for a minority of pupils, some aspects of the development of speaking and listening skills and of accuracy in writing.

64. Attainment is average in speaking and listening at the end of Year 6. A particular feature of attainment in speaking and listening throughout the school is the attention given in planning of formal opportunities for this aspect of English. For example, the older pupils have opportunities to debate matters of immediate interest to them. Good opportunities for speaking and listening are given in lessons through the teachers' effective strategies for question and answer sessions that revise previous learning and establish the starting point for the lesson. Almost all pupils listen well, both to the teacher and to other pupils. A minority find it difficult to listen. They become fidgety and restless. Restless movement of chairs makes listening to others difficult. However, many pupils have very well developed listening skills, giving very close attention to what the teacher has to say and listening acutely to others in class. Many pupils are articulate, expressing themselves and their understanding fluently. They are encouraged to use vocabulary specific to science, history, geography and music. This enables them to explain their understanding. The teachers create specific opportunities in their questioning so that pupils have to explain what they are thinking and this is a good strategy for encouraging speaking and listening.

65. Attainment is average in reading. The pupils in Years 1 and 2 recognise familiar and common words. Occasionally less able pupils are reluctant to use strategies for working out words. One or two more fluent readers, confident in their skills, choose a book that contains many unfamiliar words. They have a good understanding of the overall story line but don't fully understand the text when they come across words they do not know. However, most pupils can 'read between the lines' and draw conclusions from the text. For example, quite young pupils understand that a character is lazy, not because the text says that he is lazy but because the story action implies that this is so. Older pupils frequently choose books by preferred authors, such as Jacqueline Wilson and Dick King-Smith. They give good reasons when expressing preferences. The pupils, including younger pupils and those with special educational needs, have efficient basic book skills. For example, they recognise and explain the use of contents pages and the index in a work of non-fiction. Older and more able pupils know how to use a glossary and explain strategies for quick identification of important facts. It is clear that these skills are used increasingly as pupils move up through the school to promote learning in subjects such as history, geography and science. However, the pupils in Year 6 have little or no knowledge of conventional library layout and would therefore struggle to find information from books other than those in classroom collections or those provided by the teacher for specific topics. Part of the reason for this is that the library is only just back in use, having had to be used as a classroom for the last two years.

66. Attainment in writing is average at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. The particularly strong feature of the pupils' writing is the confident use of expressive vocabulary. This supports the good style that pupils develop. The pupils' writing is frequently completed with a powerful sense of purpose, having strong beginnings, imaginative content and a convincing conclusion. The pupils in Year 6 are comfortable writing in a range of 'genres', for example narrative and non-narrative, fiction and non-fiction, writing for scientific, historical or geographical purposes and letter writing. The specific lessons on aspects of grammar in literacy lessons are generally used well in writing tasks. For example, having learned about different tenses in the use of verbs, the pupils use tenses confidently in their own writing. The pupils in Years 3 to 6 use the prompts that the teachers display around the classroom to support strategies for spelling and punctuation. However, many pupils continue to make basic errors in these aspects of their writing, although they manage them better when tasks are completed on computers. For example, one more able pupil completed tasks without using paragraphing until prompted by the teacher. Following the prompt, paragraphs were used confidently and accurately. Another able pupil wrote powerfully and fluently with complex sentences that enhanced his style but made basic errors in spelling, using 'k' instead of 'ck'.

67. Although there continue to be aspects of spelling to be improved, the school has done a great deal to respond to the key issue of the previous inspection. For example, the school continues to encourage the learning of spelling of key words. There are good strategies for learning the technical vocabulary of subjects such as history, geography, science and music. Good displays of 'handy hints' help pupils in learning to spell more complex words. The presentation of work now shows a pride in handwriting and layout. There is very little that is unacceptable and many pupils write with a mature and well-formed hand. The school makes its expectations of handwriting and presentation very clear and gets a good response from pupils in return.

68. Teaching is good. The teachers have very good subject knowledge and this helps them to plan effectively. Lessons gain a sense of security from this and go confidently and briskly. Although there is often a buzz of pupils and adult talk in the classroom, this is never allowed to get out of hand. Rather, it encourages learning as pupils discuss, organise and arrange their work. The teachers are vigilant in seeing that pupils settle quickly to their tasks. There are good arrangements for giving support to pupils with special educational needs. Learning Support Assistants are well deployed, frequently to help those who have difficulty

with their learning. All teachers have a very secure understanding of the National Literacy Strategy, partly because of the school's participation in national monitoring of the strategy's implementation. However, the teachers are also adept in tailoring literacy lessons to the specific needs of the pupils. So, literacy is a powerful tool in making cross-curricular links with subjects such as geography and history. It is used well to develop the pupils' observational and recording skills in science. The teachers recognise the potential for using literacy skills to develop a range of other learning skills, for example the development of historical enquiry skills through the careful research of facts through using a history encyclopaedia. This means that time devoted to literacy is well and efficiently used to promote learning in a good range of subjects. Because teachers are able to make lessons go with a swing and teach confidently, pupils benefit in their learning. They are enthusiastic and want to participate. This has a considerable effect on the quality of learning and the resulting standards achieved. Only occasionally, a very small number of pupils are difficult to control. These pupils have not yet acquired a secure understanding of the school's high expectations. Their restlessness impairs the quality of speaking and listening and slows down the lesson. However, teachers and pupils are very positive in their relationships and this helps the management of pupils and the resulting behaviour outcomes.

69. The curriculum overall is very good. It lacks only clear planning to promote the achievement of higher attaining pupils. These pupils get good opportunities to read, research and write competently. They do not have very clear and specific targets to accelerate their progress. The school has a complex pattern of assessment which is thorough and diligent. The information is sometimes used to group pupils in class and to develop tasks for specific ability groups. It is used to identify the progress of individuals, groups and year groups. However, there is no one clear and specific strategy for using assessment to target what pupils need to learn next. For example, a talented pupil with whom a powerful piece of work was discussed, had no understanding of some very obvious steps to be taken to make further progress.

## **MATHEMATICS**

70. Standards are average at the end of Year 2 and above average by the end of Year 6. The pupils make good progress through the school due to the very good teaching that they are receiving. Progress since the last inspection has been good as standards were average by the end of Year 6 then.

Strengths in the subject are:

- the standards being attained in using and applying mathematics;
- the quality of teaching and learning;
- the progress that the pupils are making;
- the levels of challenge provided in many lessons.

An area for development is:

- the use of assessment to ensure that the teachers know exactly what it is that the pupils know and understand and are then able to plan for the next stage in their learning.

71. The teachers are very good at encouraging the pupils to think for themselves. The pupils are expected, not only to use their own strategies for solving problems, but are expected to explain in some detail why they have used a particular strategy. For example, in a very good lesson in Years 3 and 4 in which the focus was shapes, the teacher was getting the pupils to verbalise their thinking in answering such questions as "How did you know it was that shape?". Many of the oral sessions at the start of lessons encourage these thinking processes with the use of questions like "How did you get that?" and "Did anybody get it a different way?" The ability that the pupils gain from this thinking enables them to apply readily the knowledge that they have to new problems.

72. The quality of teaching is very good. The co-ordinator has adapted the numeracy strategy well and the teachers use it well to plan their lessons. They usually organise their classes so that the two age groups within the classes are doing work appropriate to their ages. The teachers also usually ensure that the work contains levels of challenge for all levels of ability. For example, the teacher in a lesson in Years 5 and 6 had organised her lesson so that the Year 6 pupils were successfully working at a task using conversion graphs, while she was working with the Year 5 pupils on creating formulae – a complex concept for this age. Despite these levels of challenge offered in lessons, the most able pupils aren't consistently challenged. The proof of this is the relatively lower proportion of higher levels gained in the National Curriculum tests in both Year 2 and Year 6 over the years. The major reason for this is that although a great deal of assessment information is collected and records are kept carefully about what it is that pupils know and understand, this information is not always used to take the pupils on to what they need to do next. For example, in some lessons some of the more able pupils have to complete the same tasks as the other pupils when they have clearly mastered that concept and are ready to move on to higher levels of challenge. These pupils do not then learn as effectively as they might.

73. There are very good relationships in lessons, so creating a purposeful working atmosphere. The learning support assistants are used particularly well to support the learning of individuals and small groups of pupils. For example, in a lesson in Years 1 and 2, the support assistant worked with a group of pupils estimating and checking objects in the classroom to see whether they were more or less than a metre. The teacher was then able to focus her attention on a group of Year 2 pupils who were drawing and measuring lines to the nearest centimetre. The learning of all pupils was thus enhanced as they were working at appropriate levels with good levels of support. Another effective feature of this lesson, commonly found throughout the school, was the independence that pupils were given for their own work. A third group was working independently on their own task of estimating length.

74. The teachers are generally good at involving the pupils in their own learning. For example, the teachers ask such questions as "Do we think we understand this?" However, this is not always the case, and the practice of displaying the learning objective for the lesson and drawing attention to it at the beginning of the lesson is not always held to. Similarly the objective is rarely returned to at the end of the lesson so that the pupils can judge the effectiveness of their learning. Opportunities are thus missed for the pupils to be given greater understanding of their own learning and know what it is they are to learn next.

75. Very good use is made of resources to support the pupils' learning in all lessons. For example, an overhead projector was used with some of the younger pupils so that they could see clearly which straws were the longest and shortest. Their mathematical language was very well developed during this session. In a lesson in Years 5 and 6, the teacher had prepared and copied conversion graphs for the pupils to save them the laborious task of drawing them, when the focus of the learning in the lesson was to be using the graphs. The pupils make good progress through the school in mathematics. The reason why the very good teaching is not resulting in very good progress is because of the shortcomings with the assessment procedures mentioned above. Good use is also made of numeracy in other subjects. For example, an ICT lesson in Years 3 and 4 was re-enforcing the work that the pupils were doing on shapes, and in geography, data-handling skills were used to present the findings of the pupils' geography fieldwork in Years 5 and 6.

## SCIENCE

76. Standards are average at the end of Year 2. By the end of Year 6 they are above average. The children make good progress and the pupils with special educational needs make similar progress because the school ensures the provision for these pupils is good and their needs are specifically included in the plans for all lessons. The quality of teaching in science is very good. The improvement the school has made since the last inspection is good.

Strengths in the subject are:

- the thorough planning of lessons and the use of the good resources to ensure lessons are practical and clearly focused;
- the teachers' use of very good and challenging questioning techniques;
- the clear, concise and focused methods of reporting that the pupils use to record their investigations;
- the continuity of the science curriculum within the federation of schools in the area.

An area for development is:

- to provide extended activities for the more able pupils.

77. Throughout the school nearly all lessons are lively, interesting and well paced because teachers plan lessons in detail and have a clear focus on the progress they expect their pupils to achieve. The pupils use and build on their existing knowledge and are confident about extending and developing a scientific investigation. They are able to embark on and organise their investigations using the good resources carefully so the results of the investigation can be measured. They are confident about how to prepare materials, they plan well together so that predictions can be made and their ideas tested. The teachers have high expectations and in a Years 5 and 6 lesson where pupils were handling living creatures in order to discover the conditions they preferred, the focus was on collecting the data and testing its reliability. The emphasis on every pupil co-operating and predicting the results was very good. The pupils were sensitive to the needs of the wood lice and were very careful in their handling of the creatures and how they collected the information.

78. All teachers have good subject knowledge. This is supported very well by the science co-ordinator who manages the curriculum effectively and encourages pupils and colleagues to explore a wider curriculum than that prescribed in national guidelines. The use of the wealth of resources within the school's conservation area extends both knowledge and ensures living science is used well to develop the pupils' scientific thinking and knowledge.

79. The pupils work hard and achieve well. In a Years 1 and 2 lesson where the pupils used each other's results to collate the information using a chart, they did not make such good progress and were constrained by waiting for others to complete their result. The pace of the lesson slowed and the pupils did not fully understand the purpose of the investigation. The use of common formats to report results is used well throughout the school. The pupils always use the key symbols to record their investigations from the youngest to the oldest pupils in the school so that by the time they are in Year 6 they report their results in clear concise terms.

80. The pupils are eager to engage in scientific activities so that they can extend their knowledge. More able pupils support other pupils well but are not always given challenging tasks so that they can further their own knowledge and skills. In a Years 3 and 4 lesson the pupils were eager to join in the discussion on which particular magnet is strongest but more able pupils did not fully develop the hypothesis of why it is the strongest. The behaviour of pupils is good but in some lessons the pace is slowed because pupils do not listen to the very good questions the teacher's ask them and then respond inappropriately. Marking in Years 3 to 6 is good and helps the pupils to see what they need to do to improve. In Years 1

and 2, marking and comments are not as clearly focused and pupils do not achieve the same rate of progress because they complete investigations as a group and record their work as a whole class effort. The pupils' progress is clearly recorded and there are detailed records. At the end of Year 6 pupils are encouraged to use a self-assessment record which they take with them when they transfer to the Secondary School. This clearly indicates their achievements but does not focus pupils sufficiently on what it is they are expected to know and understand by the end of Year 6.

## **ART AND DESIGN AND DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

81. In all classes, except the Reception class, design and technology is alternated with art and design. It was not possible during the course of the inspection to observe any lesson in either subject. The detailed scrutiny of pupils' work in both subjects, the displays around school, discussion with pupils and evidence of previous year's achievements indicate that standards in art and design are above average and in design and technology they are average at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. These standards have been maintained since the last inspection in both areas of the curriculum.

Strengths in these subjects are:

- the use of sketch books in Years 3 to 6 to sketch and design ideas and to develop the pupils' original sketches;
- the use of good resources to develop the pupils' skills;
- the use of both subjects in other curriculum areas throughout the school.

Areas for development in the subjects are:

- the use of displays of pupils' work to reflect its quality and vibrancy;
- the use of the planning and process aspect of design and technology so that pupils can evaluate their work in greater detail.

82. The pupils enter Year 1, having had good experiences in Reception, exploring colour, texture and shape in their art and design work. This continues during Year 2 where most pupils including those with special educational needs make good progress. They develop and refine their skills using observational drawings of natural materials. The pupils use wax rubbings to build textured surfaces and develop their painting skills to illustrate their work in other areas. The pupils are very aware of how to use tools and are careful in the way they manage colour and the tools they use. They are encouraged to use ICT programs to develop their designs and make patterns which they use in design and technology as wrapping paper.

83. It is a similar picture in Years 3 to 6. There are clear links between the two subjects and whilst sketch books are used as a tool to extend the design process, they are not used often enough so that pupils can evaluate their original design against their finished piece of work. Older pupils are encouraged to complete and use small detail in their drawings. By the end of Year 6, they use shading in various layers to depict shadows surrounding the bottles and other objects they have drawn. They are developing a sense of perspective and how to draw moving figures. The teachers plan carefully so that the pupils are encouraged all through the school to look at the styles of famous artists. For example, the pupils achieve good results when they paint in the style of Van Gogh. Year 6 pupils have knowledge of his painting and why he painted in a particular style. The pupils enjoy their art and design lessons and appreciate the work on display. The work is not displayed to best effect as some of the larger wall spaces around the school are not always used for this purpose.

84. The amount of pupils' work available in design and technology is very limited and much of the previous work recorded as photographic evidence is from 'Science Challenge' days. These are very successful and well thought-out. They develop the pupils' ability to work co-operatively together in teams in a range of ages from the youngest to oldest. They solve the challenge through discussion, a limited amount of planning to build structures using

marshmallows and spaghetti for example, or working out how to test the relative strength of kitchen towel to lift differing weights. Teachers use of other areas of the curriculum to create real design problems is good, for example making cakes and biscuits for the party. There are not sufficient opportunities in any class to fully develop the process of observation, designing, making and evaluating the finished product.

85. The curriculum is well planned in both areas and makes clear links with other subjects. More attention and detail is given to the design aspect in pupils' art and design work and the results are good.

## **GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY**

86. By the end of Year 2 standards are average, and by the end of Year 6, standards in both geography and history are above average. This is because the school teaches a very rich curriculum and the pupils acquire a very extensive range of skills in geography and history. The curriculum is well taught, enabling pupils to achieve well and make good progress. The pupils with special educational needs enjoy the work and they too make good progress. The standards have been maintained since the previous inspection and provision further enhanced and developed.

Strengths in these subjects are:

- a rich curriculum that makes very good use of the school environment, the locality and a wide range of visits out of school and visitors into school;
- practical work in geography;
- history research skills;
- good teaching;
- very good use of literacy and numeracy skills to promote good research and investigative skills.

No areas for development specific to history and geography are identified.

87. Discussions with pupils reveal that they believe the work they do on visits out of school, and the work they do in association with visitors into school, are highlights of history and geography. For example, in geography, the pupils have done a local river study. They have mapped different features of the river and have measured its flow. They have considered how it fits into the water cycle. Results of measurements have been presented in quite sophisticated graphs using computers and numeracy skills. They have compared the water cycle locally and the environmental features of water use with that of Tigoï in Kenya. Their knowledge of the way of life in Tigoï is comprehensive and further study of family life in Tanzania has enlarged their view of life in different parts of the world. This study has had a profound effect on pupils' personal development, particularly in their understanding of differences in cultural diversity and in the sensitive understanding and feeling for others that their work reveals. Other pupils have learned to map the school grounds, working alongside a surveyor. This has not only deepened their understanding of how accurate maps are made but also extended and enhanced their understanding of accurate measurement and the use of geometry.

88. The school is equally enthusiastic about building the pupils' historical skills. Good use is made of the history of the village. A little further afield, the pupils visit stately homes, museums and other places of historic interest. History is made into a real and living pageant of times past. In one project, the school created its own museum. Based on experience of museum visits, the pupils brought in objects of historical interest from family and friends. Taking the guidance and advice of a museum curator, these were catalogued and prepared for exhibition. The school museum was 'opened to the public' and was visited by many parents and friends. Following the success of this project, the pupils' work was submitted in a national competition where it won a prize. The pupils in Year 6 are very clear about how

they use their historical enquiry skills. They assemble lists of historical questions with which to interrogate objects, textual sources and human sources. They discuss a wide range of available sources, such as objects of interest, buildings, films, the Internet and people still living who were alive during the period of study.

89. History and geography are well taught, with enthusiasm and good subject knowledge. The teachers are very clear about the direction they need to take to meet the school's expectations of the curriculum. Lessons are busy, brisk events. The teachers plan for very good use of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills and computers are often made use of to present work. Sometimes the heart of the teaching comes during literacy lessons, for example, in the way the skill of using an encyclopaedia of history was taught. The pupils successfully combined the book skills of using an encyclopaedia with the skills of historical enquiry. This is very good use of curriculum time by teachers. Although pupils are working hard, the work is lively and interesting. As a result pupils learn well, concentrating for long periods and getting through a good volume of work.

90. The school has made very effective use of ICT. As part of their study on the history of the locality, the pupils have put the results of their research into the school's very good Website. Spending on resources has been wisely arranged. There are procedures for assessment in both subjects. The teachers identify those pupils who have made the progress expected, those who have progressed better than expected and those who have not made as much progress as expected. However, it is not clear how this information is used to promote even higher standards.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

91. Standards in ICT are above average at the end of Year 2 and well above average at the end of Year 6. The pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress through the school, largely because of the quality of the curriculum planned for the subject and the very good quality of teaching and support. Standards have therefore improved since the last inspection.

Strengths in the subject are:

- the standards being achieved;
- the quality of teaching and learning;
- the curriculum for the subject and the range of opportunities that the pupils enjoy;
- the use of ICT in other subjects;
- the resources available for the subject.

An area for development is:

- to use the pupils' self-assessment booklets more consistently.

92. Many of the pupils are achieving well above average standards. For example, the pupils in Year 5 had written some very complex procedures to draw a picture of a house. Some had even managed to create a procedure to show smoke coming out of the chimney. The skills shown are well above expected levels for pupils of this age. Much of the reason for these high standards is the way that ICT is used in other subjects of the curriculum. For example, during the inspection, pupils were seen using ICT to support their work in English, mathematics, science, geography and history, and evidence was available of its use in art and design and music as well. This use ensures that the pupils see how the subject fits with other subjects as well as giving them a whole range of other opportunities to build and practise their skills. The curriculum planning ensures that pupils are learning skills in ICT at the time they will need them to support learning in other subjects.

93. Although not all staff would consider themselves experts, the quality of teaching and learning is good. Very good use is made of a support assistant who is very skilled and

supports lessons taken in the ICT suite. The teachers make particularly good use of the equipment that is available. For example, the interactive whiteboard is very well used to demonstrate exactly what skills are being taught. The fact that the pupils can see the same symbols on the screen as they will shortly be seeing on their own screens helps their understanding considerably. The suite itself, with ten computers, is well equipped for a school of this size, and planning for its use is good. In most classes, half the class will be using the computers while their peers do a related task, either in the library area or in their own classroom. As well as the suite, there are at least two computers in each classroom but not so much use is made of these. Learning in science in Years 5 and 6 was enhanced by the use of a microscope linked to one of the class computers. Very good use is also made of the school's digital camera, which is used by the pupils to record events and their work and to support learning in other subjects such as art and design.

94. A very good booklet has been produced for the pupils' self-assessment. Some good use is made of these, but they are not yet used sufficiently consistently to enable the pupils to have a clear knowledge of the quality of their own learning. A particularly good innovation is that the after school computer club is restricted to those pupils who do not have a computer at home. This club is well supported and ensures that these pupils are not disadvantaged.

## **MUSIC**

95. Standards are average at the end of Year 2 and above average at the end of Year 6. The quality of teaching and learning is good and the pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress through the school. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

Strengths in the subject are:

- the quality of teaching and learning;
- the range of opportunities both within the curriculum and in extra-curricular clubs and activities;
- the pupils' attitudes to the subject.

There are no areas for improvement identified in this subject.

96. The above average standards achieved in music are largely due to two factors. The first, and most significant of these, is that all classes are taught by a musician. The second is the range of opportunities that the pupils enjoy. For example, in lessons in the early part of the term, the older pupils worked with a visiting teacher to produce their own compositions on compact disc. The resulting disc showed very good results and something of which the pupils can be proud. The song produced by Year 5 was particularly evocative, based as it was on Far Eastern music inspired by the visit of a Chinese lady.

97. The quality of singing is good, being lively and tuneful, usually accompanied by the headteacher on the guitar. In a lesson with Years 3 and 4, the pupils made a good effort to sing a round in four parts. A great deal of concentration was required and each group worked well together, listening to each other and the other parts around them. These good attitudes were also seen in a lesson in Years 5 and 6, where the pupils were composing and writing down their own rhythm phrases. Again the groups worked well together and most produced good rhythm patterns by the end of the lesson.

98. Apart from these very good opportunities in lessons, there is a wide range of other opportunities. Two recorder groups meet, as well as a school choir, which performs locally as well as enhancing special services such as Harvest or Christmas. A good number of pupils learn a range of other musical instruments taught by visiting teachers during the school day.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

99. By the end of Years 2 and 6, standards of achievement match those expected nationally. However, the pupils are exposed to a very wide range of physical activities, especially in the range of games they play in clubs. This range exceeds that available in most schools. Progress is satisfactory over time. The pupils with special educational needs enjoy these tasks and this enhances the progress they make. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.

Strengths in the subjects are:

- the use made of existing accommodation; the school hall, the hard surface area and the extensive school field;
- very good provision for out of school clubs, both at lunchtime and after school;
- the impact of visiting teachers with specific expertise such as dance.

No specific areas for development are identified.

100. Discussions with pupils reveal that they identify 'all the things we do in clubs' as a strength of their curriculum in physical education. The pupils have a very secure understanding of important features of this curriculum area such as health and safety and the significance of warm up and cool down within lessons. They are very precise in their knowledge of how to move large equipment safely. They are insistent on the equal part that boys and girls can play in a range of physical activities, including netball, tag rugby and soccer. Not all elements of the National Curriculum for physical education were seen during the inspection. The pupils discuss all elements confidently. The implication of this is that they have been well taught the full curriculum. In the lessons seen, the pupils achieve the expected levels of agility, strength and mobility. They create their own movements and develop sequences. They develop games skills such as catching, throwing, striking and dribbling. They interpret music sensitively. The strength of their achievements is the way they apply thinking skills to what they do. Sometimes their physical skills are insufficiently well developed to make best use of their thinking. Because they listen well to what the teacher has to say, the pupils get messages quickly and consequently make good use of the time available to them for skill development and games practice. They work well individually, in pairs and small teams. This is good provision by the school and promotes co-operation between pupils well.

101. Teaching is satisfactory overall, but with some good and very good lessons. A particular strength of teaching is the teachers' subject knowledge and this is particularly the case with the visiting dance teacher. Her lessons were good role models for all members of staff and for the pupils. The teachers make effective use of warm up and cool down. One lesson cool down was quite inspirational in the way it moved pupils from a state of high physical activity to a state of relaxed preparedness for the next, rather calmer, lesson. All teachers demonstrate activities well or use examples of good practice by pupils and evaluation of activities by the pupils themselves. This enhances the standards achieved and motivates and involves pupils. The teachers show an interest in what pupils can do and pupils appreciate this. Lessons are inclusive. Thoughtful attempts were made to include a pupil temporarily confined to a wheelchair. Occasionally, some pupils are a little too lively. This slows down lessons to some degree and where they do not listen well enough to instructions they do not make best use of the teachers' technique points. For example, in one lesson the teacher was quite explicit about the best use of space, pointing out that it is not

best practice to move in a continuous and crowded circle as if 'being in a whirlpool'. However, as the activity intensified, pupils quickly forgot about the teaching point.

102. The school teaches a full curriculum that includes appropriate swimming lessons and opportunities for older pupils to take part in outdoor and adventurous activities. It is very well enhanced by activities out of school, including opportunities for aerobic, country, and line dancing as well as an extensive range of games opportunities. The school makes very good use of its resources and accommodation.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

103. The pupils by the end of Years 2 and 6 achieve standards that are in line with those expected in the local syllabus for religious education. Progress is satisfactory throughout the school including that made by pupils with special educational needs. Teaching is satisfactory. These standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

Strengths in the subject are:

- the good use of resources and visits to local places of worship;
- the good use of questions and strategies to focus pupils thoughts and ideas;
- links with other cultural opportunities are good.

Areas for development are:

- to extend the range of challenging activities;
- to develop the pupils' understanding about learning from other faiths and beliefs;
- to enhance the scheme of work to extend the opportunities already in place to use the school's links with Kenya and visitors from other parts of the world.

104. The teachers make satisfactory use of the scheme in the locally agreed syllabus and use a variety of good resources to extend the pupils' knowledge of other faiths. In a Year 2 lesson, the pupils responded well to the direct questions on factual information and had a good recall of the Hindu story about Rama and Sita. They recognised that worship is important to a Hindu and listened carefully to the teacher as she explained the contents of the Puja tray. The pupils were not challenged sufficiently to extend their ideas about how the articles are used in order to make comparisons about how people worship. By the time pupils are in Year 6, they relate their own statement of belief to that of other faiths. They recognise the difference between an everyday statement as opposed to a religious statement and know that belief is important to an individual. The teacher used well the good video resource to extend pupils knowledge about Judaism and ensured specific vocabulary was developed and used in the correct context. More able pupils were not extended sufficiently so that they developed their understanding because the task was the same for all pupils.

105. The pupils in Years 3 to 6 are interested in the discussions about beliefs and traditions. They contribute well to the discussion so that ideas are shared with other pupils. Literacy skills are used to research information from text about Christian festivals and traditions. The pupils are involved in reading the text but do not extend their knowledge to recognising the significance to a believer of the festival, or making comparisons with other beliefs in the subsequent discussion.

106. The school has good links with the local church and younger pupils are developing their understanding through visits to local places of worship. The teachers use the visits to enable pupils to make comparisons between two similar places of worship. They compare two local churches and recognise the similarities and how they are used. The pupils in Years 3 and 4 recognise the altar and the font as important parts of the church and the different colours used in the church to denote the seasons and festivals. The teachers make good use of the school's many resources to extend the pupils' knowledge of other faiths and beliefs. The schools links with Kenya enable pupils to recognise how different beliefs in other

parts of the world are practised. Visitors to school, including a Chinese lady, enable the pupils to extend their knowledge and understanding about celebrating different festivals from other beliefs. These opportunities are used well by teachers and the pupils respond with appropriate questions and ideas.

107. The pupils are involved in their learning and contribute well to discussions. However, the opportunities to develop even further the pupils' understanding of the subject are not always taken. Concentration diminishes when the pace of the lesson is not being moved on fast enough and they lose interest. When this happens there is not enough challenge in the activities and learning is not consolidated. Marking is not always consistent and does not focus pupils on what they need to do to improve the quality of their work.