

INSPECTION REPORT

GLEBE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Fenton, Stoke-on-Trent

LEA area: Stoke-on-Trent

Unique reference number: 124004

Headteacher: Mrs L.M.Bradbury

Reporting inspector: Mrs O.M.Cooper
10859

Dates of inspection: 30 September – 3 October 2002

Inspection number: 248525

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: 3-11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Park Place
Fenton
Stoke-on-Trent
Staffordshire

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr K. James

Date of previous inspection: 14 – 17 October 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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10859	Mrs O. Cooper	Registered inspector	English Equal opportunities English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9505	Mr D. Haynes	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?
22740	Mrs M. Leah	Team inspector	Geography History The Foundation Stage	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
29504	Mrs S Herring	Team inspector	Mathematics Religious education	
30935	Mrs K. McArthur	Team inspector	Art and design Design and technology Music Special educational needs	
17907	Mr M. Bowers	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Physical education	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Glebe Primary is an average sized community school situated in the relatively disadvantaged area of Fenton in Stoke-on-Trent. The school caters for 227 full-time pupils; 109 boys and 118 girls, which includes the 27 pupils in the nursery. There are very few pupils from minority ethnic groups, two Bangladeshis, one Angolan and five from other ethnic groups. Three pupils have English as an additional language, their first language being Portuguese or Bengali. One of these pupils is in the early stages of learning to speak English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is above the national average; the majority having moderate learning difficulties and a few having behavioural difficulties. An above average proportion of pupils is entitled to claim free school meals. Overall attainment on entry to the school is well below that expected for pupils of this age, particularly in their language and social skills and is declining. There has been a high turnover of staff since the previous inspection, with the school experiencing difficulties in recruiting teachers. The school is involved in the Health Promoting Schools initiative, partnerships with Beacon schools and has Investors in People status.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school that is making a difference to the attainment and personal development of its pupils through very effective leadership and management, good teaching and high expectations. Most pupils achieve their best over time in the school, helped by their positive attitudes, good behaviour, an effective curriculum and the day-to-day care for their health and well-being. By the time the pupils transfer to high school, standards are below the national average, but show improvement from the well below average levels of attainment on entry. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The school is very well led and managed with a clear focus on raising standards.
- Teaching is good and enables pupils to achieve their best.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to school and behave well.
- The curriculum is well planned and meets the needs of the pupils.
- Pupils are encouraged to become mature and responsible.

What could be improved

- Standards in writing could be higher.
- Pupils' investigative skills in mathematics and science are not as well developed as they could be.
- The use of the assessment information available to track the progress of individuals and groups of pupils.
- The school library has insufficient books due to lack of space.

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 October 1997 and has made good improvement since. Standards have risen; teaching, leadership and management of the school and pupils' attitudes to learning have improved. There have also been improvements in the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and in aspects of the curriculum. The action plan in response to the key issues raised in the previous report has been completed and the key issues largely overcome, except for the whole school library. The school has improved its development plan and its procedures for checking the work of the school in order to raise standards. The building has been extended, with further work due to start in the near future. The school has tried many ways of involving parents in their children's learning, but parents are unwilling to respond to many events.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	All schools			Similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	D	D	E*	E*
Mathematics	E	B	E	E
Science	D	D	E	E

Key	
Well above average	A
Above average	B
Average	C
Below average	D
Well below average	E
Very low	E*

Attainment is well below average on entry to the Nursery, particularly in language and social skills. Children make good progress in the Nursery and Reception class, but despite this good progress their attainment by the time they start Year 1, is below the level expected for the children's ages in all the areas of learning.

The school's 2001 results of national tests at the end of Year 2 were the best ever in reading, writing and mathematics and were above the national average in reading and mathematics and matched the national average in writing. These results compared well with similar schools. Standards in science were lower, were below the national average on the basis of teachers' assessments, and were not high enough. In 2002, the school's results showed some decline due to the overall ability of the year group. Current standards in Year 2 are broadly average in reading, writing, mathematics, science and all other subjects. Pupils achieve well to reach average standards from the well below average attainment on entry to the school.

The school's 2001 results of national tests at the end of Year 6 were well below the national average in English, mathematics and science and in English were in the lowest five per cent of schools. These results are not typical for this school. The well above average proportion of pupils with special educational needs in this year group affected the school's results compared to all and similar schools. The 2002 test results show notable improvement in all three subjects. Current standards of work amongst Year 6 pupils are below average in English and mathematics as the year group contains a higher proportion than usual of pupils with special educational needs. Nevertheless the pupils have achieved well as their attainment at the end of Year 2 was particularly low. Standards in writing are not high enough and are affecting pupils' attainment in other subjects. Standards in all other subjects are broadly average except for religious education, where they fall below those expected in the locally agreed syllabus and physical education where they rise above average. The school's improvement in standards has been broadly in line with the national trend over the last five years, and in some years it has been good, leading to an achievement award in 2001 for being one of the most improved schools nationally. The school was successful in meeting its targets in mathematics in 2001 and in English and mathematics in 2002.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy school and most are eager to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good in lessons, at playtimes and at lunchtimes. There have been three fixed period exclusions for unacceptable behaviour in the latest reporting period.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils' personal qualities are very well developed. They willingly accept responsibility. Relationships with each other and with staff are very good.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory, below the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The teaching of English and mathematics is good overall. The teaching of literacy and numeracy skills is good, but writing skills are not taught as well as reading and spelling and a significant number of junior pupils are not confident writers. There are insufficient opportunities planned for pupils to develop their investigative skills in mathematics. The overall strengths in the teaching are in the lesson planning, which identifies clearly what pupils are expected to learn; the management of pupils, the deployment of teaching assistants and the use of resources. Teachers have secure knowledge of the subjects they teach and have high expectations of most pupils. Slow pace and lack of challenge for more able pupils led to an unsatisfactory lesson and, in some satisfactory lessons, the introductory session lasts too long, lacks excitement and activities planned are not as interesting as they could be. The teaching meets the learning needs of all groups of pupils well, including those with special educational needs, potentially gifted or talented pupils and those who speak English as an additional language. The teaching assistants play an important part in supporting many of these pupils and enabling them to keep up and complete their work. Learning is good. Most pupils make good progress in acquiring knowledge and developing their skills over time in the school.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. There is a wide range of relevant experiences and opportunities for learning, enhanced by a very good range of extra-curricular activities. All statutory requirements are met.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good for all pupils whatever their difficulty. Pupils' individual education plans are detailed, maintained well and provide challenging targets. Clear records show the good progress made.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Pupils are supported well in lessons by their class teachers. Pupils in the early stages of learning to speak English receive very good, individual support for a short period each day.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good in all aspects. The provision very effectively promotes pupils' personal qualities.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Child protection procedures are securely in place and there is good regard for pupils' health and safety. Risk assessments are carried out regularly, but there is no formal system for recording the findings. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment are good, for monitoring their behaviour and personal development are very good.

The school tries hard to work in close partnership with parents, but too often the parents are unwilling to respond.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher supported by the deputy headteacher and senior managers provides very clear direction for the work of the school. High priority is given to developing the leadership roles of curriculum leaders so that they can play a full part in school self-evaluation procedures and support the drive to raise standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very well. There is an efficient committee structure and good procedures for monitoring the work of the school, which gives them a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development. All statutory responsibilities are met.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The headteacher and staff monitor the work of the school closely through analysis of the data about each pupil's progress, and comparative information about the performance of schools nationally and locally. The information is not yet being used to set targets for each year group.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The governors have good systems to oversee the budget and obtain best value for money. Specific grants are used well and in the best interests of the pupils and the standards achieved. Staff are deployed very effectively. The principles of best value are applied well.

There are sufficient teachers and a good number of teaching assistants for the number of pupils on roll. Resources for learning are adequate except for outdoor equipment for the Reception class and the whole school library. Despite the addition of a further classroom, the accommodation is cramped in some of the mobile classrooms and ventilation unsatisfactory, which affect the quality of teaching and learning.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school expects the children to do their best. • The school is well led and managed. • The teaching is good. • The school helps the children to become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A number of parents of nursery pupils would like their children to have packed lunches instead of school meals. • The ventilation in the mobile classrooms

The inspectors fully support the parents' positive views of the school. The issue of packed lunches in the nursery has already been resolved after some discussion. The heat in the mobile classrooms remains a problem on sunny days, with staff having to open fire doors, but even then the rooms remain hot and are not conducive to good learning.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. In most years the children's attainment on entry to the Nursery is well below that expected for their age and in their language and social skills is low. Many children have a very limited range of vocabulary; difficulty in communicating their needs and respond to questions with single word answers. There are, however, occasional year groups where attainment on entry is higher, although still below average for the children's ages which results in apparent fluctuations in attainment by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Children in the Nursery and Reception class make good progress in all the areas of learning as a result of the good teaching and effective interaction from their teachers. However, because of the low starting point a significant proportion are unlikely to reach the level expected by the end of their year in the Reception class in any of the areas of learning and standards are below average. Pupils with English as an additional language make the same progress as others, with one in the early stages of speaking English making very good progress.

2. In the 2001 National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, results were above the national average in reading and mathematics and matched the national average in writing. These results compared very favourably with similar schools being well above the average in reading and mathematics and above average in writing. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher level than expected for their age was above the national average in reading and mathematics, and was broadly in line with the national average in writing. The school has made good improvement in standards in reading and mathematics since the previous inspection and better than found nationally. Teachers' assessments in science showed pupils attainment to be below the national average in 2001, and well below for the proportion of pupils exceeding the expected level. These pupils achieved very well in English and mathematics and standards were high enough, but they underachieved in science. In 2002 the results continued to rise in spelling, were similar in mathematics, but dipped in reading and writing reflecting a typical year group for this school, with few higher attaining pupils and several with special educational needs requiring individual support. The rise in spelling is influenced by the very good teaching of this aspect. No pupils reached the higher level in writing but almost one quarter did so in spelling and mathematics. This indicates standards in reading and writing could be higher. In science, standards were below those expected. National figures for 2002 are not yet available for comparison. In English and mathematics girls achieve better than boys and to a greater extent than found nationally, but there are more boys with special educational needs.

3. Current standards of work amongst Year 2 pupils are broadly average for pupils' ages in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Most pupils are on course to reach the level expected by the end of the year as the small number of pupils in the Year 2 classes and the level of support available is enabling them to make good progress. Where a pupil in one of the classes was found to be falling behind, immediate steps were taken to support the pupil and better progress is evident. Such measures will help in keeping the year group on course to reach average standards. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls or among pupils from minority ethnic groups. Pupils from all groups continue to achieve well.

4. The results of National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 in 2001 were well below the national average and the average for similar schools in English, mathematics and science. In fact in English they were in the lowest five per cent of schools. These results are not typical for this school. The year group included two pupils with Down's Syndrome, a further pupil with a statement of special educational needs and a class with 50 per cent of pupils identified as having learning difficulties relating to literacy, which depressed the overall level of attainment. The attainment of these pupils at the end of Year 2 was particularly low, and a comparison of their Year 2 and Year 6 results show most made at least satisfactory progress, some with special needs made good progress towards their targets and achieved well in relation to their capabilities. The 2002 results showed notable improvement in all three

subjects, not only at the expected level but also at the higher level, although higher standards in reading compensated for lower standards in writing. In reading and science around 40 per cent reached the higher level, and in mathematics 26 per cent, which are close to the national averages in 2001. Standards in reading, mathematics and science were high enough and pupils achieved well. In writing, however, very few pupils exceeded the level expected, and only 44 per cent reached the level expected nationally. Standards in writing were not high enough. Of the eleven pupils who underachieved in writing in Years 3 to 6, eight were boys. The school has identified the underachievement of boys as an issue and is taking steps to overcome the declining interest evident from Year 4 onwards.

5. Current standards of work in Year 6 are below those expected nationally in English and mathematics, but are broadly in line with those expected in science. A few pupils are already working at the higher level in mathematics and science, but very few in English. This is because almost 40 per cent of the pupils have special educational needs, most with learning difficulties in reading and writing. These pupils make good progress and achieve well in relation to their previous learning and attainment as a result of the high level of support and good teaching, but lower the overall ability of the year group. Pupils' writing skills are affecting their ability to record their work in other subjects and whilst good progress is made in lessons, it is not always evident in the written work. Between 1999 and 2001 the boys did better than the girls in mathematics and science and to a greater extent than found nationally. The current situation has changed because of the proportion of boys with special educational needs.

6. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support to meet their individual needs, and make good progress. Targets in individual education plans are clear and appropriate, and teachers make good use of them when planning lessons. The school has identified a number of pupils as gifted and talented in different subjects. Teaching styles are adapted well to acknowledge that pupils learn in a variety of ways, for example when asking challenging questions to raise pupils' ability to think at a deeper level about what they have learned. A 'Challenge Day' for gifted and talented pupils was held in conjunction with two local schools. Pupils made good use of their science investigation skills to solve a murder mystery, including using the Internet to research forensic evidence. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress as teachers check that they understand what they have to do. Any pupil in the early stages of learning to speak English receives short periods of intensive teaching each day and they make very good progress in extending their range of vocabulary. Teaching assistants provide good support in lessons and ensure such pupils understand any subject specific vocabulary being used.

7. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are continuing to have a positive influence on standards. Pupils have many opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills, both in literacy hours and other subjects and these develop well. Sufficient emphasis is placed on developing subject specific vocabulary and this develops satisfactorily. By the end of Year 6, pupils speak clearly, but lack confidence in addressing larger audiences. Most are able to express their ideas and opinions, but use a limited range of vocabulary. Pupils usually listen carefully and respond well to questions posed. Standards are broadly average for pupils' ages. In reading, pupils begin to develop strategies to read unfamiliar words and most make good progress. Where pupils receive regular support at home their reading skills develop more quickly and they are often more confident readers. Pupils use their reading skills effectively when searching for information using computer programs or the Internet, but poor library provision hinders this development. The support from parents declines from Year 3 onwards, but additional help in classes minimises the effect for those who still need to read regularly to adults. Writing skills develop satisfactorily, but as the pupils move into junior classes one or two lose interest. They show great enthusiasm during discussions but are slower to get their thoughts or knowledge onto paper. Pupils do not make sufficient use of their literacy or numeracy skills in other subjects when worksheets are used instead of requiring pupils to record their work independently. Numeracy skills develop well. Pupils improve their skills in mental recall of number facts and in strategies to help them carry out mental calculations, but some have difficulty in explaining how they have arrived at their answer. They gain a satisfactory understanding of shapes and measures and handling data, but their

investigative skills are weaker as they have fewer opportunities for this type of activity. Insufficient use is made of numeracy skills in subjects such as science and design and technology.

8. Current standards of work among Year 2 pupils are broadly in line with those expected in art and design, design and technology, history, geography, information and communication technology (ICT), music, physical education and religious education. Teachers satisfactorily plan the use of computers into lessons, and the computer suite is fully utilised to aid pupils' learning. In Year 6, current standards are in line with those expected for pupils of this age in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music and ICT. Standards in physical education rise above average as virtually all pupils reach the expected level in swimming and a few embark on survival awards. In addition a wide range of extra-curricular activities and of apparatus available before and after school and at playtimes enhance the curricular provision. In religious education, where pupils have not covered the work in sufficient depth, standards are below those expected in the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds are making good progress, although it is slower in Year 5, where teaching is largely satisfactory and better in Year 6. Over time pupils continue to achieve well.

9. The school sets itself challenging, but realistic targets. In 2001, it achieved its targets in mathematics but not in English. The 2002 targets were higher and were achieved. The targets for 2003 are challenging for this year group but achievable if the current rate of progress continues throughout the year.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. The pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are very good and contribute well to the positive learning environment that exists within the school. Pupils with special educational needs and those from all minority ethnic groups show equally positive attitudes to school and work. The school's aims and values are appropriate to the area and contribute greatly to the positive atmosphere in the school. This is an improvement since the previous inspection and is a strength of the school. Pupils are keen to enter school and settle quickly into the daily routine without undue intervention from the class teacher. During nearly all lessons, pupils concentrate well and show enthusiasm.

11. Behaviour is good. On few occasions is it necessary for pupils to be reminded of the rules. Starting in the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception classes) and continuing throughout the school the teachers' expectations of pupils' behaviour are high and the pupils live up to these expectations most of the time. Behaviour in lessons is good though the standard varies with the quality of teaching. Behaviour around the school, in assemblies and at play, is good. No incidents of bullying, racial discrimination or oppressive behaviour were seen and this type of behaviour is not reported as a problem by either parents or pupils. The school is an orderly community. There is no evidence of vandalism. Learning resources and property are treated with respect. Pupils demonstrate a natural courtesy to adults, which is well demonstrated by pupils from all year groups as they walk about the school and during lunch times. Pupils relate well to each other and to all members of the teaching and non-teaching staff. There were many examples of collaborative working during lessons. However some pupils were not at ease and found difficulty in expressing their feelings to members of the inspection team. This was particularly evident during informal discussions with pupils when they talked about their likes and dislikes and about behaviour of children around the school. There were three fixed period exclusions for unacceptable behaviour during the latest reporting period involving one pupil.

12. The school offers a range of opportunities for pupils to take on responsibility for the day to day running of the school including being peer mediators, helpers around the school and members of the school council. The school council has been involved in creating a parent questionnaire, soliciting views of pupils and making a presentation to the governing body. Monitors assist after lunch with the youngest pupils and Year 6 pupils provide assistance in maintaining the computer room. Pupils from all year groups have been actively involved in the creation of an award winning environmental project in the school grounds. All those wishing to participate are included. The school offers a very good range

of pre-school and after school activities for both infant and junior pupils, which includes, for example, craft, recorders, dance, badminton, and team sport clubs. These activities are well attended and are open to both boys and girls of all abilities. The school supports local and national charities and pupils are aware of those less fortunate than themselves.

13. For the latest reporting period overall attendance at 92.6 per cent is below the national average, a situation similar to that found at the previous inspection. Holidays in term time are the main factor influencing attendance rates. Unauthorised absence is below the national average. The fact that the school is in the top 15 per cent of local authority schools for its attendance rate means it is not a priority school for support from the education welfare officer.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

14. The quality of teaching is good overall and has improved since the previous inspection in that the proportions of good and very good teaching have increased. Of the 55 lessons seen, one was excellent, a further 11 were very good and another 31 were good. Eleven lessons were satisfactory and just one was unsatisfactory. The good teaching is one of the key factors in pupils' good progress. The fact that each class has support from a teaching assistant, and two teachers work alongside each other in many literacy lessons in Years 1, 4, 5 and 6 means pupils receive more help and guidance in lessons. This helps younger pupils make a good start and supports older pupils when the attitudes of one or two begin to become less positive towards their written work. The school successfully places a high priority on professional development and rigorous monitoring of teaching to ensure pupils are taught well and helped to achieve their full potential.

15. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well in these lessons, but there is room for further improvement in the teaching of writing skills and of investigative skills in numeracy through other subjects. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies continue to have a good effect on the quality of teaching. Most teachers are very secure in their understanding of the strategies and the framework for teaching them, and have effectively adapted the Literacy Strategy to meet the needs of the pupils, recognising the need to raise standards. There are some good, brisk introductory sessions in numeracy that help pupils to develop their skills in mental calculations. In both literacy and numeracy lessons, the introductions are followed by purposeful direct teaching. The time towards the end of lessons is used well to consolidate or reinforce what has been learned, and teachers assess if pupils have made sufficient progress. The teachers plan in detail for the first three days of each week and evaluate how well the pupils have done before completing their planning for the remainder of the week. This ensures the activities planned move pupils to the next stage of their learning, or provide further reinforcement where necessary. The example of unsatisfactory teaching in numeracy resulted from slow pace in the lesson and insufficient challenge for the more able pupils who in turn did not make the progress they should have done. There are weaknesses in satisfactory lessons where the introductions last too long, are uninspiring and activities planned lack interest.

16. Teaching in other subjects is variable. In science, geography, history, ICT and physical education, teaching is good overall, although there is room for improvement in science, where pupils in Years 3 to 6 have insufficient opportunities to devise their own experiments. In subjects such as history and religious education, there is too much emphasis on the use of worksheets, which hinders the development of pupils' writing skills. The teaching techniques used in literacy and numeracy are being transferred effectively to many lessons in other subjects and this has led to some improvement in teaching. Teaching in all areas of learning in the Nursery and Reception class is good, and is very good in developing the pupils' knowledge and understanding of the world. The staff have secure understanding of how young children learn and provide a good range of activities for the children to choose from which include all the areas of learning. There is a high level of good quality interaction with the children as they work and play in order to develop their language skills.

17. The key strengths in the teaching are in the effectiveness of the planning; the management of the pupils; the deployment of support staff, and the use of resources. Lesson plans in most classes are computer generated so that amendments can be made easily. The plans contain clear learning objectives which are written up and shared with pupils and which provide a focus for learning throughout the lessons. Teachers return to these towards the end of the lesson so that the pupils are aware of their new learning. Teachers have secure knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach, and are confident in teaching basic skills with the exception of aspects of writing and handwriting. Teachers have very high expectations of pupils in the Nursery and Reception, high expectations in Year 1 and 2, but in Years 3 to 6 there is some variation. On occasions the expectations of pupils with special educational needs are too high, but of more able pupils are not high enough. This was more evident in the scrutiny of work from the previous year and was often a result of the same task being given to all pupils in the class. The school's behaviour policy is applied very effectively; firmly but unobtrusively in lessons, so no time for learning is lost. Teaching assistants play a major role in supporting teachers and in helping lower attaining pupils and some with special needs to be fully included in lessons. Teachers make very good use of the resources for learning to vary the approach and add interest for pupils. Whiteboards were used in Year 2, for example, to support the development of spelling. Pupils attempted to spell words with 'oi' or 'oy' in them and the teacher could check instantly those pupils requiring further teaching.

18. The teaching for any pupil in the early stages of learning to speak English is very effective, with short periods of intensive teaching daily on a one-to-one basis. This intensive teaching leads to very good progress in the development of vocabulary. For example, a pupil was confident to work on a computer program to reinforce the new vocabulary on returning to the classroom. Other pupils do not require additional support and work happily on tasks set for pupils of similar ability. The school has started to identify its more able as potentially gifted and talented pupils, and suitable extension activities are provided for them in order to meet their needs in most lessons, but not always in numeracy. Pupils who have special educational needs are well catered for and they receive effective individual support. Some are withdrawn from class each day for brief sessions of intensive teaching where they focus on a very specific area, for example on phonics to aid their progress in reading skills. In many lessons, such as art and design, or design and technology, these pupils are able to work confidently in mixed ability groups because of the good support they receive.

19. The teaching meets the learning needs of pupils and enables them to make good progress over time in the acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding. In Years 3 to 6, the development of pupils' independent research skills is hampered by the poor school library facilities, although full use is made of the computers available, especially in Year 6. Pupils have a good knowledge of their learning from the targets set in each lesson and the targets set as part of the family conferences, although these are not always transferred to pupils' books as a reminder. Year 6 pupils are aware of the levels they attained at the end of Year 5 and what they hope to gain at the end of Year 6, but are not sure what they have to do to reach the next level.

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

20. As at the time of the last inspection, the school provides a well-planned, broad and balanced curriculum, which clearly reflects its aims and meets the needs of its pupils. Statutory requirements are met in all subjects of the National Curriculum and in religious education. The curriculum in ICT has been greatly improved and pupils now receive their full entitlement in all aspects of the subject. The time given to assemblies no longer impinges on teaching time. The school has carefully adapted the curriculum to meet the specific needs of its pupils. The priority rightly given to English and to mathematics reflects the school's commitment, and is successful in raising standards. The practical approach to environmental science through the outdoor classroom and through interesting and varied use of the school grounds fosters environmental awareness particularly well. The high priority given to

personal and social education successfully promotes positive attitudes to learning and is central to the work of the school.

21. In the main, the curriculum in the Nursery and Reception classes is planned appropriately to support the children's progress towards the nationally agreed goals in the areas of learning. Priority is suitably given to personal, social and emotional development with increasing attention to communication, language and literacy and mathematical development as children move through the Reception year. Physical development through structured outdoor play is insufficiently developed because of the lack of suitable large equipment and space.

22. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Individual education plans for these pupils are clear, with strategies to help the class teacher, teaching or support assistants when they plan activities, with suitable targets for each individual pupil. The 'Challenge Day' in science for gifted and talented pupils was a good way of extending and enriching the curriculum through practical and enjoyable learning activities.

23. The school has satisfactory systems for teaching the basic skills of literacy and good systems for numeracy. National strategies are being thoroughly implemented in all classes. However, the literacy curriculum is not impacting on the development of pupils' writing skills as well as it could. This is especially evident in the slower progress made by some boys in Years 5 and 6. Whilst numeracy is taught effectively in the daily Numeracy Hour, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to use their numeracy skills in other subjects and to solve mathematical problems.

24. The school provides a very good range of extracurricular activities. There are regular and frequent opportunities for pupils to take part in clubs before and after school and during the lunch break. For pupils in Years 3 to 6 seasonal and other sports, art, dance, ICT, and several musical activities enhance the curriculum considerably. Cycling proficiency lessons and a homework club are available for older pupils. There are also infant activities. The annual camp provides an excellent chance for pupils in Years 5 and 6 to develop skills of independence. Gardening sessions, visits and visitors including joining in carnival activities provide stimulating experiences beyond the classroom.

25. The school makes good provision to meet the needs of different groups of pupils in the school community. Through the implementation of its clear and relevant equal opportunities policy, it ensures that all pupils have full access to a suitable curriculum. Appropriate challenge is provided for gifted and talented pupils as well as for lower attainers so that all can make the progress of which they are capable. For instance, gifted pupils join with those from other schools in a focused science day and talented musicians are encouraged to perform with local authority groups. Booster classes in English and mathematics are provided for lower attainers. The very few pupils who are in the first stage of learning English are supported well in class so that they can fully join in activities. In English, particular attention is being given to providing more stimulating reading materials to interest and motivate boys. Access for disabled pupils has recently been improved and is now satisfactory.

26. The school's provision for personal, social and health education and for citizenship is very good in line with the importance the school attaches to this area of the curriculum. The single school rule emphasises courtesy, consideration and respect for oneself and others. Pupils are encouraged to be 'Glebe People'. In weekly personal, social and health education lessons and across the curriculum teachers provide good quality opportunities for pupils to successfully develop positive attitudes to learning and to each other. Sex and drugs education are carefully planned and sensitively taught. Much attention is given to the promotion of healthy lifestyles, for instance, through initiatives like the 'Happy and Healthy Campaign', so that pupils can make informed choices in their own lives.

27. The school has developed good links with the community, which contribute effectively to pupils' learning. The parish priest, who is a governor, is a familiar figure in school. He provides informal support for staff and pupils as well as leading corporate acts of worship and advising on religious education. Close links with the church make a valuable contribution to the curriculum. The school

draws on a wide range of local expertise from a professional football club to emergency services to extend pupils' skills and knowledge. Enthusiastic involvement in carnival activities through the Racial Equality Council has extended the cultural awareness of many pupils.

28. The school has very good links with other educational establishments. These are used wisely and effectively. For instance with other primary schools, Glebe has reviewed and improved provision for its gifted and talented pupils. The sharing of expertise between schools is well organised. For example, when a teacher brought her particular expertise to lead an assembly on Hinduism, many pupils explored ideas beyond their day to day lives. Links with secondary schools promote social and academic liaison which smooth transfer of pupils at age eleven. Strong links with the College in the Community have enabled the school to host courses for adults. These have enhanced the confidence of some parents in helping their children and provided a useful bank of skills on which the school draws.

29. The school makes very good provision for pupils' personal development and this promotes very good attitudes and good behaviour throughout the school. This is an improvement since the last inspection when the provision was found to be good.

30. Spiritual development is promoted very well through the strong emphasis placed on raising self-esteem, through the celebration of success and effort in the awards assemblies, and in considering the feelings of others, through discussions such as how they might feel if somebody vented their anger on them. Pupils are encouraged to consider a variety of beliefs in religious education lessons and to empathise with people in difficult situations. This was demonstrated well in a Year 3 lesson, when pupils considered the plight of the Jewish slaves in Egypt. There are very good opportunities for pupils to reflect on their own thoughts, as in the quiet meditation period at the end of a Year 6 dance lesson, and during assembly as pupils concentrate on the lighted candle and reflect on how to deal with their anger. The positive effect this has is evident in the harmonious atmosphere throughout the school.

31. Very good provision is made for moral development. This is due in large measure to the very clear Code of Conduct, emphasising consideration and respect, which is displayed in each classroom and which is consistently applied. Pupils are well aware of the rewards and sanctions. The clear reference made to the code when pupils do not behave appropriately, minimises disruption to lessons and has a positive effect on behaviour and learning. Good behaviour is recognised and rewarded through the display of names on boards and charts in each class. Moral dilemmas are illustrated and discussed in assembly, for example pupils discuss possible reactions to being hurt following a short drama enacted by staff. All adults in the school provide good examples of qualities such as fairness and respect through the way in which they relate to the pupils and to each other.

32. Social development is promoted very well through a very good sense of community, emanating from the strong vision and leadership of the headteacher. Strong emphasis is placed on the fact that "Glebe people are special and work as a team," and this is demonstrated well as pupils co-operate successfully in lessons, for example with their 'talking partners', and in school projects such as creating and maintaining an attractive school garden. This included acquiring sponsorship from the local community. Pupils are encouraged to resolve differences through discussion, and in a new project, older pupils are acting as Buddies, to help and encourage younger pupils to resolve any differences in the playground. The elected School Council provides a very good opportunity for elected members to take a lead and accept responsibility. Members itemised areas of success to the whole school, and these included more games being painted on the playground and the provision of healthier meals and snacks. Their activities are seen as purposeful and are respected by the pupils and this is having a positive impact on pupils' attitude to school. Pupils with special educational needs often work in mixed ability groups in lessons such as art and design, and this promotes all the pupils' self esteem and personal development as they become more independent as learners. In literacy lessons, a pupil with special needs who has limited writing skills may be partnered and share ideas with a more able pupil who can act as a scribe. The school aims to be 'dyslexia friendly' and staff have received

training to enable them to understand more about helping pupils with specific learning difficulties, for example, providing pupils with a spell checker.

33. Very good opportunities are provided to promote cultural development. The school makes considerable efforts to prepare their predominantly white pupils for life in a culturally diverse society through the study of a variety of faiths in religious education lessons and through visitors to school such as the Hindu lady who helped pupils to experience traditional Mendi hand decorations. In a larger project members of The Racial Equality Council were invited into school for a week to work with pupils on aspects of West Indian culture, culminating in the making of large carnival figures and participation in a carnival itself. Pupils explore their own culture through music and art, for example pupils in Year 4 learn a traditional Tudor dance and pupils also study the work of a good variety of artists to influence their work. They also routinely listen to music as they enter and leave assembly. Pupils' own gifts and talents are recognised, celebrated and encouraged as they participate in school productions, class assemblies and the Glebe Talent Competition. Many photographs around the school record the different events pupils experience and help in raising their self-esteem and aspirations.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

34. The school cares well for its pupils. The head teacher is responsible for child protection and her excellent knowledge of pupils and their backgrounds together with clear guidance for teaching staff provides a good level of protection. The guidance on child protection given to classroom staff does not extend sufficiently to other adults on the school staff. Record keeping and communication within the school is very good and contact is maintained with outside specialists and their services are effectively used when required. First aid provision is good and the children know what to do should the need arise. The caretaker and team of cleaners maintain a high level of cleanliness and any aspect of maintenance is attended to promptly. This helps create a safe learning environment and also instils high values in the pupils that are reflected in their respect for property and learning resources. Classrooms for Years 3, 4 and 5 have very low ceilings and poor ventilation, which lead to an unacceptable learning environment especially on sunny days. Safety inspections and risk assessments are carried out but these lack a clear focus and adequate records. This has been a factor that has led to some situations identified during the inspection requiring attention.

35. The school has few rules in number but its aims and values are prominently displayed around the school and pupils know what is expected of them. Very good procedures are in place to promote good behaviour and racial equality and there were no incidents of harassment or bullying during the inspection. An appropriate racial equality policy has been implemented. The head teacher is very active in supporting the class teachers in establishing and maintaining high expectations of behaviour. Visits are made to classrooms before the end of the teaching day to remind individual pupils of what is expected or to congratulate them on their behaviour. The school supports a 'Happy and Healthy Campaign'. This is evident in assemblies, communications to parents, personal social and health education lessons and complements very well the school's aims and values. There are good procedures at the end of the teaching day concerning the collection of younger pupils by parents. After the start of the school day access to the premises and buildings is restricted. A good level of supervision is provided when the children are at play and a play box with small apparatus, such as hoops and balls is available, but there is no structured or guided play led by the supervisors to encourage more participation in a range of larger group games. The supervisors interact very well with pupils and the standard of supervision provided maintains a consistent approach to behaviour management. The school has clear procedures to prevent pupils gaining unrestricted access to the Internet during lessons or in extra-curricular activities.

36. Registration is quickly taken and there are very few pupils arriving after registration closes. Registers are maintained correctly, using both a manual system and a computer based system. The administrative staff are very confident and competent at analysing the data. A good feature is the return of the registers to the office after each registration, any late comer having to report to the office

as other access routes are secure during the teaching day. The school contacts parents on the first day of absence if no notice has been received. There are very good procedures in place for monitoring absence, but those for improving attendance have been less effective due to parents taking pupils on holidays during term time. Attendance patterns are monitored regularly and the education welfare officer involved when required. The overall effectiveness of absence monitoring procedures is not having the necessary impact on attendance, as there has been no sustained improvement since the previous inspection and attendance remains below the national average.

37. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good and have improved since the previous inspection. There are good records of pupils' progress in reading, spelling, writing, mathematics and science that provide the school with a comprehensive range of information by which to check that pupils are making sufficient progress. Until more recently the teachers were unsure of what to do with the wealth of information they had and were not using it effectively to identify strengths and weaknesses. This is now better as the information is in the process of being collated to show pupils making insufficient progress or better than expected progress, so they can be given further support. The data is not yet being used to set targets for each year group so that the school can check it is on course to attain its targets set for pupils at the end of Year 6. Assessment information gained is being used effectively to judge the value added by the school to pupils' progress between Year 2 and Year 6, but does not yet track the progress of each pupil from entry to when they leave the school. At the end of Year 2 and throughout Years 3 to 6 the results of both the statutory and optional national tests are carefully analysed to highlight areas of the curriculum that need improvement and to see whether pupils are making sufficient progress. The attainment of boys and girls has been analysed, but not of pupils from different minority ethnic or ability groups. Targets are set for groups and individuals within each class, which are discussed at family conferences, but these are not always as effective as they could be in raising standards in writing when they are based on handwriting and presentation.

38. Assessment procedures in the Foundation Stage are sound, with assessments on entry to the Nursery and formal assessments on entry to Reception. Information gained is used appropriately to group pupils and plan work to meet their needs. Staff assess children from day-to-day and record their progress towards the national targets set for the end of the Reception year, so they know how well children are progressing throughout the two year groups.

39. Assessment procedures in the Foundation subjects are soundly based on the end of project assessments. At the beginning of new topics, teachers effectively assess pupils' levels of knowledge and understanding to ensure their lessons build on what pupils' already know and can do. Assessment procedures in ICT are not as clearly defined as in other subjects as there are no criteria by which to assess the development of pupils' skills. This makes it difficult for teachers to plan the next stage of development for the pupils in their classes. During lessons teachers often question pupils carefully to find out their levels of understanding. They then work with identified groups of children to help them gain a greater understanding.

40. There are very good procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development. The needs of the pupils are known well by staff, who are very alert to potential problems. High priority is given to personal, social and health education, with the school encouraging pupils to eat toast at morning break, instead of sweets, and fruit at the end of the school day. Sensitive support is given to pupils with medical problems

41. The school regularly checks the progress of pupils with special educational needs, and reviews of their individual education plans are held at regular planned intervals, termly or half-termly. The information is used to plan the next steps in each individual pupil's learning. The pupils themselves are involved in reviewing progress towards their targets. Staff emphasise that pupils learn in different ways, in order that pupils with special educational needs do not feel different to other members of the class. Pupils in the early stages of learning to speak English are well supported and cared for to ensure they integrate successfully into the school community. Similar support is provided for pupils after periods of absence.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

42. Parents' views as expressed in the parents' questionnaire and at the parents' meeting were very positive. Parents particularly appreciated that their children liked school, that they were making good progress and there was an expectation of hard work. Parents regarded staff as very approachable and liked the strong caring and sharing ethos of the school. The only area of concern involved the lunch provision for nursery children and the school has since addressed this. The inspectors support the parents' positive views of the school.

43. The school offers an appointment at the end of the summer term for parents to meet class teachers and discuss the progress of their children and two 'family conferences' at other times when targets are set with both pupil and parent present; this is more than the requirement. The school has a flexible timetable for these meetings to accommodate working parents. Overall the quality of information provided for parents is good. Year group newsletters inform them of what is to be taught each term. Regular school newsletters inform parents of general events. The annual report to parents on pupils' progress is good; it is comprehensive and contains details of progress particularly in English, mathematics and science. Progress in other curriculum subjects is not separately detailed. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Parents like the annual report on pupils' progress. The school prospectus and annual governors' report are clear and precise but they should be reviewed to ensure each in isolation meet statutory requirements.

44. There is good liaison with parents of pupils with special educational needs. Individual education plans for these pupils are discussed with parents at regular intervals. Plans may include activities for parents to undertake with their children at home. Most parents attend these meetings, and staff are always willing to meet with them at other times. Parents are consulted if their child is causing concern, and are aware of the two stages of school action.

45. The contribution of parents to their children's learning at school and at home and their impact on the life of the school is satisfactory. Many parents, particularly of infant pupils, make good use of the reading record book to confirm that reading is undertaken at home. The level of homework is satisfactory and well managed. The Parent, Teacher and Friends Association organises social events for both parents and children and events that raise valuable funds for the school. Parents, staff and pupils have constructed an environmental garden. A home / school agreement is in place. Parents are welcome to assist in school during the teaching day and the few that do are made welcome and used effectively by individual class teachers. During the inspection, 15 parents attended an assembly being presented by Year 4 pupils, and 30 attended the awards assembly. On other occasions very few parents actually enter the school buildings, for example, at the start of the school day owing to lack of space. The school has provided courses for parents and some have been well attended particularly the ICT course and the science day. However other curriculum courses have had to be cancelled due to lack of interest. Overall the effectiveness of the school's links with parents is good. The school puts a lot of effort and time into attracting parents into school but with limited success.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

46. The school is very well led and managed and successfully pursues its aims. The school benefits from the purposeful and very effective leadership of the headteacher, deputy headteacher and members of the senior management team who provide clear direction for the school, concentrating on improving teaching, raising standards and meeting pupils' personal development needs in order to make a difference for all pupils.

47. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have established and maintained a very positive climate for learning during a period of staff turbulence and difficulty in recruitment, which is characterised by

high expectations of teachers' work and pupils' effort, behaviour and achievement. The professional development of all staff is a high priority, performance management procedures have been implemented well, and consequently staff morale is high; pupils respond well to their teachers and to the school's expectations, and the vast majority of parents are very satisfied with the school's work.

48. The governors do their work very well and statutory requirements are fully met. They are well organised and have an effective committee structure with minutes of committee meetings feeding into full governing body meetings. Along with their monitoring visits to observe lessons or meet with curriculum leaders, and the headteachers' reports, the governors have a clear overview of the school's work and a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Assessment data is used to analyse school performance against local and national standards and challenging targets are set for performance at the end of Year 6. The governors see problems as challenges to be overcome and provide very valuable support for the school in seeking ways to overcome the problems, often pursuing issues on behalf of the school.

49. The governors have taken some risks in appointing two Registered teachers, formerly employed as non-teaching staff in the school and who require intensive support through their period of training. This decision was considered carefully in the light of difficulties in recruitment, particularly in attracting applicants who would support the school's strong ethos of raising self-esteem and aspirations. It was also considered a good example for others to aspire to. The very good lessons taught by both these teachers, neither yet qualified, supports the governors' decision, and confirms the high quality support they have received from their mentors. In addition, the school has benefited from the strong cohesive team spirit and a consistency in approach in much of the daily life of the school. There is a strong emphasis on professional development of all staff, with most engaged in further study. This is influenced by the example set by the headteacher and deputy headteacher. The consequence of this is in the number of staff who are recognised as leading teachers in English or mathematics and who subsequently gain promotion.

50. There are very good procedures for monitoring the teaching, not only by the headteacher and deputy headteacher, but also by those curriculum leaders who are sufficiently experienced to do so and which are helping to raise standards through improved teaching. There are improvement plans for all subjects based on areas identified from the monitoring. The issue of developing the roles of curriculum leaders contained in the previous report was remedied, but as staff have gained promotion it has been necessary to revisit the issue, which the school has done and continues to do successfully. Where weaknesses in teaching are identified through monitoring planning, teaching or through the scrutiny of pupils' work, additional, effective support is provided through shadowing others, mentoring or coaching. The school's expenditure on staff development is lower than in most schools because of the effective support it can offer within the school, within the local cluster of schools or through partnerships with Beacon schools. These arrangements work well. The school's self review and evaluation procedures are good; the procedures for assessing pupils' performance have improved noticeably since the previous inspection enabling the school to set realistic targets based on reliable data and to amend the curriculum to meet the pupils' needs. The school is beginning to collate all the data in a coherent way so as to track the performance of individual pupils from Years 2 to 6, but not from entry to Year 6.

51. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is well co-ordinated, with information, training and assistance being available for all staff. Although the co-ordinators are fairly new in post, both have received training in the new Code of Conduct and the role of the co-ordinator. This has enabled them to draw up a relevant action plan. All support staff have been trained and this enhances the work they do in the classrooms. There is an up-to-date policy for special needs, which states the school aims to give every pupil full access to a broad and balanced curriculum. Pupils who have long periods of absence are well supported by teaching assistants working in smaller groups to help them to catch up.

52. The strategic planning for the longer-term development of the school is good. The development plan covers a period of five years with detailed plans for the current year based on a full evaluation of

the success of action in the previous year. Governors and staff are fully involved in the process of determining the priorities and in some years, parents also through the use of questionnaires. The plan is a clear document containing all relevant information and how its success is to be measured. The most recent plan shows improvement over previous plans where the criteria for success were not specific enough in terms of the impact on pupils' attainment, for example in having teaching assistants in all classes.

53. Financial planning procedures are good and clearly linked to the school development plan and the professional development needs of the staff. The fact that the school is carrying forward a larger amount in the budget than recommended is due to the planned building programme being delayed, as the school was included in the local education authority's reorganisation proposals. The school is not to be affected by the reorganisation and the building programme is expected to go ahead early next year. The day-to-day management of the budget is very efficient, with clear delegation of responsibilities, which was an issue in the last auditor's report. This report commended the school on many aspects of its financial control and all issues raised have been remedied. All income is used efficiently for the intended purposes and in the best interests of the pupils.

54. There are sufficient teachers and a good number of teaching assistants for the number of pupils on roll. All teaching assistants have received training, which enables them to make a very effective contribution to pupils' learning. The administrative, clerical and midday staff all provide good support for the teaching staff, enabling them to focus on teaching the pupils in their care. The efficiency of the school is enhanced through the use of management information systems. For example, pupil, attendance, finance, assessment and special educational needs information is stored on computers for ease of access and updating. There are sufficient resources for learning in all subjects with the exception of the school library, which is poor and the range of resources for physical development in the Foundation Stage.

55. The adequacy of accommodation was an issue at the time of the previous inspection and remains unsatisfactory. The headteacher's office and a classroom have been built to increase the accommodation, and there are plans for a further classroom and computer suite to be built to replace one of the mobile units. This will still not provide adequate space for a school library, which was a key issue at the time of the previous inspection, nor will it solve the issue of the heat in the other mobile classrooms. Some adaptations to the building have already been made to improve access for disabled pupils and visitors. The governors are aware of their forthcoming responsibility to have a disability access plan for the school. The quality of displays around the school has improved, as the school saw this as a key factor in motivating pupils, especially boys, in raising aspirations and in supporting the ethos of high expectations. There are many attractive displays, some three dimensional, which celebrate pupils' achievements and which add much to the learning environment.

56. The governors and senior staff apply the principles of best value rigorously. They compare the standards achieved with those of similar schools, for example working in a local school partnership to compare the attainment of potentially gifted and talented pupils and to compare their approach to teaching and assessing writing. They consult parents through the use of questionnaires and pupils through the school council to determine their views of the school. They obtain quotes for large items of expenditure and investigate whether outside contractors can provide a more efficient service before 'buying into' the local authority services.

57. The leadership and management of the school have improved since the previous inspection and are a key factor in the current success and rising standards in the school.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

58. In order to continue the good improvement made since the previous inspection and raise standards further the headteacher and staff supported by the governors should:

- (1) Raise standards in writing by the end of Year 6 by:
- placing more emphasis on developing writing skills through other subjects;
 - reducing the reliance on the use of worksheets in lessons;
 - providing more guidance for pupils as to how they can improve their work by redrafting it;
 - ensuring the targets in literacy books are relevant;
 - displaying more examples of pupils' writing in classrooms and corridors to give pupils a standard to aspire to.

Discussed in paragraphs 4, 23, 65,70,71,72,74,75,76,77,79.

- (2) Improve pupils' investigative skills in mathematics and science by:
- providing planned opportunities for pupils to apply their skills to challenging investigative work in mathematics lessons and to applying numeracy skills in other areas of the curriculum;
 - ensuring sufficient challenge for more able pupils in mathematics;
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to plan their own investigations in science.

Discussed in paragraphs 7, 23, 82,84,89,90, 93,102.

- (3) Improve the use of assessment information by:
- collating all the data to show the progress of pupils from entry to when they leave;
 - identifying clear targets for each year group;
 - tracking the progress of all groups of pupils.
 - ensuring individual pupil targets contained in their reports are evident within the classrooms and progress towards meeting them noted in lessons and when marking their work.

Discussed in paragraphs 37-40, 77,81,103,119,129,141.

- (4) Improve the whole school's library provision by:

- improving the range and quantity of books available;
- increasing the space when funding permits.

Discussed in paragraph 74

In addition to the key issues given above the governors should consider including the following minor issue:

- (1) Improve the range of outdoor resources for physical development in the foundation stage.

Discussed in paragraphs 21, 54, 68

- (2) Take all steps possible to improve attendance rates
discussed in paragraph 13

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	55
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	21

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	11	31	11	1	0	0
Percentage	2	20	56	20	2	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	27	200
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		57

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	11	57

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	12
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	11

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.4%
National comparative data	5.6%

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2001	12	15

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	10	11
	Girls	15	14	15
	Total	25	24	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (74)	89 (71)	96 (81)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	10	10
	Girls	14	15	13
	Total	23	25	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (74)	93 (81)	85 (81)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2001	10	13

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	3	8	10
	Girls	5	5	8
	Total	8	13	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	35 (77)	57 (77)	78 (91)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	9	9
	Girls	8	8	9
	Total	15	17	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	65 (68)	74 (64)	78 (77)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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	167	3	
White – Irish			
White – any other White background			
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean			
Mixed – White and Black African			
Mixed – White and Asian			
Mixed – any other mixed background			
Asian or Asian British – Indian			
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani			
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	1		
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background			
Black or Black British – Caribbean			
Black or Black British – African			
Black or Black British – any other Black background			
Chinese			
Any other ethnic group	5		
No ethnic group recorded	26		

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)	9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	28.6:1
Average class size	22.2

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	227.25

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	N/a
Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	86.75
Number of pupils per FTE adult	9:1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2
	£
Total income	520,805
Total expenditure	504,827
Expenditure per pupil	2,126
Balance brought forward from previous year	86,520
Balance carried forward to next year	102,498

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	6
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

227

Number of questionnaires returned

120

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	69	26	4	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	53	43	3	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	59	35	3	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	42	40	6	0	12
The teaching is good.	66	28	3	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	49	37	11	2	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	68	28	2	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	75	23	1	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	51	38	9	1	1
The school is well led and managed.	66	30	2	1	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	61	34	2	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	49	29	12	0	10

Other issues raised by parents

Parents of children in the nursery were not happy that their children could only have school dinners and did not have the option of bringing packed lunches. This has now been resolved.

The unsatisfactory ventilation in the mobile classrooms was raised in a letter and inspectors agree that the conditions are uncomfortable on sunny days, even with fire doors open.

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

59. Children are admitted to the Nursery in the September of the school year before their fourth birthday. The gradual induction procedures are well organised to allow children to attend half days at first, moving to full time attendance as they become more confident. In the September before they are five, they move into the Reception class. Currently there are 27 part-time children on roll in the Nursery, and 29 full-time pupils in the Reception class.

60. Nursery staff promote particularly good initial links with families so that children settle quickly into school. Weekly toddler club coffee mornings and pre-school taster visits encourage children to look forward to starting Nursery. Parents are encouraged to use the lending library and are given pre-start packs to work through with their children. Staff consult with parents to assess their children's attainment as they begin their school life.

61. The Reception and Nursery classes follow the early learning goals, the nationally recommended curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage. This consists of six areas of learning: personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy development, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development. Each area of learning is made up of four stages or *Stepping-Stones* from which progress and standards can be measured.

62. Whilst standards of attainment on entry vary from year to year there has been an overall downward trend over the last four years. This is confirmed by the results of tests given to children soon after they start Nursery. Standards of attainment on entry are now lower than they were at the time of the last inspection, are well below average and particularly low in language and social skills. Children in the Nursery are currently working at a level below the first *Stepping-Stone*, and many Reception children are working on the second *Stepping-Stone* with a small number of more able children working towards the third *Stepping-Stone* in each area of learning. Overall, children achieve well over the Foundation Stage in all the areas of learning due to the good teaching. Nevertheless a high proportion of children are unlikely to reach the early learning goals in each of the areas of learning by the time they start in Year 1 and standards are below average for their age in all areas of learning. Children with special educational needs are supported well and make good progress. The teacher and teaching assistant in the Reception class make sure that any child who is at an early stage of learning to speak English is fully included in all activities.

63. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. All staff use their secure knowledge and understanding of the way young children learn to plan interesting practical experiences which meet their needs. A particular strength is the high quality of teamwork between adults, which enables individual skills of teachers and nursery nurses to be used to best advantage. The very good relationships between staff and between staff and children promote a calm and secure environment where children enjoy learning. Occasionally planning in the Nursery does not focus clearly enough on which specific skills are to be learnt. The Foundation Stage is well led and managed and overall improvement since the previous inspection has been good.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development.

64. Almost all enjoy coming to school and leave their carers willingly. They are just settling into the carefully established routines in their first weeks in school. Many as yet are not confident, for instance to answer their names as the register is called. They are learning to wait their turn at snack time but many find it difficult to share. They are demanding of adult attention and sometimes interrupt at the

wrong time. Most children are becoming increasingly confident in selecting an activity. However they easily become tired and concentrate for only a short time before moving on. The vast majority in the Reception class are confident in carrying out set tasks but several show little initiative in making choices of their own. They show care and concern for others as when trying to please the Special Person of the week. More able children are keen to take responsibility for minor administrative tasks like giving out snacks. Almost all are developing positive attitudes to learning. Teaching and learning are very good. Consequently, children achieve very well in this area. All staff take every opportunity to set high standards of behaviour and promote caring co-operative attitudes in all aspects of school life. They model good manners in saying 'please' and 'thank you' and insist on pupils apologising to others when appropriate. They show respect for children's ideas and give reassuring feedback to increase confidence. Particularly good support is given to one child in the Reception class who is at an early stage of learning English. The curriculum is adapted to meet her needs so that she makes good progress alongside her peers. Regulations concerning the teaching of religious education are fully met.

Communication, language and literacy

65. Many nursery children are reluctant to communicate verbally. They respond to their teachers' questions with gestures or in words or phrases rather than sentences. They often show by their response that they do not understand what is said. They are interested in books but many are not experienced in handling them properly. A few more able children are beginning to recognise their name as they choose it daily to hang on the wall. Most make marks on paper for instance when taking "telephone messages" in the home corner. About three use random letter shapes in their writing. Pupils in the Reception class enjoy listening to stories and looking at books but still have difficulty concentrating for more than a short spell without yawning and fidgeting. They are becoming confident to talk in front of the class. They listen carefully to identify rhyming sounds. Most children recognise some letters by shape and sound at the beginning of words but cannot always identify the letter. A few more able children recognise some words in the first readers and use phonic skills to sound out simple three letter words. Children explore the shape of letters in dough and use letter shapes increasingly in their own writing. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, although on occasions the tasks associated with the teaching of letter sounds in Reception are dull and pupils lose interest which slows their learning. Adults constantly model good speaking and listening skills and encourage children to interact verbally. Staff plan work with clear objectives to build up skills step by step over time.

Mathematical Development.

66. Children in the Nursery and in the Reception class join enthusiastically in number action rhymes. Whilst nursery children copy the actions they do not remember the words. They have difficulty showing three or four fingers or in counting one to one accurately. Reception children are confident in counting objects one to one up to five or ten with several more able children going beyond this. With help, they check their work by making rows or marking off. Most recognise numeral shapes to five or ten. In these aspects of number work Reception children are on line to reach the early learning goals. The children name two-dimensional shapes like circles, triangles and squares and are beginning to use mathematical language correctly as when matching the right bowl and spoon to each of the three bears. Teaching and learning are good. Staff plan appropriate practical tasks, which involve children actively in counting, matching and sorting activities. On going assessments made by observing the children at work are used effectively to plan the next steps in learning. Plenary sessions at the end of lessons when children demonstrate their skills carefully reinforce teaching points. Elements of the numeracy strategy are used efficiently in the Reception Class but some untargeted group work (for example threading beads) is not sufficiently focused to support learning well.

Knowledge and Understand of the World.

67. All of the children use their senses to investigate the world around them whether exploring the properties of sand or water in the Nursery or joining in a listening walk in the Reception Class. The majority use technology such as the computer and language master confidently to support their learning. Reception children are becoming adept at controlling a programmable toy to carry out simple backwards and forwards manoeuvres. With adult help pupils examine the relative strengths of building

materials when blowing through a straw to see if they can blow their model straw, twig or brick house down. More able children are learning to observe carefully and talk lucidly about what they see. Only a few children show initiative or contribute their own ideas independently. Whilst they are interested they are not adept at asking questions of their own. Teaching and learning are very good. Staff plan imaginatively to catch the children's interest in a lively hands-on approach. For instance children were motivated particularly well when the programmable toy was dressed up as the wolf and pupils aimed it in turn at each of the little pigs' houses. Staff use questions very skilfully to make children think in order to extend their own ideas.

Physical Development

68. Very few children in the Nursery are independent in dressing for their daily outdoor play session. They are largely unaware of others when steering large wheeled toys around the track. They are unadventurous in balancing and only cross a very low bridge built with construction toys when holding the teacher's hand. Their ability to control small tools like pencils and glue spreaders is not well developed. For instance one child uses two hands to scrub a paintbrush on the paper. Whilst the children have physical education lessons once a week in the school hall, the lack of access to a secure and suitable outdoor play area limits the much needed opportunity for children in the Reception Class to develop their co-ordination in appropriately challenging tasks. Most children in the Reception Class use pencils and scissors with reasonable control and manipulate construction toys for a particular purpose for example to build houses for the three little pigs. Teaching and learning are good but achievement, although good, is hampered by the lack of outdoor facilities. Nursery staff make the best use of the resources available, but the outside area is too small to house the full Nursery class comfortably. They extend children's play as when adding cones to the track to encourage greater control of the wheeled vehicles. All staff manage children very well with praise and encouragement to build up confidence and independence.

Creative Development

69. Children explore a range of media. They enjoy playing in the home corner or 'builders' yard' but are not very imaginative in their role-play. Children in the Nursery play alongside rather than with each other. They enjoy the experience of working with finger paints or dough but only a few play purposefully with specific outcomes in mind. Reception children are enthusiastic in making music. They join in a small repertoire of rhymes and songs, composing short choruses with pride. Teaching and learning are good. Resources are well prepared and accessible, so that children waste no time in getting on with tasks. Staff intervene in role-play to extend children's ideas and promote a more imaginative use of materials. There is some overuse of activities like collage making, where children cut and stick paper to fill in shapes which do not challenge children to develop their own creativity.

ENGLISH

Strengths

- Teaching is good overall, enabling most pupils to make good progress in speaking and listening, reading and spelling.
- There are good procedures for monitoring and developing teaching.
- There is good support for pupils with special educational needs or who have English as an additional language.
- Careful analysis of pupils' performance in writing tests has highlighted where the school needs to focus its efforts to raise standards.
- The subject is well led and managed; this supports the drive to raise standards.

Areas for improvement:

- The development of pupils' skills in writing, particularly in Years 3 to 6.
- Better use of assessment data for setting targets.
- Consistency in teaching handwriting skills.
- The school's poor library provision.

70. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection when standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 were well below the national average. The school's 2001 results of national tests at the end of Year 2 were the best ever and were above the national average in reading and matched the national average in writing. These results also compared favourably with similar schools. These pupils achieved well from the below average attainment on entry. This year group contained a few higher attaining pupils who exceeded the expected level by the end of Year 2 and helped to raise the overall attainment of the year group. In 2002, the results dipped in reading and writing, because there were more pupils with special educational needs and very few higher attaining pupils. However, results in spelling continued to rise because the teaching of this aspect is a particular strength in infant classes and pupils make good progress in understanding spelling patterns. Current standards of work are broadly in line with those expected of pupils in Year 2, although higher in speaking and listening, reading and spelling than in writing, where standards could be higher. There is a heavy reliance on the use of worksheets, which whilst being helpful in guiding pupils' writing in some lessons, hinders the development of their writing in others. There is some improvement evident in this since the beginning of the current school year.

71. The school's results of national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2001 were very low and were not typical. This particular year group contained three pupils with statements of special needs and in total a half of the pupils had special needs relating to literacy. The school's 2002 results rose by 30 percentage points over those in 2001. A good proportion (40 per cent) of the pupils exceeded the level expected in reading and a small proportion (7 per cent) in writing. However, higher standards in reading compensated for lower standards in writing in the overall results. This shows there is room for improvement in pupils' writing skills. Through careful analysis of the pupils' performance in the writing tests the school has identified that the children struggle with the structure and organisation of their work when writing for different purposes. The curriculum has, therefore, been amended this year to place more emphasis on this. The comparison of test results at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 for pupils remaining in the school show that many pupils achieve well. Over the last three years in reading the large majority have made the expected rate of progress and around 40 per cent of pupils made good progress. In writing, however, a small majority has made sufficient progress, a small number have made good progress, but a small number did not make the expected rate of progress. Whilst these are mostly pupils with special educational needs, who in fact have achieved well in relation to their capabilities, in 2002 the proportion was high as 11 of the 27 pupils did not make the expected rate of progress. The majority of these pupils were boys.

72. Current standards of work in Year 6 are below those expected. Nevertheless these pupils have achieved well as their results at the end of Year 2 were well below the national average. In addition, they had a disrupted year last year with a change of teacher in January and some unsatisfactory teaching evident from the scrutiny of pupils' books, which affected their rate of progress. The overall good teaching is a key factor in motivating pupils and maintaining their interest, particularly in writing. There is clear evidence of good progress being made already this year and additional support to boost the performance of the pupils is helping some in Year 6 to make very good progress. Approximately 66 per cent of the pupils are on course to reach the expected level by the end of the year, with a small number likely to exceed this level in reading, but very few in writing.

73. In speaking and listening, standards are broadly in line with those expected at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils enter school with a very limited range of vocabulary and throughout the classes many opportunities are provided during class discussions and question and answer sessions for pupils to extend their range of vocabulary. Many pupils are not confident speakers on entry to Year 1, but within the classrooms this develops well. However, few pupils are confident in speaking to a larger audience evident, for example, when members of the school council led a school assembly. Most pupils listen carefully to their teachers and each other, but occasional answers to questions show pupils do not listen carefully enough. Teachers are skilful in drawing those not participating into class discussions to ensure all pupils develop their ability to express their views and opinions more clearly. Where pupils struggle to find the precise words they need, teachers give good support. When writing about an

earthquake hitting the local area in Year 6, for example, a pupil was unsure whether to use the word 'drowsy' or 'dizzy' in her writing. Through further questioning the teacher helped the pupil decide, for herself, which was the better word to use. The pupils' limited range of vocabulary hinders their progress in making written stories more interesting for the reader. Pupils with special educational needs, some having speech and communication difficulties are fully included in lessons and teaching assistants help and guide them in verbalising their ideas. Pupils in the early stages of learning to speak English make very good progress. They receive intensive support for short periods of time each day, very closely matched to their needs. For example, in the reception class, this support is given at the start of literacy lessons whilst the rest of the class is reading the shared text. On re-entry to the classroom the pupil is given a task to build on the new vocabulary.

74. Standards in reading are broadly in line with those expected in Year 2, but are below those expected in Year 6. Pupils of all abilities and from all minority ethnic groups make good progress in their understanding of letter sounds, although a small number confuse letter sounds and letter names and this hinders their development of skills in word building. By Year 2, the more able pupils are developing a good range of strategies to attempt unfamiliar words such as splitting words into smaller parts or using their knowledge of letter sounds. They read most words accurately and are developing fluency in their reading. Lower attaining pupils tend to make more use of picture clues. Some of the lower attaining pupils, and those with special educational needs, are reluctant readers often receiving little support at home. Progress for many pupils in infant classes is supported by frequently reading to parents or other adults at home. This declines as pupils enter junior classes and teachers work hard and successfully to maintain pupils' interest in the world of books. By Year 6, more able and average attaining pupils can discuss books by different authors, such as R.L.Stine, J.K.Rowling or Roald Dahl. They discuss the main characters and the plot of the story, referring to specific text to justify their answers. They often reread sentences when attempting to read unfamiliar words. Both more able and average attaining pupils show interest in fiction and non-fiction books and can locate given information in reference books, scanning pages confidently. There are a significant number of pupils in the current Year 6 with reading ages well below their chronological age and this is depressing the overall standards. These pupils read more frequently to adults in school to compensate for the lack of support at home. The poor library provision is also a factor hindering the development of research skills through reading for information, although computers are used satisfactorily for this purpose.

75. In writing, standards are broadly in line with those expected in Year 2 and are below in Year 6. More able pupils in infant classes make good progress in developing their skills in writing stories. The scrutiny of books from the previous year showed some accurate use of punctuation, including speech marks and exclamation marks, mostly accurate spelling and the effective use of large print and capital letters to emphasise commands, for example **'NO, GO AWAY!'** Pupils' written work showed a good range of writing for different purposes, for example, instructions, post cards, letters, book reviews, accounts, stories and poems and increasing understanding of how to write for different purposes. Average and lower attaining pupils make good progress through the emphasis on developing skills in spelling and handwriting and are showing more confidence in their abilities as writers. This developing confidence is sometimes hampered by the over use of worksheets, instead of encouraging pupils to record their work independently.

76. By Year 6, there is a distinct change in the attitudes of a few pupils to their written tasks. Currently in Year 3, it is among girls and in Years 4, 5 and 6 it is among boys. The school has identified the issue and is working to overcome the situation. The team teaching in Years 4, 5 and 6 is helping to overcome the issue by providing more support to raise pupils' self-esteem and perceptions of their abilities as writers. The teachers have to work very hard to ensure pupils produce an acceptable amount and quality of work in the time given. They are making maximum use of the computers available to encourage pupils in recording their work. There is inconsistency in the teaching of handwriting and some pupils have reverted to printing, rather than persevering in developing a fluent style of joined handwriting and this again hinders their speed in recording their ideas and slows their overall rate of progress. Again pupils have many good opportunities in Years 3 to 6 to write for different purposes and make satisfactory progress in learning how to structure their writing, for

example when writing a letter of complaint about an activity holiday, newspaper articles about an earthquake, instructional texts and narratives. The development of story writing skills is weaker, with few opportunities evident in the books from the previous year. Pupils plan their stories well and write opening paragraphs, but too often this does not lead to redrafting their work in order to improve the content. There are few examples evident of a class working together to create a good story opening, which they then develop individually through to a suitable conclusion. There is more evidence of story writing in the current Year 6 class, but this aspect requires more emphasis to encourage pupils to write longer stories with a clear beginning, middle and end which are redrafted to improve the content in order to hold the reader's interest.

77. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, with no unsatisfactory lessons seen. The influence of Leading Literacy Teachers, recognised for their good practice has led to better teaching than at the time of the previous inspection, which enables pupils to make good progress in acquiring basic skills, knowledge and understanding of writing for different purposes. The strengths are in the good quality of planning, the teaching of basic skills in reading and spelling, the management of pupils, the use of resources and the very effective deployment of teaching assistants. The planning is clearly linked to the National Literacy Strategy and provides a clear focus for the teaching and pupils' learning. The use of whiteboards for pupils to attempt spellings or writing sentences is effective in helping to encourage pupils to have a go and enables teachers to assess quickly those having difficulties, so they can support them and prevent loss of self-esteem. Pupils are encouraged to share their thoughts and ideas with their 'talking partners', which is successfully promoting the development of speaking skills. Pupils felt to be struggling with aspects of their work are moved to work with groups supported by teaching assistants to give them a boost and enable them to keep up. This strategy is working successfully in a Year 2 class. There is no evidence of more able pupils underachieving, which has been evident in recent years and at the time of the previous inspection. Very good lessons in Years 1 and 2 are characterised by the brisk pace, level of challenge and the teachers' high expectations. In Year 2, for example, the pupils were expected to write their own sentences using correct punctuation when recording daily events in their lives. Pupils responded well to the challenge, worked hard and knew they had succeeded in meeting the target for the lesson. Pupils are set targets for improvement, which are discussed at family conferences, but the literacy targets inside book covers do not always reflect those in their reports and often relate to behaviour or presentation. There are few examples of pupils' writing on displays in classrooms or around the school, in order to give others a standard to aspire to. The accommodation in some classrooms is inadequate and makes gathering pupils around shared texts difficult and this impacts on the overall quality of teaching. There is insufficient space to move around the groups of pupils in Year 3, so the group being taught by the teacher is very close to other groups, making it difficult for others to concentrate. In other classes it is impossible to position the tables in groups in the most effective way for teaching. The mobile classrooms get very hot even with all windows open, pupils are uncomfortable and struggle to sustain their concentration at times. Teachers work hard to inspire pupils as without good teaching Glebe pupils would not make good progress in their learning.

78. The subject is well led and managed by a co-ordinator who has been in post for less than a year, but who nevertheless, has a good grasp of standards throughout the school and of the strengths and areas for development. Assessment data is being used to identify those pupils who would benefit from a boost to their performance and additional national guidance is used effectively for this purpose, with success evident. There is systematic tracking of pupils' progress from Year 2 to Year 6, but no targets set for each year group, so that all teachers are accountable for their part in standards attained by pupils at the end of Year 6.

Literacy across the curriculum

79. There is insufficient emphasis on developing pupils' literacy skills through other subjects. The scrutiny of work in all subjects from the previous school year showed very little written work in religious education, history and geography in most year groups. Where work in history topics was available, for example in Year 4, most of the World War II work involved the use of worksheets, with

independent writing only evident on rationing during the war. The school has recognised this weakness and during the inspection there was evidence of literacy targets in lessons, for example in art and design in Year 1 where pupils wrote their evaluations of their self-portraits. In a numeracy lesson in Year 2, pupils had a number game to test their mental agility, which involved them in reading out their question to the class, which the class enjoyed. Computers are used frequently for pupils to present their work.

MATHEMATICS

Strengths

- Good progress for all pupils.
- Teaching and learning of basic skills.
- Effective sessions at the end of each lesson for pupils to check what they have learned.
- Very good leadership and management of the subject which influence standards.
- Effective use of additional classroom support leading to good achievement of lower attaining pupils.

Areas for improvement

- The opportunity for pupils to apply their skills in solving problems and investigational work in numeracy lessons and in other subjects;
- The use of ICT to support learning;
- Extend the use of assessment information to track pupils' progress and to set specific targets for improvement;
- Provide consistent challenge for more able pupils.

80. In the national test results for 2001, compared to similar schools, results for seven-year-olds were well above average, and above average compared to schools nationally. Compared to schools with pupils from a similar background and to schools nationally, standards at the end of Year 6 were well below average. This was because of the high percentage of pupils in the year group who had special educational needs, including three pupils with statements of special needs. Results for 2002 showed the percentage of seven-year-olds achieving the expected level fell slightly, reflecting the nature of the year group. However, there was a good improvement in the number of eleven-year-olds achieving the expected level. Inspection evidence shows that current standards in Year 2 are similar to those in 2002. Standards in Year 6 are currently below those expected for the age of the pupils. Approximately two thirds of the pupils are likely to reach the expected level. This is below the national expectation but represents good achievement as almost 40 per cent of pupils are identified as having special educational needs. Fewer pupils than average are working at a higher level in the subject.

81. There have been very good improvements overall in the number of pupils attaining the expected standard since the last inspection. This is due to the priority the school has placed on raising standards, the successful introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy, and the good monitoring and support of teaching and learning in lessons. Good use is made of additional resources to help those pupils who are just below average to achieve the expected level by the end of Year 6. There are good procedures for assessing pupils' progress, though these are not yet used to set precise future targets for individual attainment and progress.

82. Most pupils achieve well, including those with special educational needs or with English as an additional language. However, some more able pupils could do better if they were sufficiently challenged in lessons. The decision by the school to increase the level of classroom support from teaching assistants has had a positive effect on achievement. Their good deployment in class, working with small groups of pupils, has helped to raise the achievement of lower attaining pupils and pupils with special educational needs. More able pupils generally achieve well overall and benefit from the co-operation with other schools on the 'Gifted and Talented' project, however, lack of consistent challenge in lessons throughout the school reduces the number of pupils attaining the higher levels. The examination of pupils' work shows that progress was slower in Year 5 last year, where there was a change of teacher at Christmas; for the remainder of the year progress was satisfactory rather than good for average and more able pupils. Pupils show a good attitude to their work and this helps them to achieve well.

83. By the end of Year 2, through good use of patterns in number and regular practice of addition and subtraction, most pupils have a good understanding of numbers to a hundred. Thorough coverage of tables up to five, gives pupils confidence with simple multiplication sums. Some more able pupils extend

their understanding as they add and subtract hundreds, tens and units. With good classroom support and beneficial use of simple counting apparatus, lower attaining pupils are becoming competent in adding units to tens and units. Pupils are able to use their skills to solve simple word problems and puzzles, though they cannot organise their work systematically to check that their results are correct.

84. By the end of Year 6 most pupils have a sound understanding of the value of each digit within a number, using large numbers and numbers to three decimal places. They know the relationship between decimals, fractions and percentages and are secure in their ability to cancel to simplify a fraction. When they start Year 6, pupils have difficulty with remembering tables. Teaching in Year 6 places a suitable emphasis on improving pupils' recall of tables, enabling most to perform multiplication sums accurately, and more able pupils are confident in solving long division sums. Through regular practice and good support in small groups, lower attaining pupils can add and subtract numbers in the hundreds. Pupils have some opportunities to solve word problems and puzzles, though the poor reading and language skills of some pupils hinders their ability to interpret questions and use their skills. There are few opportunities for pupils to extend their understanding through more open-ended investigations, and this limits the number of pupils attaining the higher level.

85. Pupils' measuring skills develop to a suitable level. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a sound understanding of the different units of measurement. They can measure accurately in centimetres and identify right angles on different shapes. They complete symmetrical patterns and can name and describe common shapes. They can collect and then display information on simple charts and graphs, and higher attaining pupils can use the information to answer questions about odd and even numbers as well as multiples.

86. By the end of Year 6 most pupils can draw and measure angles with reasonable accuracy and can use all units of measurement appropriately. They understand the properties of different shapes and can use the formula to find the area and perimeter of rectangles. More able pupils can construct a triangle accurately. Pupils can extract information from a variety of graphs and plot a line graph to show the change of excitement levels in "The Awakening". More able pupils extend their skills by drawing a currency conversion line graph. Work on aspects of handling data, such as finding averages, frequency tables and probability is limited.

87. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall throughout the school. One very good lesson and one unsatisfactory lesson were observed. Lessons generally get off to a brisk start, with mental calculation sessions that lead to good improvement in pupils' arithmetic skills. In the less successful lessons, the pace of this initial session is too slow and so pupils lose concentration and questions are not well matched to take account of the range of attainment within the class. Teachers explain new work very clearly, which helps pupils to understand and make good progress in acquiring skills, particularly in number. Very good use is made of simple resources to help pupils to understand. For example, a teacher in Year 2 used connecting cubes successfully to illustrate doubling and halving of numbers. Good use was made of the overhead projector in Year 6 to demonstrate percentages as parts of a hundred. Lessons are generally well planned and teaching assistants are effectively deployed to support the learning of pupils, particularly in the group activities. This was seen in a very good lesson in Year 3, for example, where the skilled learning assistants had been well briefed by the teacher. Their good understanding of the pupils and their tasks enabled them to give specific support to help pupils' understanding of money. In the unsatisfactory lesson observed, work was not well matched to pupils' prior attainment and pupils not directly supervised by an adult made little progress. Opportunities for pupils, particularly in Years 3 to 6 to develop a depth of understanding through independent activities such as problem-solving or practical investigations are limited. Information and communication technology was used well to support learning in data handling in Year 2. Overall, however, ICT is insufficiently integrated into lessons to support learning in mathematics. Too often computers were not switched on or in use in lessons.

88. The time at the end of lessons is used well to check what pupils have learned. There are good opportunities for pupils to explain how they have worked things out though many have difficulty in

articulating their thoughts. Pupils are used to deciding how successful they have been in understanding the lesson, and the thumbs up or down signs enable the teacher to plan the next stage. In most lessons sensitive use is made of the school's behaviour policy when necessary and this helps to keep disruptions in lessons to a minimum.

Numeracy across the curriculum

89. The opportunity for pupils to practise their numeracy skills in other subjects, such as science, history, geography and design and technology is underdeveloped. Shape is used in some lessons, for example, Year 1 paint symmetrical butterflies and Year 6 use the nets of shapes to build structures in design and technology. However, there are missed opportunities for measuring and for drawing graphs, particularly in science.

90. The subject is led and managed very well and this has led to the very good improvement and exceptional increase over the last five years in the number of pupils reaching the expected level by the time they leave school. The head and deputy head teachers provide good support in classrooms through team teaching and this is helping to raise standards. The provision of teaching assistants in each class has helped to improve pupils' progress.

SCIENCE

Strengths

- Teaching is good, enabling most pupils to make good progress and achieve well.
- Investigations form a key part of the teaching programme.
- Leadership and management of the subject are good and influence standards.

Areas for improvement

- Further use of investigations and the development of accurate scientific language.
- Pupils do not plan their own investigations.

91. Standards at the end of Year 2 are average. This is an improvement on the standards shown in teacher assessments in the previous two years. In 2001, standards were below the national average in all aspects of the subject, with the proportion of pupils exceeding the expected level being well below the national average. When compared with the results in reading, writing and mathematics, standards in science were not high enough. Teachers' assessments in 2002 were similar. More emphasis is now being placed on the teaching of investigative skills in the subject and teachers are identifying pupils who show a potential to work at the higher level and are preparing appropriately challenging work. Teachers' skills in assessing pupils have also improved and pupils are now achieving well.

92. Current standards in Year 6 are broadly average for pupils reaching the expected level, and a few are working at the higher level. This is an improvement over the 2001 results of national tests, which were well below the national average. The 2002 results showed an improvement of ten percentage points over those of 2001 and with a good proportion (44 per cent) achieving the higher level. The present Year 6 pupils are making good progress and achieving well when considering the proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in class and careful planning and support in many classes enables them to record their investigations. However, in some classes the older children do not receive this high level of support and their progress is slightly slower. Pupils with English as an additional language progress at the same rate as their peers and potentially gifted pupils are well catered for through links with other schools.

93. Pupils' progress has improved since the previous inspection because the curriculum is better organised to involve them in scientific investigations and teachers are becoming more skilled in judging the standards being achieved. However, opportunities to teach the specific subject vocabulary and to use numeracy skills are missed. Pupils in Year 6 have a sound knowledge of life processes and living things, materials and their properties and of physical processes, but investigative skills are weaker as

there has been insufficient emphasis on developing these skills previously and no opportunities for pupils to devise their own experiments.

94. Teachers assess pupils' knowledge and understanding at the beginning of each new scientific topic. This enables them to judge carefully the pupils' knowledge and plan their lessons accordingly, although the new specific vocabulary to be introduced is not always identified. A new, improved scheme of work has been introduced. This links scientific knowledge with investigations, which should enable pupils to make predictions and increase their understanding of the nature of fair testing.

95. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. In the infants, teachers have good subject knowledge, which they present to their pupils in stimulating and challenging ways. Their introductory explanations quickly review the pupils' previous learning and they question them carefully to help their recall of earlier work.

96. In Year 2, where children are finding out what causes ice to melt, teachers ask them to decide where the best place would be to stop the ice from melting. They are encouraged to make a suggestion and asked to give a reason why. This encourages the children to apply their knowledge to the situation. Good discussion ensures that pupils learn about how to make their investigations fair. The pupils are aware that their ice pops are the same length and that the test will run for the same length of time. Careful probing questions challenge the children to make predictions. These include 'placing the ice pop in the freezer because it is a cold place' and 'the worst place will be on the window sill because it gets hot there'.

97. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils who write sentences and draw sketches and diagrams of their activities. Pupils with special educational needs are supported effectively by learning support assistants. This enables them to keep up with the pace of the lesson and complete their work successfully.

98. In a very good lesson seen, there was a greater emphasis on the use of accurate scientific language. As the lesson progressed the teacher introduced the phrase 'change of state' once the children had realised that when ice was not kept cold it started to melt. Pupils enjoyed their work, they worked hard and enthusiastically with the more able children organising increasingly complex environments – boxes covered with carpet tiles and cardboard 'to keep out the heat and keep the ice pop cold'.

99. In junior classes, teaching is very good in Year 6 and satisfactory in Year 5. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use questions skilfully to help pupils recall previous knowledge and learning. For example, this helps them to judge children's understanding of the function of the heart and the effect of exercise. However, when teaching is only satisfactory, pupils do not devise their own experiments, but are led by their teachers in carrying out the investigation and record their findings on worksheets, rather than deciding the best way to record their findings for themselves.

100. In a very good lesson in Year 6, pupils were challenged to construct a switch to operate a battery-powered circuit. They were expected to apply their knowledge about conductors and insulators to complete the task. The teacher had planned the lesson well, providing a good range of everyday materials from which the pupils made their choices. The pupils were managed effectively and often worked in pairs showing high levels of interest and concentration to complete their tasks successfully. The teaching assistant was deployed effectively to support all the pupils including those with special educational needs. The teaching styles were appropriate to the investigation, making careful suggestions or answering a pupil's question with a question to help them solve a problem associated with the work.

101. Time at the end of lessons was organised well giving pupils very good opportunities to speak to the class about their new learning. Pupils talked about switches that operate by sliding, pressing and telescoping, showing the range of original thought they applied to the task. The time given to the

lesson was carefully managed allowing children to write about their work to develop their literacy skills.

102. The very good planning in Year 6 ensures that pupils are involved in practical activities that revise all aspects of their previous work relating to batteries and electrical circuitry. Although pupils are not challenged to devise their own investigations, and this is a weakness, they work hard to complete the set tasks. Often the groups work very closely sharing their ideas. There was a resounding cheer when a group of children assembled a complex switch circuit and when another group successfully organised a parallel circuit to ensure that both bulbs emitted the same amount of light. In this very good working atmosphere the adults worked closely with some pupils who had difficulty in applying their knowledge to the set task.

103. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The curriculum leader has good knowledge of the current priorities for development and has worked hard to improve the curriculum and raise standards. A useful file of assessed samples of pupils' work is being collated to show the school's expected standards. The past years' National Curriculum assessment scripts have been analysed. This evaluates the effectiveness of the teaching and identifies the need for further development of the investigative approach to the subject. Effective methods of assessment are now being used to check pupils' progress, but are not yet fully established to show the progress of all pupils from year to year. Opportunities are provided for pupils to use ICT to help analyse data collected during investigations, but overall more opportunities are required. Teachers' planning is evaluated for its impact on pupils' learning and attainment. Overall, there has been a good improvement since the previous inspection.

ART AND DESIGN

Strengths

- Teachers closely follow the scheme of work when planning lessons.
- Pupils explore a range of materials, techniques and skills as they move through the school.

Areas for improvement

- Too much time is spent on observational drawing.
- All pupils, particularly those in Years 5 and 6 do not make sufficient use of their sketchbooks for developing their skills and practising techniques.
- Teachers' expectations are not always high enough.

104. The attainment of pupils in Years 2 and 6 is as expected for their age. This is an improvement from the previous inspection, when pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 was below the standard expected for their age. Achievement is satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by teaching assistants, who help them to sustain their concentration, to observe closely and so complete their work satisfactorily. Potentially talented pupils and those who speak English as their second language are supported by their class teachers and make satisfactory progress. The scrutiny of work from the previous year showed too much emphasis on observational drawing at the expense of other aspects of the subject, which prevented pupils from making good progress.

105. Year 1 pupils study how different artists draw self-portraits. Before they started to draw their own faces, they used mirrors to study particular features, such as their eyes and the shape of their face. The teacher's clear explanation in this good lesson helped pupils to make real progress in their ability to observe closely and draw what they see. Pupils in Year 3 also made good progress when improving their figure drawing, because the teacher broke the tasks into small steps. However, few pupils in the older classes know how to vary pencil strokes, or add shade and texture. Year 5 pupils draw their favourite items, but many of them do not observe closely enough so their representations are careless and bare little resemblance to the subject. Year 6 pupils know how to show a human figure moving into different positions, but only more able pupils can show this realistically, and the work of others tends to be cartoon-type images.

106. The art work on display around the school shows that pupils satisfactorily use paint and paper in different ways, make collages using card, tissue and fabrics, and make hats and masks. They have some opportunities to make three-dimensional models, for example using card to make a model of a chair and air-dried clay to make textured pots and tiles. Pupils learn how to produce repeating patterns on the computer, and many Year 2 pupils show good use of colour when working in the style of the artist Jackson Pollack. In other subjects, pupils use their art and design skills well. Year 2 pupils drew bright pictures of spiders after writing the story of 'Anansi the spider' in a literacy lesson and made a good three-dimensional display to support the Happy and Healthy campaign. Year 3 pupils produced intricately detailed drawings of an Egyptian mummy for a history topic and made masks, necklaces and hats as part of a multi-cultural carnival theme. This followed a visit to the school by a group of artists, which helped to broaden the pupils' experience of art from different cultures. Year 6 pupils made links with the traditional local industry when they carefully observed how the famous local artist, Clarice Cliffe used colour and then designed plates in a similar style.

107. Pupils enjoy their activities. They respond well to opportunities to work in different, mixed ability groups and support each other with useful ideas and suggestions. The classroom assistants are well deployed to help different groups of pupils during lessons.

108. The standard of pupils' work indicates that teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Some good teaching was observed during the inspection when effective introductions and clear explanations ensured that pupils knew what to do. Teachers now follow closely the school's programme of work for pupils in each year and so build on their previous experiences. Skilful questions help pupils to think about how to improve their work. Sometimes, teachers do not have high enough expectations of what their pupils can do. On these occasions, work is careless and unfinished, and pupils are not given enough direction to help them develop their skills of observation.

109. The leadership and management are satisfactory. The curriculum leader has recently taken on responsibility and has already made clear plans to develop the subject. She checks teachers' lesson plans, but has had no opportunity to check the quality of teaching. Samples of pupils' work are kept to show the standards they should achieve, and to ensure that they have covered all areas of the curriculum. This aspect is not sufficiently developed to show how pupils' ideas in every class should build on their knowledge and skills by working with a wide variety of media in order to develop their creative and expressive ideas. Overall improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Strengths

- Pupils have good opportunities to investigate and solve problems in lessons.
- Teachers have good knowledge of the subject and provide good resources for their pupils.
- They frequently remind pupils to use tools and materials safely and carefully.

Area for improvement

- More practice in using basic tools.
- More rigorous monitoring of teaching to identify areas for development.

110. Standards are as expected for pupils in Year 2 and Year 6. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when the attainment of the pupils at the end of Year 2 was below that expected for their age. Pupils of all ages make satisfactory progress. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by teaching assistants who help them to complete their work. Potentially talented pupils have opportunities to pursue their ideas and designs independently and teachers check that those pupils who speak English as their second language understand what they are expected to do. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory over time in the school.

111. In Year 2, pupils designed a vehicle and assembled wheels and axles in a variety of ways after examining a selection of model cars to find out how they work. Pupils chose suitable materials and produced well-made cars, vans and trucks, carefully finished to a good standard. Year 4 pupils designed money holders made from fabric in one very good lesson. They went through the design process thoroughly, first looking at commercially made purses and considering which materials would be most suitable to hold money securely, then experimenting with different ways to decorate their purse. The teacher challenged the pupils to set themselves a target to try a new skill, either sewing, knitting, weaving or batik, and they responded enthusiastically. At the end of the lesson, their evaluations recognised that they needed more practice in each area in order to make a quality product. All classes designed and made banners using fabric and paint to support the “Happy and healthy” campaign and the colourful results are well displayed in the school hall. After studying various structures around the school to see how they were strengthened, Year 6 pupils were challenged to design a structure that would support the weight of an imaginary guinea pig. The challenge was increased when they were given a limited range of materials to do this with, and they developed some ingenious solutions. There were, however, weaknesses in the work of some pupils who did not complete their tasks with enough care, and their structures were not well made.

112. In the three lessons observed during the inspection, teaching and learning were very good in two lessons, and good in the other. Evidence from the scrutiny of pupils’ work and discussion with pupils about their design and technology activities, leads to a judgement that the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, but with some good features in Years 1, 2 and 4. When teaching is good, teachers are secure in their subject knowledge and make very good use of probing questions to challenge pupils’ thinking and move learning on to the next stage. Good planning provides realistic situations for pupils to investigate and solve, using a good variety of resources, which helps in developing pupils’ skills. Frequent reminders are given about the safe and correct use of tools and materials. Teaching assistants and volunteer helpers are used well and provide unobtrusive support for all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs work alongside their classmates in mixed groups and become a little more independent in their learning and not so dependent on the support of the teaching assistant. When teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve, the pupils do not always complete their designs or work with sufficient care. Although they often have good ideas, some pupils need more practice with basic tools, such as scissors, to improve their control in order to carry out their designs.

113. Pupils enjoy their projects, and generally work with enthusiasm. They behave well in lessons because they are involved in the learning activities, and are helpful towards each other, offering constructive criticisms and ideas for improvement.

114. Management of the subject is satisfactory. Two members of staff are temporarily leading the subject because there is no curriculum leader in post. The school follows national guidelines for teaching, which ensure pupils have opportunities to develop and communicate their design ideas and skills, use a range of tools and aim to improve their products. There has been no monitoring of teaching to determine areas for improvement, but the staff have looked at pupils’ design products to ensure standards are consistent. The school’s digital camera is well used to maintain a record of pupils’ work. The development of pupils’ literacy and numeracy skills through design and technology lessons could be more effective. Overall improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory.

HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY

Strengths

- Pupils achieve well
- Teaching is good
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and behaviour is good.

- Geography and history make very good contributions to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Areas for improvement

- Slow pace in parts of some lessons
- Overuse of worksheets
- Ineffective use of assessment

115. As at the time of the previous inspection, standards in Year 2 are broadly average. In Year 6 standards are securely in line with those found in most schools. The vast majority of pupils achieve well in acquiring skills of geographical and historical enquiry and in developing their knowledge of places and of the past. The school organises the curriculum so that all pupils are fully included and are given suitable opportunities for learning. Pupils with special educational needs are supported effectively in class and make good progress alongside their peers. Staff take care to ensure that the very few pupils who speak English as an additional language receive the help they need to learn successfully and that potentially gifted pupils are sufficiently challenged.

116. In geography in Year 2, pupils make first hand observations of physical and human features on a walk in the locality. They accurately identify differences between their surroundings in Fenton and the rural landscape and setting of a Scottish island. They do not express views on environmental features or consider ways in which people influence the world around them. During the inspection, Year 2 pupils were just beginning to draw maps of the island showing features like the bay, houses, trees and river. They are starting to become aware of the use of symbols and of a key. By the time they reach Year 6 pupils have sound knowledge of the water cycle and how it affects everyday lives. They use a range of maps and plans to study the local area and locations further afield. Their knowledge of the different stages in a river's journey to the sea is sound. More able pupils use subject specific language like tributary and estuary accurately. The vast majority of pupils are becoming independent in using a range of sources including computers, books, videos and maps to research a topic on a large river of their own choice. They propose suitable questions to further their study on river use and navigation. Their ability to generalise from findings and describe geographical patterns is not well developed.

117. Scrutiny of pupils' work in history and discussion with pupils currently at the beginning of Year 3 indicate that by the end of Year 2 pupils acquire a sound sense of the past and of change over time. Their description of the cause and course of the Great Fire of London shows sound knowledge of the city and of life at the time. Pupils are aware of different ways of collecting evidence from people, objects and pictures to investigate the past. They know that Samuel Pepys' Diary is an important historical source because it contains a first hand account of events. In Year 6, pupils show adequate knowledge of aspects of past societies studied, including the Romans, Saxons, Tudors and Victorians. They make relevant comparisons between aspects of Victorian society and life today. They make good use of sources such as census returns, artefacts, video and CD-ROM to investigate the past. More able pupils explain how some sources are more reliable than others and consider bias. Their knowledge of the role of archaeologists is weak.

118. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Teachers' planning follows national guidance and particular emphasis is rightly given to the step-by-step teaching of skills. Relationships are very good. Teachers use praise and encouragement judiciously to promote confidence and raise pupils' aspirations. Pupils respond well to this positive management. They behave responsibly and work co-operatively. Teachers are skilled in asking questions, which make pupils think and so extend their ideas. When pupils in Year 4 were scrutinising portraits of Henry VIII for clues to his lifestyle the teacher's question, "How do you know he was wealthy?" rather than "Was he wealthy?" ensured pupils considered and justified their observations. In geography in the juniors, particularly good use is made of ICT. Pupils use the Internet to carry out research with some independence. In Year 6, homework is used effectively to enable pupils to produce in-depth projects. Teachers organise successful field studies and interesting visits in the locality, which increase understanding and bring the subjects to life. Sometimes learning slows when parts of lessons proceed at a slow pace. This

happens when introductions go on too long and pupils become restless and lose concentration. When group work does not fully motivate pupils, particularly through overuse of uninspiring worksheets, they work in leisurely fashion.

119. The subjects make a very good contribution to pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. For instance, in geography, pupils consider the effects of pollution and conservation. In history, pupils learn about issues like the position of women in society by studying the role of women in World War II or education in Ancient Greece. However, the development of literacy skills through these two subjects is in early stages of development, for example Year 6 pupils took notes as they watched a video, and Year 2 pupils wrote a postcard to describe features of Fenton. The scrutiny of the previous year's work showed too much reliance on worksheets, an issue the school is now working to remedy. Opportunities are missed to develop links with numeracy. Assessment procedures are in place at the end of each topic but best use is not made of the information gathered to plan future work.

120. Management of the subjects is satisfactory. The curriculum leaders are beginning to check on standards by monitoring teachers' plans and by building up portfolios of assessed work. Improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Strengths

- Pupils make good progress.
- Teaching is good. Teachers have secure knowledge, plan and organise lessons well and manage pupils effectively.
- Good and developing links with other subjects.
- The information and communication technology suite is used well.
- Good availability of the Internet and a very good range of software.

Areas for improvement

- The scheme of work does not respond to all the needs of the school.
- Absence of a checklist to identify hierarchy of skills.
- Sharing of machines slows progress in some circumstances.
- Pupils are not encouraged to use both hands when operating the keyboard.

121 By the end of Years 2 and 6 pupils' skills are broadly in line with those expected for the pupils' ages and they achieve well as the teaching is good. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are well supported by teaching assistants and make good progress. Potentially gifted pupils make the same rate of progress as their peers as they have extension activities to provide further challenge in lessons. This is a good improvement on the findings of the previous inspection. Effective use is made of the ICT suite, which is visited by all classes on a regular weekly basis and, is used for extra-curricular activities before and after school. Pupils are given satisfactory opportunities to practise their skills using the computers in the classrooms where ICT is used effectively to support learning in other subjects, for example in science, history, geography, English, and art and design. In mathematics, religious education and music, better use could be made of pupils' ICT skills and the resources to support their learning.

122. All groups of pupils are making good progress by Year 2. They confidently log on and use the mouse skilfully to activate and display menus and then click on the desired application in the table of contents. Younger pupils operate keyboards, successfully using command and alphabet keys to write their names and spell words. More able pupils begin to form sentences. All pupils control the mouse adeptly to click on two-dimensional shapes, 'lifting and dragging' them to form sets of triangles and rectangles during their work in mathematics.

123. This effective use of ICT and good rate of progress in developing pupils' skills is continued in Years 3 to 6, where Year 4 pupils activate the Stoke on Trent 'Intranet' to access information about The Tudors as part of their historical studies. Year 5 pupils use word processing accurately to create poems and then operate the 'toolbar' to access software to develop artistic images and create repeating patterns. The oldest pupils successfully input information about the school environment onto spreadsheets. This includes daily temperature changes, times of journeys to school and the mode of travel. They activate suitable software to analyse this information through the compiling of bar graphs and pie charts. However, there are no resources to support work in music.

124. The quality of teaching and learning is good. In lessons seen in the computer suite teaching was always good or very good. Occasionally it was excellent. Teachers confidently use the computer suite to teach specific skills, often linking them with an ongoing classroom project. In a lesson with Year 2 pupils, the teacher repeatedly questioned the children asking them what she had to do to log on. She followed their instructions to open the computer. This activity reinforced the knowledge and skills they had learned previously. Pupils were very clear on what they were to learn. Good use of time ensured that pupils were given a clear demonstration of how to use a mouse to select from a toolbar. They then used this technique to experiment with vertical and horizontal lines and shapes to create patterns in the style of artists such as Malevich and Riley. They quickly and enthusiastically rose to the challenge of the task, creating unique patterns of their own using lines of different thickness and a good range of contrasting shapes. Almost all pupils completed this task with the more able working with greater depth, detail and accuracy to change the thickness of boundary lines, incorporating trapezium shapes into their work. These children automatically save and print their work without the need for any instructions or direction.

125. Pupils in Year 4 build effectively on these skills when they create a pattern, which they successfully colour, copy and then drag and position to make a repeating pattern. The teacher provides clear written instructions to ensure that the pupils can access the program and work at their own rate. One third of the class immediately create a design, use line tools to enclose it and change the size and shape of the brush tool to fill in segments of their patterns. Time is organised well to ensure they all complete the tasks. Lower attaining pupils receive good support from the well-informed teaching assistant. The very good collaboration between pupils sharing machines ensures that they all make good progress to achieve the desired result. The new learning is reinforced well towards the end of the lesson. Here the teacher carefully questions pupils, asking them to explain how they operated the computer to check their understanding. Accurate vocabulary is expected of the pupils who work hard to explain what they have learned and accomplished.

126. Good links with science are established when Year 5 pupils are taught how to use a spreadsheet to record their investigations into pulse rate. The teacher's clear initial explanations ensure that the pupils know what is expected of them. Thoughtful planning ensures that sufficient time is available to enable children to complete the tasks. However, many pupils are using only one hand to enter numbers and text on the keyboard. This slows down the process.

127. Year 6 pupils are fully challenged by the task to create a multi-media presentation incorporating the use of original text and pictures of previous work produced by using the digital camera. The very good and positive relationship between the teacher and the class enabled a collaborative atmosphere to emerge where children help and support each other. Brief explanations and demonstrations enable pupils to call up photographic images, adjust their size and shape. They revise skills previously learned and type sentences and paragraphs into text boxes that they placed alongside the images. More able pupils are challenged to use the sound library application to animate their presentation, showing very good understanding of the use of timing devices to configure a slide show. This very good progress is achieved because the teacher has planned the lesson very carefully, has ensured that the machines are in good working order and has created an ideal learning environment. In these circumstances pupils display the highest levels of confidence and are prepared to experiment. The teacher supports pupils who have difficulty, using questions and discussion to help them work out the procedures. Pupils enjoy their work and are prepared to talk about how they completed it.

128. There have been good improvements in the subject since the previous inspection. The school has responded well to the requirement to extend the subject and incorporate the use of computers into all subjects, and the developments have been well led and managed.

129. Teachers are confident to use the ICT suite. The school has adopted national guidelines for teaching all aspects of the subject, which help teachers to plan lessons with clear learning aims. However, the guidelines have not been amended to meet the specific requirements of the pupils. Assessment procedures are currently basic and identify pupils doing better or not as well as expected, but are not recorded in a way which shows clearly the development of pupils' skills and knowledge, although this is planned. The fact that some pupils have to share a machine in the suite has a slowing effect on the progress they make and many children do not attempt to type text using both hands. All computers in the suite are networked and there is Internet availability in all classrooms, which enables pupils to search for information in lessons as appropriate. The subject is supported well by a full range of software.

MUSIC

Strengths

- Pupils enjoy all musical activities particularly singing.
- Teachers make good use of their own singing and playing talents to the benefit of the pupils. They focus on techniques such as diction and improved breathing to help pupils improve their singing.

Areas for improvement

- Composing and using notation are weaker elements in pupils' knowledge and understanding of music.

130. By the time pupils reach Years 2 and 6, the standards they attain are in line with those expected nationally, and they achieve satisfactorily, which was also the position at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils with special educational needs, those for whom English is a second language and potentially talented musicians also make satisfactory progress and participate fully in all music making activities.

131. It was not possible to observe any lessons for infant pupils during the inspection, but their singing was heard during school assemblies. The music co-ordinator uses her musical skills well when she teaches one lesson a week with each junior class. Pupils learn to listen to and appreciate a range of musical styles in lessons with their class teacher. Support staff make a good contribution by joining in all activities, and helping pupils to sing and play. The curriculum leader is working hard to improve pupils' ability to compose simple tunes as limited experiences in recent years means pupils do not find it easy to create, express and record musical ideas. Lessons begin as the pupils enter the room, clicking their fingers in time to a lively tune on CD as a warm-up exercise. Year 3 pupils improved their ability to maintain the beat of a tune, and used untuned percussion instruments to compose a simple rhythm. Whilst they clearly have experience of playing the instruments, they did not fully explore and experiment with the range of sounds each instrument can make. In a good lesson in Year 6, pupils quickly learned how to recognise the change from 4 beats to 2 beats and back when the teacher used a 'Follow my leader' game. Pupils in this age group know how to improvise their own rhythm, and perform their simple compositions with confidence, but a few pupils find it difficult to sustain the beat.

132. Pupils improve their singing by practising breathing exercises to help them reach higher notes, and they learn to sing clearly with good diction. They know how to sing songs in two parts, do so successfully and enjoy the experience of singing with large groups in school assemblies.

133. In addition to lessons, hymn practices and singing in assembly, a number of pupils take the opportunity to join the school choir, although more girls than boys undertake this voluntary activity. A few pupils who are identified as gifted and talented have the opportunity to sing with the City Music School Training choir. There is a recorder club and some pupils have attended the City Recorder Festival where they had the chance to play alongside a well-known professional musician. Both the City Music School and the Glyndebourne Opera have performed and organised workshops for the pupils in school, broadening pupils' experience of music beyond the curriculum.

134. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Some examples of good teaching were observed where teachers used their own musical abilities well to demonstrate in order to help pupils improve their techniques. For example, one teacher made good use of her voice to show how the pitch of a tune can vary. Pupils hear the music of different composers as they enter the hall for assembly, and knew they were listening to Ravel's Bolero. When they learn the song 'Shalom' from the Jewish faith, they find out that the word means peace. Music supports other subjects, for example Year 4 pupils listen to Tudor music when they study that period in history. Recently, each class performed a song from the musical 'Grease' in a concert held in school, giving them good experience of singing in a large group in front of an audience.

135. The leadership and management of music are now good. A new co-ordinator with music qualifications has very recently taken over responsibility for the subject, and already has clear ideas about how she intends to develop music and raise standards. She has made some assessment of the skills, knowledge and experience of the pupils and knows which areas need improving, for example, pupils' ability to compose and record their work. There is a good scheme of work for teachers to use when planning lessons. There are currently no computer programs for music in school, but pupils may make tapes to record their work. Resources for music are satisfactory, and the recent purchase of more small instruments means that each pupil can have an instrument in lessons.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Strengths

- Good leadership.
- Teaching is good overall.
- Attainment is above expected levels in swimming.
- Pupils make good progress in dance and games.
- The curriculum is supported well by a good range of extra-curricular activities.

Areas for improvement

- Teachers' analysis of pupils' attainments are recorded but are not always used to help plan the next step in their learning.

136. Standards in Year 2 are average for the pupils' ages and rise slightly above by the end of Year 6. Their achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and is good in Years 3 to 6, where the wide range of extra-curricular experiences enables them to make more rapid progress in developing their skills and the teaching is good. Standards have improved from those found at the time of the previous inspection. There is no difference in the attainment of pupils from different minority ethnic groups, with special educational needs or for those who speak English as an additional language. No gymnastics lessons were observed during the inspection but pupils were observed practising their games and dance skills.

137. Pupils undertake swimming lessons in Years 2 to 6 and by the time they leave the school over 95 per cent are able to swim 25 metres. All the Year 6 pupils who left the school in July 2002 had achieved this standard and a few children had embarked on the National Personal Survival Awards Schemes. These excellent standards reflect the careful record keeping of the co-ordinator, enabling the pupils' progress to be monitored with extra help given to those who are not making sufficient progress.

138. The teaching and learning seen during the inspection were good overall. All lessons seen were in Years 3 to 6, but pupils' skills in Year 3, and their physical skills observed at playtimes indicate teaching to be at least satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. In a dance lesson with Year 6 pupils the teaching was very good. Lessons are well planned with clear learning aims that challenge pupils to practise and develop their skills. Energetic warm ups ensure that pupils are able to increase the tempo of their work in the main part of the lessons. Pupils are managed well and are challenged to work at a good pace thus ensuring that their heart rates are increased. Children are given good opportunities to demonstrate their dance routines and their ability to throw a ball to a team mate and then move to an open space to receive it back. The demonstrations and opportunities for pupils to discuss their routines, help others to improve their skills. Teachers build good progression into lessons enabling children to develop and improve their dance routines, and extend their throwing and catching skills for co-operative games practises to competitive small-sided games activities. Pupils enjoy their lessons. They work hard and accept the rules when they play competitive games. Learning support assistants make good contributions to lessons, working with pupils with special educational needs who are physically challenged to ensure that they take an active part in the activities.

139. Pupils make good progress in their dance in Years 3 to 6. They respond to a good range of music to create and perform repertoires and patterns associated with Tudor Times. In games lessons they make up and play small-sided games, using skills and tactics to apply basic techniques of attacking and defending. They sustain their interest well to keep the game going.

140. The school organises an annual residential activity where all junior pupils are involved in team building programmes as they complete orienteering tasks and map reading exercises. A good range of clubs is available to enable children to follow their interests.

141. The curriculum, leader has produced a good scheme of work based on national guidelines. She has identified a good range of sports coaches and experts to visit the school and work with pupils to enhance their expertise. Teachers analyse and record the achievements made by the pupils at the end of a programme of work. However, they do not use this valuable information as a basis to plan the next series of lessons.

142. Teachers' skills have been evaluated. Where further development has been required a programme of team teaching has been organised to provide the necessary confidence and skills. The enthusiasm, diligent work and effective leadership of the subject has led to good improvement since the previous inspection.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Strengths

- The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development.
- Effective use of artefacts to aid learning;
- Good contribution from visitors and from visits.

Areas for improvement

- Raising standards by the end of Year 6;
- Covering the curriculum in more depth in Years 3 to 6 to enable pupils to reach the targets set in locally agreed syllabus;
- Increasing opportunities for independent research, including use of computing skills.

143. Only one lesson was observed in Years 3 to 6 and so judgements for these pupils are based on the one lesson seen, on work in the pupils' books and on discussion with some of the older pupils. At the end of Year 2 standards are in line with the targets set by the locally agreed syllabus, but by the end of Year 6 standards are below those expected and have declined since the previous inspection. This is due to insufficient depth of coverage of the subject in recent years as the school moved

between following the locally agreed syllabus and recent national guidelines. However, planning for the beginning of the current year shows a more satisfactory situation with teachers following the targets and recommendations of the locally agreed syllabus more closely. This is too recent to have had an impact on standards for older pupils.

144. All pupils achieve satisfactorily in Years 1 and 2, through completing a sound range of activities and receiving good support in lessons. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by teaching assistants who ensure they understand the main points of lessons and complete their work. Achievement over time is unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6 because of the limited amount of work covered, which affects pupils' learning. Very little work was recorded in the previous year to show what pupils knew and to help them improve their literacy skills. Whilst teachers assess pupils' progress in individual topics satisfactorily, there is not yet a common format for using this information to highlight the rate of progress over time. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language make the same rate of progress as their peers.

145. By the end of Year 2 pupils have a sound understanding of Christianity and several elements of Judaism and Hinduism. They know several bible stories and can compare the biblical version of the creation with the corresponding Hindu story. They understand the purpose of places of worship and have visited a church and a synagogue to enliven their knowledge, and are aware of common features. Pupils extend their literacy skills well as they record their answers and their thoughts for example in composing their own prayers when making their Torah scrolls.

146. By the end of Year 6 pupils can name and show great respect for a variety of world faiths. They can identify Jesus and Muhammad in their respective roles in Christianity and Islam but discussions with older pupils show their understanding of the tenets and customs related to the world faiths are very insecure. The last inspection reported that there was limited written work, and examination of pupils' books for the past year shows this still to be the case overall. However, the work completed recently in Year 3, including writing a newspaper report headlined, "Jesus the Miracle Man," and work in Year 5 related to aspects of Judaism, indicates a more positive picture.

147. The teaching and learning seen were satisfactory overall. Teachers use questions skilfully to encourage pupils to think and to examine their own feelings. This was seen in a Year 1 lesson about Harvest when pupils were encouraged to consider where food comes from before it reaches the local supermarket and also to talk about the importance of saying thank you for God's gifts. There is good use made of artefacts and simple resources to help understanding, for example in the Year 3 lesson about the Passover, pupils handle a Seder plate. They sample the appropriate variety of food in conjunction with the story of Moses to promote an appreciation of the significance of the special food. Some shortcomings in learning are evident in Year 6, where not enough time is given to the subject to enable pupils to examine or write about the topics in sufficient depth. In general, teachers do not plan enough opportunities for pupils to carry out their own research using books or the computer.

148. Teaching and learning are enhanced by the contribution made by visitors such as the local priest and by visits to places of worship. Teachers use the subject well to promote pupils' personal development. They emphasise a respect and empathy with different religious faiths and give opportunities for pupils to reflect on wider issues such as suffering as they read excerpts from 'The Diary of Anne Frank'. They also foster a deep appreciation of the natural world through discussions and practical contributions to the school environment.

149. With the appointment of a new curriculum leader, management of the subject is satisfactory. Good efforts are being made to promote continuity and to extend coverage of the subject by following the recommendations of the locally agreed syllabus. The curriculum leader has undertaken training to gain more knowledge about the range of places to visit locally and also to build a range of appropriate assessment tasks. However, this has been too recent to have an impact on standards. Improvement since the previous inspection is unsatisfactory.

