

INSPECTION REPORT

LODGE FARM PRIMARY SCHOOL

Stevenage

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 132091

Headteacher: Mr C Tapscott

Reporting inspector: Mrs A M Grainger
20782

Dates of inspection: 28th October – 1st November 2002

Inspection number: 248896

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:	Mobbsbury Way Chells Stevenage Hertfordshire
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr A Fenton
Date of previous inspection:	N/A

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
20782	Mrs A M Grainger	Registered inspector		What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
19664	Mr J Bayliss	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?
10808	Mr A Britton	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History Music	
25203	Mr R Cooke	Team inspector	English Art and design Physical education Educational inclusion Special educational needs English as an additional language	
23610	Mrs J Denton	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Information and communication technology Design and technology	
23385	Miss S Gerred	Team inspector	Science Religious education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Lodge Farm Primary School is situated in the Chells area of Stevenage. It opened in September 2000 following the amalgamation of the separate Lodge Farm infant and junior schools. The school is above average in size, with 185 boys and 203 girls attending full-time and a further 25 boys and 26 girls who are part-time in the nursery. Only a few pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. A few have English as an additional language, but none is at an early stage of learning English. Thirteen per cent of pupils are identified as having special educational needs, which is below average. Most pupils with special educational needs have learning difficulties. There are two intakes to the nursery each year, in September and January. Taking the intake as a whole, children's attainment when they start school is average in relation to the expectations for their age.

There have been many changes of teachers since the school opened two years ago. A third of the teachers joined the school in September 2002. The school is involved in the training of teachers with the University of Hertfordshire and the school-based graduate teacher-training programme. The Investors in People Award was achieved 18 months after the school opened.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils and has some good features, such as in the care for pupils' personal wellbeing and in the partnership with parents. Pupils make satisfactory progress as they move up through the school in all the required subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. The standards in English, mathematics and science are average, and as expected nationally in all other subjects. Good standards are achieved in pupils' attitudes, behaviour, relationships and attendance. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, with many instances of good and better teaching in lessons. There is satisfactory attention to ensuring that all pupils are fully included and have equal access to the opportunities provided by the school. The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory, as is the value for money provided.

What the school does well

- Pupils respond well to the school's high expectations of their attitudes and behaviour. They get on well with each other and with the adults in school.
- The provision for pupils' social and moral development is good.
- A good range of additional activities is provided, such as clubs and residential visits.
- There is good attention to pupils' personal wellbeing. As a result, pupils are happy and confident at school.
- The partnership with parents is good.
- The headteacher provides a clear educational direction and is committed to raising standards and improving the school's provision.

What could be improved

- Standards in practical and investigative science are below those expected nationally when pupils reach Year 6, although science standards are average overall.
- The learning opportunities in the nursery do not always have a clear enough purpose.
- The assessment of pupils' attainment and progress is unsatisfactory. As a result, work is not always well enough matched to all pupils' needs, particularly those of pupils with potential for higher attainment.
- The role of the deputy headteacher is not adequately focused on significant areas of leadership and management.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

This is the first inspection of Lodge Farm Primary School.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	N/A	C	D	D
mathematics	N/A	C	D	D
science	N/A	C	C	C

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

Pupils' results in the National Curriculum tests in 2002 were close to the national average in science, but below the national average in English and mathematics. The same picture is seen when the results are compared with those achieved by schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. These results were lower than those of the previous year. The evidence from the inspection of pupils' school work is that standards, at this point in Year 6, are average in all three of these key subjects, returning the school to the position of 2001. Even though science standards are average overall, they are below the expected standard in practical and investigative science. This is a result of inconsistency in the teaching of this particular aspect of science.

In the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 in 2002, pupils' performance was above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. It was also above average compared with the results achieved by schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. These results were much better than those of 2001, when the mathematics results were well below the national average. The school work of pupils now in Year 2 shows standards that are average in all three of these areas at this point. It also shows science standards as average, matching the assessments teachers made of pupils' science work in 2002.

The variation in standards in Years 2 and 6 from one year to another mainly reflects differences in year groups of pupils rather than any change in the quality of the school's provision. However, some effective action has been taken to raise mathematics standards. In Years 2 and 6, boys and girls achieve equally well in mathematics and science. Although girls tend to do better than the boys in the tests in English, there is no evidence that girls make better progress than boys. The school is setting appropriately challenging targets for the improvement of English and mathematics standards in Year 6 and is making satisfactory progress towards them.

In all the other subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education, pupils make satisfactory progress as they move up from Year 1 to Year 6. Children in the nursery and reception classes make satisfactory progress, with good progress in the specific areas of personal, social and emotional development, speaking and listening, and scientific knowledge and understanding. Most children are on course to achieve the expected standards in all areas of learning at the end of the reception year. In the specific areas in which progress is good, a good proportion of children are likely to exceed the expected standards. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs and the few with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy school and are keen to learn. They show good levels of interest in all that goes on in lessons and more widely in school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. The school is a calm and orderly community. Break and lunchtimes are pleasant social occasions.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Boys and girls and pupils of all ages mix well. They work co-operatively in lessons and play amicably together. Pupils are friendly, and also courteous and polite in their relationships with the adults in school. They respond positively to opportunities for responsibility and undertake allocated duties conscientiously.
Attendance	Good. Attendance is above the national average. Pupils arrive punctually at school in the mornings.

Pupils' good attitudes, behaviour, relationships, and response to opportunities for responsibility, together with their good attendance, all help to create a climate supportive of learning.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

During the inspection, 79 lessons were observed. Teaching and learning were satisfactory or better in 75 lessons seen. In 23 lessons, teaching and learning were good, and in six they were very good. Examples of good teaching were seen in all year groups. Three poor lessons were seen in one Year 1 class and one unsatisfactory lesson in the nursery. In the most effective lessons, teachers meet all pupils' needs well and have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Teachers focus clearly on what they want pupils to learn. Pupils and activities are managed well by almost all teachers.

More widely, the school meets all pupils' needs satisfactorily, but pupils with potential for higher attainment are not always well enough challenged. The overall quality of teaching and learning in English and mathematics, including the basics of literacy and numeracy, is satisfactory. Teaching and learning in all other subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education are also satisfactory. The result is that standards are average in Years 2 and 6. While science teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, the teaching of practical and investigative science is inconsistent in Years 3 to 6. Standards are below those expected in Year 6 as a result. The teachers of pupils in Year 6 are, however, focusing on rectifying the weaknesses in pupils' understanding and skills in this area.

In the nursery and reception classes, teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Teaching and learning are good in personal, social and emotional development, in speaking and listening and in the development of early scientific knowledge and understanding. As a result, children achieve well in these specific aspects. Activities in the nursery that have the direct leadership of an adult are satisfactorily focused on what the children are expected to learn. Those provided as part of a range from which

children choose are not always planned with enough attention to what it is intended that children will learn. The result is that there are missed opportunities to extend children's learning through play and other activities in which they are involved.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. All the required areas of learning for children in the nursery and reception classes are covered. Learning opportunities in the nursery are clearly focused when led by an adult, but the purpose is less clear in free-choice activities. In Years 1 to 6, all the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education are taught, although the provision for practical and investigative science is inconsistent. The time allocated for teaching is below the recommended minimum. Higher attaining pupils are not always well enough challenged. A good range of additional activities is provided.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. Pupils' needs are identified and appropriate targets are set in key areas such as literacy. When support assistants are present in lessons they are normally deployed to help these pupils so that they make satisfactory progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. Although no pupil is at an early stage of learning English, the school is sensitive to these pupils' needs. They are fully integrated into all activities.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Good. A strong emphasis is placed on pupils' social and moral development in lessons and through the range of additional activities provided. The difference between right and wrong is taught clearly. Assemblies and religious education contribute satisfactorily to pupils' spiritual development. While pupils are given insight into their own cultural heritage, there are few planned opportunities for the development of their awareness of the diversity of modern multi-cultural Britain.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactorily. The school cares well for pupils on a personal level, providing a climate in which they feel happy and confident. Appropriate attention is given to ensuring race equality. However, the procedures for assessing pupils' academic attainment and progress are unsatisfactory.

The school works well in partnership with parents to promote pupils' learning at home and at school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory overall. The headteacher provides a clear educational direction and is committed to improving provision and raising standards. The large senior management team gives satisfactory support in the day-to-day management of the school and in some areas of leadership. However, the role of the deputy headteacher is not well enough linked to significant areas of leadership and management.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactorily. Governors are adequately involved in shaping the direction of the school and are very supportive of the headteacher and staff. They understand the school's strengths. However, they are not always sufficiently evaluative of what the school does in order to challenge it to greater effectiveness.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. An appropriate range of strategies is used to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching and the curriculum. The headteacher is well

	aware of the main strengths and areas for improvement in teaching.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. All resources are carefully targeted on supporting priorities for pupils' education. The weaker element is in the evaluation of the effectiveness of the spending decisions made. Satisfactory consideration is given to whether the school provides best value for pupils and their parents.

The school has a good number of teachers and support staff and good accommodation to support pupils' learning. There are sufficient resources for 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"> • Their children like school. • The school's expectations of their children. • The quality of teaching and the progress their children make. • Their children are helped to be more mature and responsible. • Pupils' good behaviour. • The approachability of the school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The information provided on their children's progress. • The amount of homework. Some feel there is too much, and others that there is too little. • The range of activities outside lessons.

Inspection evidence supports parents' positive views. The evidence does not support the negative views of some parents, although pupils' annual reports are not specific about how well they are performing in all subjects. The range of activities outside lessons is good. The amount of homework is similar to that provided in most primary schools, with some good examples in Years 3 to 6.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Pupils' results in the end of Year 6 National Curriculum tests in 2002 were close to the national average in science, but below the national average in English and mathematics. The same picture is seen when the results are compared with those achieved by schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. These results were not as good as those of 2001. However, the evidence from the inspection of pupils' school work shows that standards are average again at this point in Year 6. The variation in standards from one year to the next largely reflects differences in year groups of pupils. However, in mathematics, effective action has also been taken to raise standards. While standards are average now in all three of these important subjects, they are lower than expected for pupils of this age in the specific aspect of practical and investigative science. Although pupils entered Year 6 with below average understanding and skills in this area, the two Year 6 teachers are focusing carefully on rectifying this. Pupils now in Years 3 to 6, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language, are making satisfactory progress in English, mathematics and science. However, progress in practical and investigative science is inconsistent, with not all teachers giving enough attention to this area. The school is setting appropriately challenging targets for the improvement of standards in English and mathematics, and is making satisfactory progress towards them.
2. In the end of Year 2 tests in 2002, pupils' results were above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. They were also above average when compared with the results achieved by schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. The 2002 results were much better than those achieved in 2001. At this point in Year 2, standards seen in pupils' school work are average in all three areas. That standards at present are not as high as those shown by the 2002 tests is simply a reflection of the variation in year groups of pupils. In 2002, teachers assessed pupils' performance in science as average. The evidence from the inspection of pupils' school work shows that standards in science are much the same now, and are also average. Pupils in Years 1 and 2, including those with special educational needs, are making satisfactory progress in English, mathematics and science. No pupil in these two year groups has English as an additional language. Consequently, no judgement is provided on this group of pupils for this particular age range.
3. Boys and girls achieve equally well in mathematics and science in Years 2 and 6. Although girls tend to do better than boys in the English tests, there is no evidence that girls make better progress than boys over time. The data for children's attainment on entry to the school shows that girls are generally ahead of boys when they start in the nursery.
4. Taking the intake as a whole, children's attainment on entry to the nursery is average in relation to the expectations for their age. Overall progress through the nursery and reception year is satisfactory, with good progress in the specific areas of personal, social and emotional development, speaking and listening, and scientific knowledge and understanding. The good progress in these specific areas is a direct result of good teaching. While progress is satisfactory overall in other aspects of communication, language and literacy, mathematical, creative and physical development and knowledge and understanding of the world, it is reduced in the nursery when the planned activities do not have a clear enough focus for learning. This is normally at times when children select activities from a range provided, rather than when there is direct teaching of a particular activity.
5. Children in the reception year speak confidently and clearly, using a good vocabulary. When answering questions, many give reasons for their responses. They listen attentively to adults and to their classmates. All children handle books carefully and correctly turn the pages in sequence. They use the pictures to tell the story and recognise a few simple, frequently used words. The highest attaining children read simple texts fluently and use letter sounds to help work out words

they do not recognise. Almost all reception class children write their own name and hold a pencil in a correct and comfortable way. All have some early writing skills. Many include some recognisable letters and those who are higher attaining write simple words. All children are starting to write numerals correctly. Most work confidently with numbers up to five or nine. The higher attaining ones work with numbers up to 20, a few recognising higher numbers. Higher attaining children carry out simple addition and subtraction activities. They have the expected understanding for their age of shape, space and measures and mathematical concepts such as 'more than' and 'less than'.

6. Year 2 pupils generally respond confidently to opportunities to speak to an audience in lessons and during assemblies. They listen carefully to their teachers and to each other. Many pupils, even those who are lower attaining, approach reading activities with confidence. They competently look at the pictures for clues about words and sound out letters to work out a word that they do not recognise. The highest attaining pupils have good skills in reading comprehension. Those that are lower attaining recognise some familiar words and are interested in the events in stories. Although writing standards are average, this area of English is relatively weaker than other areas. Pupils write for a satisfactory range of purposes; for example, descriptions of things that have happened to them, lists and answers to questions. Spelling, punctuation and grammar are of an adequate standard, but there are some weaknesses in these areas. Very few pupils are starting to join their handwriting. Pupils have a satisfactory awareness of odd and even numbers and the place value of digits. Most sequence numbers to 100. A few, however, write numbers incorrectly. Higher attaining pupils use their knowledge of addition and subtraction to solve simple problems and are starting to explain the strategies used in their mental calculations. Almost all correctly name two-dimensional shapes and identify some three-dimensional ones. Most have the expected knowledge and understanding of shape, space and measures and make reasonable estimates before measuring. They successfully collect and interpret data, such as about birthdays, in simple block graphs.
7. Pupils in Year 6 speak with the expected awareness of their audience, and some are confident and articulate communicators. They take time to listen to others. Most pupils are fluent and expressive readers. Those who are higher attaining read challenging and lengthy texts, such as 'Lord of the Rings', and authors such as Jacqueline Wilson and J K Rowling are popular. Lower attaining pupils are independent in using strategies to work out words they do not recognise. Most pupils have the expected skills in locating information in a library. Most also have a satisfactory awareness of how to adapt their writing according to its purpose. They successfully use description, for example to create a picture of a storm. Most pupils' handwriting is legible, fluent and well set out, but this is not evident in all of their books in all subjects. In mathematics, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of place value, including the position of the decimal point. They have the expected awareness of multiplication and division. They successfully explain their methods for mental calculations. Knowledge of fractions and percentages is as expected at this age, as is work on shape, space and measures. Higher attaining pupils have good skills in this area, for example when devising a formula for calculating a perimeter. Work on data handling is also at the level expected at this age.
8. Standards of literacy and numeracy in other subjects are satisfactory. Pupils apply their reading and writing skills in subjects such as history and religious education to both find and record information. In design and technology and geography, for example, there is adequate application of numeracy skills. Numeracy skills are not used fully in science in those classes in which there is not enough practical and investigative work.
9. In Year 2, science standards are broadly average across all the areas of study required by the National Curriculum, but few pupils are working at a higher level than expected at this age. Work in practical and investigative science is at the expected standard at this age, although it is lower when pupils reach Year 6. Year 6 pupils do not have the independence they should in devising and carrying out investigations or in posing scientific questions. In all the other required areas of scientific study, pupils' knowledge and understanding are broadly as expected for their age.
10. Standards in information and communication technology are as expected nationally at the end of Years 2 and 6. All groups of pupils make satisfactory progress as they move up from Year 1 to

Year 6. Most pupils have the independence and skills expected for their age in using computers. They also have satisfactory awareness of the wider use of new technology at home and at school. Few pupils are working at a level beyond that expected for their age and this prevents overall standards from being higher. Teachers ensure that almost all pupils reach the expected level but they do not plan more demanding work for pupils with potential for higher attainment. Although pupils have opportunities to use and develop their computer skills in other subjects, they do not consistently use them across all subjects.

11. In religious education, pupils in Years 2 and 6 achieve the standards expected by the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils in Year 2 have a satisfactory awareness of Christianity and have a simple awareness of some features of Islam, such as the use of prayer mats. By Year 6, pupils' knowledge of Christianity has developed further and pupils are more aware of the world faiths of Sikhism, Judaism, Hinduism and Buddhism. Pupils are gaining a satisfactory awareness of how faith affects and guides people's lives. As they move up through the school, all groups of pupils develop their knowledge and understanding of religious education satisfactorily, although those with potential for higher attainment underachieve at times.
12. In art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education, all groups of pupils' progress is satisfactory as they move up from Year 1 to Year 6. In all these subjects, pupils are making the expected gains in their knowledge, understanding and skills. However, there are occasions when the achievements of pupils with potential for higher attainment are restricted because the work set for them does not push them on to even higher attainment. Overall standards in all these subjects are as expected nationally in Years 2 and 6, but few pupils are working at a higher level than expected for their age.
13. While pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress overall, there are occasions in lessons when they are not given the support they need or work is not adapted for them. In these particular lessons, these pupils do not make enough progress. The progress of pupils with statements of special educational needs is satisfactory. The targets set for these pupils are clear and work is matched to them. This ensures that in the specific areas in which they most need help, their progress is secure. Pupils with English as an additional language, although not at an early stage of learning English, are making satisfactory progress across all subjects. This is because teachers are sensitive to their needs. While higher attaining pupils make satisfactory progress, they are not always challenged well enough to achieve even more highly. This is, to some extent, a result of weaknesses in the school's assessment procedures.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

14. Pupils' attitudes to school, their behaviour, relationships and response to the opportunities provided for their personal development are all good. Attendance levels are also good, reflecting almost all pupils' enjoyment of school. These positive standards put pupils in a secure position to benefit from the school's provision for their education.
15. Children in the nursery and reception year have good attitudes to school and they behave well. They benefit from good teaching in the area of personal, social and emotional development. They soon learn routines in the nursery and know, for example, how to sit in a circle on the carpet for activities such as music. Both nursery and reception children behave very well in celebration assemblies, sitting sensibly throughout and showing interest in all that is going on. In the nursery, children concentrate well on their tasks, especially when these have a clear focus and purpose. In the reception year they work well together, with higher attaining children willingly helping those who are lower attaining or who have special educational needs. Children share toys and resources well and have a good awareness for their age of how their actions affect others.
16. Throughout Years 1 to 6, there is a constructive atmosphere in most classrooms, with pupils keen to learn. Pupils confidently involve themselves in school activities. They are keen to come to school and show an above average level of interest in whatever they are doing. They listen carefully and courteously to teachers, almost all willingly participating in question and answer

sessions in a sensible and mature way. This is particularly noticeable when teaching is stimulating and pupils are swept along with the excitement of the lesson. This was seen, for example, in a Year 5 information and communication technology lesson in the computer room. Pupils responded very well to the teacher constantly challenging them to think for themselves and to share their experiences with their classmates. Pupils respond well to opportunities to find out for themselves, such as in a lesson on Ancient Greece in Year 4 when pupils explored the purpose of a range of artefacts. Pupils are proud of their achievements; for example lower attaining pupils eagerly read their sections of stories to each other in a Year 6 English lesson. Younger pupils show pride in their reading skills.

17. Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school, for example when moving to the hall for assembly, when eating lunch and when at play. There is an ethos of good behaviour in and around the school. Break times are pleasant social occasions when pupils behave well, playing together without any sign of bullying or other anti-social behaviour. Nothing was seen during the inspection to suggest that the quality of behaviour outside the classroom is any less good than in lessons. Pupils know the school routines and what is expected of them, and they understand and accept the boundaries of acceptable behaviour. There is no evidence to suggest that when minor misbehaviour does occur that it is oppressive, or that there is vindictive bullying, sexism or racism within the school. Although it was necessary to exclude one boy twice in the last school year, this action was taken in response to the need to protect the interests of other pupils.
18. Boys and girls of all ages and backgrounds get on well with each other, showing respect for the feelings of others. They help each other during lessons and share ideas well, especially those with special educational needs. In a Year 2 history lesson, all pupils worked well in pairs to tell each other their memories. In celebration assemblies, pupils of all ages respect each other's achievements. Although all classes in Years 3 to 6 are eager to win the award for class of the week, they happily applaud the winning class when they find that they have not been successful themselves. Throughout the school the pupils are friendly, yet also polite and courteous, in their dealings with adults. Many readily hold doors open for adults. Pupils appreciate what their teachers and the other adults in school do to help them.
19. Pupils respond well to what the school provides for their personal development. Even the youngest in the school are offered opportunities to display initiative and free choice. As pupils move up through the school they mature as individuals. They become socially aware, developing views and opinions that are soundly based, and expressing them sensibly. Pupils are conscientious in fulfilling their classroom and school responsibilities. Those involved in the well-organised school council take their responsibilities seriously, playing a valuable part in the life of the school. Pupils readily involve themselves in charitable activities, showing recognition of the need to help those less fortunate than themselves. Harmonious relationships exist throughout the school community. Pupils respect the values and beliefs of others and this is apparent in the way most relate to each other both in lessons and elsewhere. Inspection evidence supports the view of the overwhelming majority of parents that the school helps its pupils to become mature and responsible individuals.
20. Pupils' attendance is good and is above the national average. There is no evidence of truancy, and unauthorised absence is negligible. Punctuality in the mornings is good. When instances of lateness occur, they are of a minor nature and are not disruptive to lessons.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

21. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory throughout the school. During the inspection 79 lessons were observed. Teaching was at least satisfactory in 75 of these lessons. There was good teaching in 23 lessons and very good teaching in six lessons. Examples of good teaching were seen in all year groups. Three poor lessons were observed in one of the two Year 1 classes and there was also an unsatisfactory lesson in the nursery.
22. The overall quality of teaching and learning in English and mathematics, including the basics of literacy and numeracy, is satisfactory. Teaching and learning in all other subjects in Years 1 to 6

are also satisfactory. However, in science, teaching is inconsistent in the area of practical and investigative work in Years 3 to 6. The result is that pupils starting Year 6 have low understanding and skills in this area. Teachers of the Year 6 classes are keeping a clear focus on developing pupils' skills in this area in order to rectify the lack of development of them in the past.

23. In the nursery and reception classes, teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. There is effective teaching in the area of personal, social and emotional development, and in the development of speaking and listening skills and early scientific concepts. In these specific areas, effective teaching results in a good proportion of children exceeding the expected standards at the end of the reception year. While satisfactory overall, there are some weaknesses in the nursery that prevent teaching from being more effective in supporting children's learning. When a range of activities is provided from which children choose, they are not always planned with a clear enough purpose. Because the teacher is not always focused on what the children are expected to learn, there are missed opportunities to move them on in their learning and this prevents standards from being higher.
24. Adults in the nursery and reception classes promote children's personal, social and emotional development well by emphasising politeness, sharing and turn taking. All the adults are good role models for behaviour towards others. They have high expectations of how children should behave and communicate these expectations clearly to the children. In a physical development lesson in one reception class, for example, the behaviour and participation of the children, together with their sensitivity towards others when offering ideas about how performance might be improved, were all very good. Adults provide many opportunities for speaking and listening, developing children's confidence and effectiveness as communicators. Children are encouraged, through the use of different types of questions often targeted at individuals, to communicate their ideas and opinions. In effective lessons focused on promoting early scientific knowledge and understanding, planning and organisation are well focused on what teachers want children to learn. Together with the use of good resources to support learning, in lessons seen these features of teaching promoted good learning about magnets in the nursery and about making predictions and testing them in the reception year.
25. Although there are often imaginative and interesting activities provided for children in the nursery when they have the opportunity to work independently of an adult, these activities are not carefully enough planned to promote specific learning. There is a tendency for the focus to be on what the children are to do, rather than on why they are doing it. This is evident, for example, in the outdoor play activities and those provided for creative development. Not enough opportunities promote literacy and mathematical development through free choice activities. The teaching of these key areas is rather formal and as such does not always meet the needs of lower attaining children and those with special educational needs. There are not enough opportunities for children to use their early reading and writing skills in meaningful situations such as role-play. Similarly, there are not enough practical focused mathematics activities. It is also the case in the reception year that activities in literacy and mathematical development are sometimes too formal and do not meet the needs of lower attaining children and those with special educational needs well enough. Some of the recording activities are not simple enough for these particular children.
26. In the very good lessons seen, teaching was very well focused on what the teachers wanted pupils to learn. In a reception class lesson with computers, for example, children learned a new skill quickly because of this. In a lesson for the top mathematics group in Year 6, very high expectations were evident of these pupils with potential for higher attainment in the 'open ended' questions asked that challenged their thinking. The lesson proceeded at a lively pace, with pupils' mistakes used very effectively to make teaching points. Very focused questions challenged all pupils in an information and communication technology lesson in Year 5. In this lesson, time was also used to the full to develop skills in the use of an art program. In a Year 6 English lesson, the teacher demonstrated good vocabulary such as 'whining wind' and 'rustling leaves' as he pushed pupils on in their descriptive writing about a storm. A Year 1 mathematics lesson made learning about subtracting from ten exciting as the teacher used a 'magic duster' to cover over some of a group of ten beanbags. In all these lessons, teaching very effectively moved on the learning of all groups of pupils at a very good pace.

27. In good lessons, there is effective attention to the full range of pupils' needs in the mixed ability classes. Support assistants are used well to give extra help to those pupils who are lower attaining or who have special educational needs. In particular, this is a feature of good English, mathematics and science lessons. Good questioning is also a common feature of these lessons. In effective science lessons, for example, questioning picks up on pupils' answers and moves them on further in their thinking. In a good science lesson in Year 6, the teacher gave a five-minute time limit for pupils to write down their ideas about how to make a test fair before they began an investigation. Not only did this set a good pace for the lesson, but it also ensured a clear focus. In many good and better lessons, teachers share with pupils what it is expected that they will learn. This leads to pupils being aware of what it is that they are aiming to achieve and focuses their learning. This is a feature of the more effective physical education lessons.
28. A positive feature of much science teaching is that an appropriate balance is achieved between whole class exposition and individual or group work. In design and technology, there is good management of many activities and careful attention to health and safety. This ensures that activities proceed smoothly as was seen in a food technology lesson about bread in Year 3. In subjects such as history and religious education, resources are used well to engage pupils' interest and motivate them so that they are eager to extend their knowledge. This was seen in a Year 4 history lesson in which pupils studied artefacts linked to the topic of Ancient Egypt. In a Year 2 history lesson, pupils responded with interest when the teacher shared her own book of memories with them. In most lessons in the computer room, careful and precise planning ensures that full use is made of the time available.
29. In less effective but satisfactory teaching, often the same work is provided for all pupils. In particular, this restricts the learning of those pupils with potential for higher attainment. This is seen in a variety of subjects but was particularly noted in some science, history, music, information and communication technology and religious education lessons. There is some use of computers to support learning in other subjects, but there is inconsistency between classes in how well this is established and in the amount they are used. Marking is another feature of teaching that is inconsistent throughout the school. In the best marking in English, constructive comments are made that move pupils' learning on. Some good examples were noted of pupils responding well to teachers' comments and trying to improve their work. In mathematics, work is marked regularly, but there is little feedback to pupils to tell them how they might improve. While there are some examples of good marking in science, there are also some poor examples. Where this is the case, teachers do not pick up on poor presentation or the incorrect spelling of key scientific vocabulary or frequently used words. The use of homework is generally satisfactory, with some good examples in Years 3 to 6 in subjects such as mathematics.
30. There is poor teaching and learning in one Year 1 class. Key features of this ineffective teaching are weaknesses in the management of pupils and activities, in the pace of lessons and in the level of challenge in the work set. Work is not matched to the needs of all pupils. In an information and communication technology lesson, pupils did not know what the lesson was about. In an unsatisfactory lesson in the nursery, the teacher did not attempt to promote the planned learning, as the book she required was not available. Although another book was used, there were many missed opportunities to develop children's reading skills.
31. The quality of teaching for the pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall and on occasions it is good. There is good liaison between learning support assistants and class teachers. Targets from individual education plans are highlighted on almost all teachers' weekly plans. This process is not always, however, rigorously applied and some weekly planning shows a lack of this information earlier in the term. The class teacher keeps a special needs file in the classroom with relevant information about individual children with special educational needs. This is accessible to learning support assistants. In some good lessons, such as in an English lesson in Year 2, specially prepared documents were given to learning support assistants with an outline of what they are required to do. The learning support assistant then made notes on the progress of individual pupils for use by the class teacher for future planning. The teachers and learning assistants have a variety of suitable resources to support the teaching of pupils with special

educational needs. Although no pupil is at an early stage of learning English, teachers are sensitive to the needs of pupils with English as an additional language.

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

32. Learning opportunities in the nursery and reception year provide satisfactory coverage of all the recommended areas of learning for children of this age. There is a satisfactory long-term plan of work, which supports provision in all the required areas of learning. Good provision is made for personal, social and emotional development. Opportunities are used well across all activities to promote children's personal, emotional and social development. This is a key factor in the good standards achieved in this area. Overall, the learning opportunities provided satisfactorily meet all children's needs. However, the recording methods used by children, such as in mathematical development, are not always appropriate for this age group. This is particularly the case for lower attaining children and those with special educational needs, who need simpler recording and more activity based experience. In the nursery, the focus is not sufficiently clear to promote small steps in learning within the wider objectives for some activities. This is most evident in activities that children choose for themselves from a range provided. Often these are planned with an emphasis on what children will do rather than on why they will do it. The provision for children with special educational needs or English as an additional language is satisfactory in the nursery and reception year and they are well supported to make satisfactory progress.
33. The range and quality of learning opportunities in Years 1 to Year 6 are satisfactory. All the required subjects of the National Curriculum are taught and requirements are met for religious education. The time allocation for subjects, including English, mathematics and science, is reasonable overall. However, the time available for teaching each week in Years 3 to 6 is lower than the recommended minimum. The school is aware of this and is looking into extending the school day in order to rectify the present shortcoming.
34. There are suitable policies for all subjects and learning opportunities are planned satisfactorily. The school has made good use of national guidance in putting together its long-term curriculum plan for each subject. There is also appropriate long-term planning in place for religious education linked to the locally agreed syllabus, and for personal, social and health education. In some cases, the national guidance has been satisfactorily adapted, such as in art and design, to meet the specific needs of pupils in this school. In science, the national guidance has been supplemented recently with a published scheme to support work in scientific enquiry. The long-term plans for each subject are used satisfactorily as the basis for teachers' half-termly and weekly plans. An effective feature of lesson preparation is that teachers in year teams plan together. This ensures consistency in lesson content across classes in the same year group.
35. The school's strategies for literacy and numeracy are satisfactory. The national strategies are implemented fully. The learning opportunities provided ensure that pupils make satisfactory progress in the basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics as they move up through the school. There are some opportunities for the development of reading and writing skills in other subjects, particularly in history. Attention is given to the development of numeracy skills in subjects such as geography and design and technology. In science, there is not the attention to mathematical skills normally found because the approach to practical and investigative science is inconsistent in Years 3 to 6.
36. In Year 6, pupils are taught in three classes based on prior attainment for two days a week in English. In some classes this helps work to be matched to pupils' needs. In a lesson seen in the lowest of the three classes, however, not enough account was taken of all pupils' needs. The relatively higher attaining pupils within the class were not challenged well enough. Pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 are taught in three classes based on prior attainment for two days each week for mathematics. Within this arrangement there is better matching of work for pupils' needs, for instance, with the higher attaining pupils in Year 6 being challenged well. These pupils are not

challenged as well when taught in a mixed ability class because work is not as closely matched to their needs.

37. The provision for information and communication technology is satisfactory. The specific learning opportunities in the computer room are meeting the needs of most pupils satisfactorily, although pupils with potential for higher attainment are not specifically planned for in the activities provided. Adequate opportunities are provided through other subjects for pupils to use and develop their skills in information and communication technology, although this is inconsistent across subjects and classes. In music, there is very little use of new technology to support pupils' learning.
38. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good and is given high priority. Good arrangements are made for sex and drugs education within a well-organised and implemented programme of personal, social and health education. Effective provision is made for pupils to learn how to keep safe in a range of situations. Emphasis is placed on pupils developing understanding of citizenship through discussion about rules, responsibilities and community. Older pupils are taught about local and national government.
39. The school council provides a forum for pupils to express their opinions about school life and to be involved in the decision-making process, such as choosing and purchasing outside play equipment and helping to design the school crest. Personal, social and health education lessons and 'circle time', when pupils sit together in a circle, provide many good opportunities for pupils to talk about themselves. They express their thoughts and feelings and listen to what their classmates have to say. Good use is made of external provision, such as visits from the police and fire services and the school nurse to develop pupils' awareness of health and safety and environmental concerns.
40. A good range of additional activities outside lessons is provided for pupils in Years 2 to 6. These include sports, such as football and netball, drama, recorders and computer club. A good range of day visits, such as to Whipnade Zoo, Woburn Safari Park and local places of interest such as Stevenage museum, and Old Walden aircraft museum enriches the curriculum. They support learning effectively across a range of subjects. Residential visits for pupils in Years 5 and 6 to outward bound centres provide opportunities for experiences beyond the work of the school. They enrich subjects such as information and communication technology and geography, as well as being particularly beneficial for pupils' social development.
41. Satisfactory attention is paid to ensuring that all pupils have equal access to all the learning opportunities provided. Teachers are sensitive to the needs of pupils with English as an additional language, even though none of these pupils is at an early stage of learning English. It is school policy to ensure that any withdrawal of pupils from lessons is minimal. All pupils with special educational needs attend almost all introductory and final parts of lessons and most are taught with the rest of their class at all times. The pupils with identified special educational needs receive their full entitlement to support according to the new Code of Practice. While some activities are sufficiently 'open ended' to allow pupils with potential for higher attainment to work at a more advanced level, the needs of these pupils are not always given sufficient attention. They are not always provided with more demanding work, and sometimes they are simply given more work at the same level.
42. The overall provision for pupils' personal development is good. Strong attention is given to their moral and social development, with satisfactory provision for their spiritual and cultural development. Pupils gain insights into the beliefs and values of Christianity and other world religions in religious education lessons and assemblies. Acts of collective worship are of good quality and have a Christian emphasis. In one very good assembly pupils were helped to reflect on the importance of treating others kindly and of keeping promises to each other, and the possible repercussions of not doing so. Visiting speakers, such as the local vicar, representatives of other Christian groups and a Rabbi make an effective contribution to assemblies. Not only does this have a spiritual emphasis but it also develops knowledge of religious festivals. Assemblies normally include a brief time for personal reflection and prayer, often based on a weekly theme. Personal, social and health education and 'circle times' provide a climate in which pupils can respect others and be respected.

43. There are occasions when pupils experience spontaneous amazement and wonder in lessons. In a Year 3 class, for example, pupils discussed the size of trees and realised that some could grow to be four times the size of ones they had observed outside. On the whole, however, there are too few planned opportunities for pupils to wonder at and be amazed by natural phenomena or to emphasise human achievements across the curriculum such as in science, art and design, music and literature.
44. There is good promotion of the principles that distinguish right from wrong. This is an area that particularly pleases parents. The school has effective systems for rewarding good behaviour and raising pupils' self-esteem, as well as sanctions that apply to inappropriate behaviour. Clear rules are displayed around the school and in classrooms. 'Golden Time' is given as a reward when pupils are given extra time on the playground. A weekly assembly is used to reward good work and behaviour and pupils are given points and awards. Pupils' names are entered in a special 'Thank You Book'. One class is nominated 'Class of the Week' and receives a plaque. A cup is awarded each half term to the 'best' class. As a result, most pupils have a good understanding of the difference between right and wrong and demonstrate this in their behaviour throughout the school. Teachers and other support staff are good role models for behaviour towards others. The school council and personal, social and health education lessons provide good opportunities for pupils to discuss wider moral issues.
45. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to develop socially and to increase their understanding of living in a community. Within their classrooms, pupils from the nursery onwards are encouraged to take responsibility and to help each other. Older pupils have added responsibilities. For example, they prepare the hall for assemblies and act as monitors undertaking jobs around the school. Classes are paired for reading, giving older pupils the opportunity to befriend younger ones as they share books together. Year 6 pupils have roles as playground 'buddies', guiding and supporting younger children in their play. Pupils develop an awareness of social responsibility by supporting charities including initiating fundraising activities. Extra-curricular activities, such as clubs and the residential visits in Years 5 and 6 provide further opportunities for pupils to work and play together outside lessons.
46. The provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory overall. There is good provision for pupils to appreciate national heritage and culture, particularly through the good range of visits, such as those to museums and places of historical interest. A good range of visitors, such as musicians, authors and theatre groups, also support pupils' cultural development well. Pupils have satisfactory opportunities in subjects such as geography and religious education to study some of the cultural traditions and customs of people from various faith backgrounds and from different parts of the world. The school has initiated links with a school in Africa and a teacher from that school has visited Lodge Farm Primary School. Nevertheless, the school is aware that more needs to be planned to develop pupils' awareness of the rich cultural diversity of multi-cultural Britain. This is a weaker element of provision.
47. The contribution made by the community to pupils' learning is satisfactory. Guest speakers at assemblies provide respected role models such as a Christian minister and Jewish Rabbi. Sponsorship from a local business has successfully promoted work in science and has helped the school to participate in a science exhibition. A local superstore has provided an opportunity for pupils in Year 3 to see how bread is baked and to visit the shop floor during working hours. The school's links with other local businesses and with parents bring additional resources and sponsorship.
48. The school has satisfactory links with other schools and partner institutions, including its neighbouring secondary school. Discussions take place between the schools' staff to ensure, for example, links in work in English and mathematics. Teachers from the secondary school have visited to observe the teaching of the daily literacy lesson. These examples aid transition well and have a positive effect on pupils' learning. The school competes with other local schools in sporting events such as netball and football. There are other informal links with local schools, including one in a contrasting area of Stevenage.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

49. The school provides good care for pupils' personal well-being, but there are weaknesses in the academic care related to the assessment of their attainment and progress. The result is that the care for pupils is judged to be satisfactory overall. The school meets its obligations for child protection and for ensuring pupils' personal welfare well. Most parents feel that their children are well looked after, and the inspection evidence supports this view. Pupils' learning is enhanced by the provision of a secure and supportive environment in which they can be happy and get on with their work safely. Child protection arrangements are very good. Formal and informal arrangements are very well organised, with all members of staff understanding their duty to be attentive. They undertake this responsibility very conscientiously.
50. School staff and governors have proper regard for the health and safety of the school community. They undertake regular risk assessments. As a result, the school provides a safe setting for the school community to work in. The school's health and safety procedures are well organised and implemented effectively. First-aid arrangements, including the school's procedures for dealing with the very occasional accident, are very good and appropriate records are maintained. There are good procedures for liaison with parents when necessary. There is a well-equipped medical room. First aid boxes are well located and suitably equipped. Fire safety arrangements are satisfactory. The school is seeking advice on adapting the building to be more accessible to pupils with physical disabilities. Appropriate procedures are in place to ensure that use of the Internet by pupils is safe.
51. All members of staff respond sensitively to the individual needs of the pupils. Induction arrangements for children starting their school life are well organised so that there is a smooth transition from home to school. There is equality of opportunity within the school. This aids learning by ensuring that all are treated equally and given proper support appropriate to their individual need, whatever their background or personal circumstances. Lunchtime supervisory staff relate well to the pupils, providing effective support that has a positive effect on behaviour and safety. The pupils confidently turn to adults when they need help or advice, knowing that they will be listened to and well looked after. The school is effective in promoting race equality.
52. The school's procedures for checking and improving attendance are good. They ensure that all understand the importance of attending school. The parents of the very few pupils whose attendance levels give concern receive support and guidance from the school and, if necessary, the education welfare officer. This support ensures that the school's good level of attendance is preserved. The introduction of a breakfast club has helped both attendance and punctuality for some pupils. Records of attendance are properly maintained. Procedures for recording unauthorised absence are rigorous. There are very good procedures to deal effectively with any unexpected absence.
53. Good procedures are in place for checking and promoting positive behaviour and eliminating oppressive behaviour. The school's policies are well focused on the need to promote good behaviour and there is clear definition of rewards and sanctions, the latter being rarely necessary. The school's strategies are well understood and accepted by almost all pupils. A very small number of parents feel that there are inconsistencies in how the school's discipline policy is implemented during lunchtimes but nothing was seen during the inspection to support this view. There is a successful whole-school approach to the promotion of good behaviour and the development of positive attitudes and self-discipline. Except for several observed examples of ineffective control in one of the Year 1 classes, all teachers have good strategies for dealing with the very occasional instances of inappropriate behaviour. As a result, the school is a calm and orderly community.
54. The school's arrangements for checking and supporting pupils' personal development are satisfactory overall. The school council is a good feature that provides well for the personal development of those involved. It gives them a voice in school planning. Elsewhere the pupils have the opportunity to act as team captains, be individual school and class monitors, take part and help in assemblies, and be involved in 'circle time' lessons when they share ideas and

experiences amongst themselves. All these opportunities help to develop pupils as mature and well-rounded individuals. No formal records of non-academic achievement, such as individual records of achievement or personal profiles, are maintained. However, the school's arrangements are generally satisfactory, including teachers' records and summaries in the pupils' annual reports. Informal arrangements for supporting pupils' personal development are effective. They benefit from teachers' knowledge of pupils as individuals.

55. The procedures for identifying pupils with special educational needs and then checking their progress are satisfactory. Regular reviews of individual education plans are undertaken. There is good liaison between teachers and support staff in the care of these pupils, academically and personally. The care for pupils with statements of special educational needs is also satisfactory, with the provision meeting the requirements of their statements.
56. The checking and support of pupils' academic performance are unsatisfactory. The school has satisfactory systems for assessing pupils' attainment and progress in English, mathematics and science. In addition to the statutory tests in Years 2 and 6, there are also other tests used in intervening years. However, the school does not have adequate systems in place for tracking pupils' progress against National Curriculum levels in these key subjects as they move up through the school. While the assessment results of pupils in Years 1 to 3 are recorded satisfactorily, those of pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 are not tracked. Consequently, the identification of a year group, class or pupil underachieving is difficult, as is accurate target setting. Although assessments take place in other subjects at the end of topics, these are not sufficient in themselves to ensure that work is well matched to pupils' differing needs as they move up through the school. There are no adequate whole-school procedures to ensure that when a topic is revisited in another class, that the work will be set at a sufficiently more demanding level. The collection and retention of pupils' work for moderation purposes are not in place, except in history.
57. The weaknesses in the assessment procedures mean that assessment information is not used sufficiently to adapt the planning of learning opportunities to meet all pupils' needs. In particular, this sometimes results in a lack of challenge for pupils with potential for higher attainment. Class teachers, subject co-ordinators and the assessment co-ordinator do not always work together so that consistent records are produced and made use of, throughout the school, to guide planning. National assessment results are used appropriately to identify the achievements of boys and girls.
58. There are clear assessment procedures for children in the nursery and reception year. Satisfactory procedures are in place in the reception class for assessing children's attainment in all areas of learning. Assessment is carried out just after children's entry into the reception year and is used to identify pupils with special educational needs and those who are working at an above average level. In both the nursery and reception year, records are kept linked to all the areas of learning for children of this age, and are regularly updated.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

59. The parents who contributed to the inspection process, either by responding to the questionnaire, attending the pre-inspection meeting or writing to inspectors, think the school is a good one. There is general satisfaction with what the school provides for their children. Parents are most pleased with the expectations that their children will work hard and do their best, the quality of teaching and the progress their children make, and the approachability of the school. They see behaviour as good and consider that their children are helped to become more mature and responsible. They are pleased that their children like school. However, some feel ill-informed about the progress made by their children. A number have concerns about the amount of homework, some thinking there is too much and others that there is too little. Some want to know how better to help their children at home. Others would like more activities outside lessons for their children.
60. Inspection evidence supports parents' positive views about much of what the school does, but does not support the concerns expressed. The only exception is in respect of the information parents are given formally through pupils' annual written reports about progress in subjects other

than English, mathematics and science. The school's homework policy is satisfactory, with some good examples of homework matched to the needs of the pupils in Years 3 to 6. The amount of homework increases at an appropriate rate as pupils move up through the school. The range of extra-curricular activities is good, and better than in many primary schools.

61. The school's partnership with its parents is good. Parents are welcome to visit the school at any time. They are encouraged to participate actively in the work of the school, and many do so, especially in the lower part of the school. Parents give good support to the fund-raising events organised by the Parent Teacher Association. These events provide very welcome additional funds that are well used to support and broaden the pupils' experiences, as well as successfully fostering relationships between home and school. The involvement of parents and other helpers in the work of the school and in supporting their children's school work at home, makes a positive contribution to pupils' learning. The support of those who are able to help, including those who act as parent governors, is much appreciated by the school.
62. The overall quality of information provided by the school is good. Class letters, school newsletters, parents' meetings, induction arrangements for children starting school, pupils' annual reports and curriculum evenings provide parents with a wide range of information about school activities and the progress made by their children. There is no reason for parents to feel ill-informed about any aspect of their child's or the school's activities and achievements, providing they take advantage of the opportunities presented to them. The 'News on the Ninth' celebration newsletters are a particularly strong feature, reflecting much that is good about the school. The school handbook for parents, the prospectus, is a well-organised, attractive and user-friendly document. It gives parents all the information they need to understand what the school does and how they might support its efforts. The governors' annual report to parents is an informative document. Parents are provided with much to interest them together with a comprehensive financial statement. There is celebration of the school's successes. Weak areas in this document are that little information is provided about how the school provides for pupils with disabilities, except those with special educational needs, and school security arrangements are not explained.
63. Parents are informed of their child's progress and development at formal parents' evenings throughout the year and, annually, through a written report, which parents like. Parents are presented with individual reports giving an overall good view of what their children know and can do. Reporting on English, mathematics and science is very detailed, with information on both attainment and effort. However, in other subjects there is little information about how pupils' attainment compares with that expected for their age. In this respect, there is some justification for the views of a number of parents that the school could provide better information about their children's progress. There is good use of a general progress section with well-focused and objective comment, and indications of areas for development, both academically and personally. This section is clearly the result of teachers taking time and trouble to make the reports individual.
64. The parents of any pupil identified as having special educational needs are fully informed of all steps of the special needs process and of the provision made for their child. Parents are fully involved in all review meetings and are consulted about the contents of individual education plans. The parents receive an updated copy of individual education plans as soon as they are formulated.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

65. The overall quality of the leadership and management of the school is satisfactory. Since the school opened just over two years ago, following the amalgamation of the separate Lodge Farm infant and junior schools, the headteacher, with the support of governors, has worked to ensure that the school operates as a single unit. Linked to this, there has been a clear focus on improving accommodation and resources. In both these key areas, the school has moved forward satisfactorily over the last two years. Governors, staff, pupils and parents all feel part of one cohesive school. Although the staff comprises a mix of those who were in the two separate schools and those who have arrived over the last two years, all work together for a common purpose. This common purpose centres on meeting the needs of the school's pupils from when

they start in the nursery to when they move on to the next stage of their education at the end of Year 6.

66. The headteacher provides a clear educational direction for the school. He is committed to improving the quality of the school's provision and to raising standards. The success of this so far is seen in the effective implementation of whole-school policies and procedures in areas such as behaviour management. As a result, pupils of all ages know what is expected of them and they respond well to the school's high expectations of their behaviour. A new whole-school reading scheme has been implemented to address a weakness identified in this area. In terms of improvements to the accommodation and resources, a good example of progress has been the relocation of the nursery and reception classes so that they are adjacent to each other, with much improved outdoor play facilities.
67. The large senior management team gives satisfactory support in the day-to-day management of the school and in some areas of leadership. Two co-ordinators competently carry out responsibilities for the day-to-day management of the school. One oversees the nursery, reception classes and Years 1 and 2. The other takes care of Years 3 to 6. These two co-ordinators contribute to the smooth running of the school in matters such as the promotion of good behaviour and in practicalities such as the running of assemblies. Through weekly meetings with teachers and support assistants in the year groups for which they are responsible, they communicate issues raised by senior management. They also identify information that needs to be taken back to senior staff.
68. These two key members of staff also have responsibility for special educational needs and pastoral care. They ensure the smooth running of special educational needs provision and have overseen the satisfactory implementation of the new Code of Practice for special educational needs. With the introduction of the new Code, the arrangements for the support of pupils with special educational needs have been reviewed appropriately. The co-ordinators have set up, and are continuing to develop, a system to support teachers in planning for these pupils' needs.
69. In addition to the two co-ordinators, another three members of the senior management team have the role of team leaders for the lower, middle and upper school. These roles are related to checking the curriculum and the quality of teaching. The team leaders competently undertake their management responsibilities, for instance through checking teachers' planning and the work in pupils' books. Their roles are also linked to leading developments in areas such as the curriculum. All three team leaders are fairly new in post, one having been in the school only since the start of this term. All three are clear about the role they have to play in raising standards and in improving the quality of teaching. The lower school team leader, responsible for the nursery, reception classes and Year 1, is clearly helping to develop practice in the part of the school for which she is responsible. She is working with the nursery teacher, for example, to develop the planning of learning opportunities and to look at how nursery staff are deployed. She is also focusing on rectifying the inconsistencies in the quality of teaching in Year 1.
70. Because the day-to-day management and curriculum responsibilities are clearly allocated to the two co-ordinators and three team leaders, the role of the deputy headteacher is not adequately linked to substantial areas of leadership and management. The deputy has made a satisfactory contribution to developing the staff handbook for the amalgamated school and implementing policies such as for behaviour. She oversees the provision for trainee teachers, an area in which the school achieves success, and contributes to the management of staff development. She has satisfactorily reviewed the use of support staff. Although she undertakes a little timetabled teaching, she does not have a class. The governors have invested a significant amount in taking the deputy out of the classroom. She covers for absent colleagues and releases staff such as co-ordinators from their classes when required. However, this is not an efficient or effective use of what should essentially be a key player in the development of the school. The deputy has responsibility for assessment, an area in which the provision is unsatisfactory and is not adequately benefiting pupils' learning. In this important area, leadership and management are unsatisfactory. It is one of the main areas in which the school needs to take action in order to raise standards.

71. Subject co-ordinators are satisfactorily involved overall in managing their areas of responsibility. The system of having a 'lead' co-ordinator and a second 'shadow' co-ordinator is successful in most cases in ensuring a whole-school overview of provision. Many co-ordinators are new in post as a result of the high turnover of teaching staff. Those for mathematics, art and design, design and technology, geography, history and information and communication technology have all been in post only since the start of this term. Many are keen to forge ahead in checking the provision in their subjects and in leading developments. Some of the co-ordinators have checked the provision through scrutinising teachers' planning and the work in pupils' books. The school has clear plans to increase the involvement of co-ordinators in checking what happens in their subjects, such as by looking at lessons. However, the English co-ordinator does not have a clear plan as to how her five days of allocated time out of the classroom might best be used. A few co-ordinators, such as for physical education and music, have had responsibility for their areas for the last two years, but are not sufficiently involved in checking the quality of teaching and learning.
72. An appropriate range of strategies is in use for checking the school's provision, particularly the effectiveness of teaching. The headteacher undertakes most of the observations of teaching and learning. As a result he is well aware of the overall effectiveness of each teacher. He has taken swift action when weaknesses have been identified in order to support the teacher concerned and to improve the provision for pupils in the class. There is some involvement of other staff, mainly the three team leaders, in checking teaching and the curriculum. Overall, subject co-ordinators are at a fairly early stage in developing their responsibilities in this aspect of their role. The headteacher is aware that in moving the school forward, the checking of teaching and the curriculum needs to become more sharply focused and sustained.
73. The school's overall strategic use of the financial resources available to it is satisfactory. Pupils' learning is properly supported. Financial planning and day-to-day control are strong features but the monitoring of the effectiveness of spending decisions lacks some rigour. The school is presently enjoying higher than average financial resources as a result of the additional monies made available for post-amalgamation refurbishment. When allowance is made for these 'one-off' receipts, the school's spend on a per pupil basis is broadly in line with the average for similar schools nationally.
74. There is very effective liaison between governors, the headteacher and staff in formulating the budget. The chair of the school's finance committee, who is very experienced and well-informed, works closely with the headteacher and the conscientious school bursar to ensure that governors have a secure grasp of the school's financial situation. The school's budget is managed very effectively. Monies that the school receives to support pupils with special educational and other needs, and other additional funding, are used properly.
75. Governors take an active part in the development of the budget and, as a result, they have ownership of it and the strategies behind it. They explore a variety of options open to them and take decisions with confidence because of the expertise of their members and the objective information provided by the headteacher. Governors have proper regard for the use of accumulated financial reserves that, although recently above the levels usually considered prudent, are being released in line with the school's development plan. They are aware of the implications of their decisions in this respect. There is secure contingency planning to ensure that the school's finances will be sufficient to ensure the continuation of its present strategies. Arrangements for checking that spending is undertaken as intended are satisfactory. However, there are weaknesses in how the planned spending is used. Although spending is planned very well, the effectiveness of its use is not always properly recognised and evaluated. The result is that there is some spending on staffing provision that is not properly supporting the raising of standards, for example the investment in having a non-class based deputy.
76. The school's overall administration arrangements, and the day-to-day control of its finances, are very good. The office manager is very well organised, competent and committed. She and her administration staff work closely together, making a significant contribution to the smooth running of the daily life of the school community. Appropriate use is made of new technology to support the work of the school. There is good use made of the information available from the school's

computerised management system. Since amalgamation the school has not had a formal external financial audit, and no detailed investigation was conducted as part of the inspection. On the evidence available, there is no reason to suppose that there is any cause for concern.

77. In judging the school's performance, the headteacher and members of the governing body use the four principles of compare, challenge, consult, and compete satisfactorily. However, the challenge element is weaker. While governors are aware of the need to challenge what is going on in the school, their procedures for doing so, and taking effective action, lack some rigour. As a result they do not have a full understanding of how effectively their plans are implemented. Nevertheless, governors are not only supportive of the school, they are also satisfactorily involved in shaping its direction. They understand the school's main strengths well, but their knowledge of areas for improvement is not as strong. Consultation is well organised, with opportunities for all members of the school community to be involved in commenting on school activities and plans. The school has very secure procedures to ensure that it obtains best value for money when purchasing goods and services. The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities satisfactorily.
78. The match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum is good. There has been a considerable turnover of staff since the school opened, with many new to the school this term. However, because arrangements for the induction of new staff are good, these teachers are already contributing positively to the education of the pupils for whom they have responsibility.
79. The accommodation is good. There has been considerable development and refurbishment of the accommodation over the past two years. As a result of these improvements, the accommodation provides a pleasant, welcoming and generally stimulating environment that encourages learning. Disabled access is a problem given that the school is on four levels. A disability access assessment has been made. The school caretaker and cleaning staff work conscientiously to keep the building clean, tidy and well maintained. Extensive well-maintained grounds, including a grassed playing field and a nature reserve area, together with a profusion of trees and shrubs, enhance the external appearance of the school. The school grounds are used well in support of the school's educational provision.
80. The learning resources, in terms of both quality and quantity, are satisfactory overall. No subject is under-resourced and there is good provision for several subjects including mathematics, information and communication technology, history, physical education and music. There are also good resources to support the learning of children in the nursery and reception classes.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

81. To rectify the weaknesses, while maintaining the strengths of the school, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:
 - a) improve standards in practical and investigative science in Year 6 by ensuring that there is full and consistent coverage of this area in Years 3 to 6. Work should progressively develop pupils' understanding and skills;
(Paragraphs 1, 9, 22, 35, 120, 123)
 - b) ensure that the learning opportunities in the nursery always have a clear purpose, whether they are adult led or chosen by the children;
(Paragraphs 4, 23, 25, 90, 93, 95, 97)
 - c) develop and fully implement procedures for assessing and recording pupils' attainment so that their progress can be tracked as they move up through the school. Use assessment information to ensure that work is matched to all pupils' needs, including those of pupils with potential for higher attainment; and

(Paragraphs 29, 36, 41, 49, 56, 57, 109, 119, 127, 135, 142, 148, 155, 163, 169, 178, 184)

- d) review the role of the deputy headteacher so that this key role is significant in the leadership and management of the school.

(Paragraphs 70)

In addition to the key issues above, the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- while writing standards are average overall, pupils are not as skilled in writing as in reading, speaking and listening;

(Paragraphs 6, 83, 86, 102)

- the recording methods used for children in the reception year are not always suitable for this age group, especially the lower attaining children and those with special educational needs;

(Paragraphs 25, 32, 88, 90)

- marking does not always give enough guidance to pupils about how to improve their work;

(Paragraphs 29, 118, 126)

- the weekly teaching time in Years 3 to 6 is below the recommended minimum;

(Paragraph 33)

- the use of new technology, such as computers, to support pupils' learning is inconsistent across subjects and classes; and

(Paragraphs 10, 37, 106, 118, 126, 148, 153, 156, 170, 183)

- there are too few planned opportunities through subjects for pupils' spiritual development or for increasing their awareness of the rich diversity of life in multi-cultural Britain.

(Paragraphs 43, 46)

The school has already started to develop a system for tracking pupils' progress but this is still at an early stage and is not used across the school.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	79
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	41

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	6	23	46	1	3	0
Percentage	0	8	29	58	1	4	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 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)	26	388
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	39

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	5	50

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	9

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	18

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.8

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0

National comparative data	5.4
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	30	30	60

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	23	23	28
	Girls	27	28	30
	Total	50	51	58
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (76)	85 (72)	97 (86)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	23	22	25
	Girls	28	30	30
	Total	51	52	55
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (81)	87 (84)	92 (95)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	32	30	62

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	21	24	28
	Girls	24	19	27
	Total	45	43	55
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	73 (83)	69 (75)	89 (91)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	24	22	26
	Girls	25	20	25
	Total	49	42	51
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	79 (83)	68 (75)	82 (91)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

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

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	334	2	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	5	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	3	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	4	0	0
Any other ethnic group	9	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	16
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.25
Average class size	27.71

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	12
Total aggregate hours worked per week	233

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	64
Number of pupils per FTE adult	8.67

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	12
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	13

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.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2
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	£
Total income	1019503
Total expenditure	1039788
Expenditure per pupil	2401
Balance brought forward from previous year	123994
Balance carried forward to next year	103709

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

30%

Number of questionnaires sent out

439

Number of questionnaires returned

133

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	63	35	1	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	55	41	2	1	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	40	55	2	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	29	59	8	2	2
The teaching is good.	50	47	1	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	30	44	23	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	62	35	3	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	56	42	1	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	40	45	8	1	6
The school is well led and managed.	53	39	2	0	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	49	48	1	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	41	38	8	2	9

Not all answers total 100 owing to rounding.

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

82. Children enter the nursery in the school year in which they will be four. Those with birthdays between the start of September and the end of December begin in the autumn term. The others start in January. Children attend the nursery part-time, becoming full-time in one of the two reception classes a year later. There are currently 51 children attending the nursery and 32 children split between the two reception classes. Twelve children (five in the nursery and seven in the reception year) are identified as having special educational needs, mainly learning difficulties. Only one child has English as an additional language, although is a fluent speaker of English.
83. Taking the intake as a whole, children's attainment on entry to the nursery is average in relation to the expectations for their age. Overall progress through the nursery and reception classes for all children, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language, is satisfactory. Within the area of communication, language and literacy, children make good progress in speaking and listening. In writing, progress is slower and this is a relative weakness within this key area, although it is satisfactory overall. Good progress is made in children's personal, social and emotional development and in the specific area of scientific knowledge and understanding. Almost all children in the reception classes are on course to achieve the expected standards in all areas of learning. In personal, social and emotional development, speaking and listening, and scientific knowledge and understanding, many children are likely to exceed the expected standards.

Personal, social and emotional development

84. Children make good progress and most are likely to exceed the expected standards at the end of the reception year. They settle well into their classes because they are made to feel welcome and secure in the routines provided. Higher attaining children show a good level of independence for their age. All children concentrate well on their tasks, particularly when activities are well focused and planned with a clear purpose. Children have a strong awareness of the needs of others. This is seen, for example, in the reception class when they work together to find a book, and when they share sand equipment in the nursery. While nursery children work alongside or with a partner well, reception children work together in groups. They share equipment such as games, cards or headphones for the tape player. Children respond well to the expectations that their behaviour should be good. They maturely take turns, such as in table games. Higher attaining children willingly assist those who are lower attaining or who have special educational needs. Almost all children have good relationships with each other and with the adults who help them. They have a mature sense of right and wrong. When changing for physical education lessons or dressing for outdoors, and in matters of personal hygiene, children show good independence. All children have a well-developed sense of responsibility in selecting tasks and equipment and in tidying up at the end of a session.
85. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff promote politeness, taking turns and sharing well. Adults are good role models for how to treat each other and they have high expectations of all children. In both the nursery and reception classes, children have good opportunities to make thoughtful choices about tasks. Teachers ensure that children develop responsibility by encouraging them to try new experiences. In the reception classes, children record what they have done in pictures, and this gives them some opportunity to take responsibility for their learning. Adults manage children well and, as a result, children are clear about the standards of behaviour and attitudes to learning expected of them. How to sit in a circle on the carpet and the importance of putting a hand up to answer a question are examples of aspects reinforced clearly.

Communication, language and literacy

86. Children, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language, make satisfactory overall progress in this area. Most are on course to achieve the expected standards at the end of the reception year and a good number are likely to exceed them in speaking and listening. Higher attaining children in the reception classes are already meeting some of the end-of-year goals. The exception is in writing, where fewer children than expected show good writing skills.
87. Children listen attentively to adults and enjoy stories, songs and rhymes. They have confidence to speak out and to share views using a good range of vocabulary. This was seen, for example, as they gave their opinions during an investigation with food colouring. Children supplied reasons for their answers, responding in full to the teacher's questions. Children enjoy talking about the books they borrow from the school library. All handle books carefully, turn pages in sequence and use the pictures to tell the story. They recognise a few frequently used words, such as the regular story characters - Floppy, Biff, Chip and Kipper. The highest attaining children fluently read simple texts and use letter sounds to help them identify words they do not recognise. The lowest attaining children are confident in using books, name the main characters and suggest the story line. Children in the nursery identify their name in print and match some letters, the highest attaining being confident in writing it. Almost all reception children write their own name, holding pencils in a comfortable way. All children communicate by making marks on paper. The lowest attaining children do so with mostly random shapes, which they read to an adult. Most children's writing includes recognisable letters, and the highest attaining children write simple words. This was seen as they pretended to be the wolf writing a letter to Little Red Riding Hood's granny to say sorry. Children show enthusiasm for games with letter sounds and know a range of letters.
88. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. There is good attention to speaking and listening in all activities. Vocabulary is enriched through interesting topics and the contribution of visitors to the school. The learning of letter sounds is promoted in an interesting way through good visual aids, such as puppets, toys and video sessions that encourage children to participate. The reading of shared 'big' books develops children's understanding of the relationships between text and pictures. Activities with these books are used well to develop children's understanding of writing for a purpose in the reception classes. However, the methods and resources used for writing are very formal and are not always the most suitable for the lower attaining children or those with special educational needs. In an unsatisfactory lesson in the nursery, not enough attention was given to the intended purpose of the lesson in the use of a book, resulting in children missing this aspect of their learning. Too few opportunities are provided for purposeful practise of early writing in the nursery, for instance through role-play situations. A number of activities are provided in which writing could take place but the planning of the activity does not incorporate this. There are also occasional missed opportunities for writing in the reception year.

Mathematical development

89. Children, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress. Almost all are on target to achieve the expected standards at the end of the reception year. All children are learning to form numerals correctly. All are confident in working with numbers up to five or nine, and those who are higher attaining work with numbers to 20. A few recognise higher numbers. Higher attaining children also competently carry out simple addition and subtraction activities. All children have the expected awareness of addition and subtraction, for instance, in counting backwards and forwards in twos. Children recognise a range of simple two-dimensional shapes. Through practical activities, they are gaining an understanding of time, measurement including weight and capacity, position, and language such as 'more' or 'less'.
90. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are challenged at the right level in direct teaching sessions where visual aids help understanding. However, recording in the reception class is sometimes too formal. This is particularly so for lower attaining children and

those with special educational needs, who would benefit from more practical activities and simpler forms of recording. Planning for learning is well thought out for reception children. However, in the nursery, the intended outcomes for teaching are not always broken down into specific enough skills. As a result, there is not always a clear focus that could be promoted throughout the week when children are working independently of an adult and on an activity of their choice. Direct teaching opportunities are generally used satisfactorily by all the nursery staff, ensuring skills in using mathematical language and numbers are promoted effectively through small group activities. Numbers on display around the room at the right height support learning both in the nursery and reception classes. In both nursery and reception classes, children acquire an understanding of addition and subtraction through the good range of songs and rhymes taught to them, such as when counting back in twos from 'ten fat sausages sizzling in a pan'. Reception teachers enrich the teaching of numeracy with suitable games, for example for counting and sequencing.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

91. Children, including those with special educational needs, are successfully developing an understanding of the world in which we live through practical experience and visitors to the school. Their overall progress in this area is satisfactory, with good progress in the scientific aspect. Children are in line to achieve the expected level by the end of the reception year. In scientific knowledge and understanding, many are likely to exceed the expected standards because of good teaching in this aspect.
92. Through topics such as 'people who help us' they have explored the tasks people perform and have had a visit of fire fighters for first hand experience of uniforms, tasks and a fire tender. Through activities related to stories such as 'Little Red Riding Hood', they are acquiring an idea of simple route maps. Both nursery and reception children have a clear understanding of routes taken to the hall, the office or the dining room. Nursery children are gaining good awareness of scientific language, such as 'attract' and 'repel' when testing the properties of materials with a large magnet. Reception children are gaining good knowledge of investigation and testing hypotheses, for instance as they explore whether colour changes the taste of food. Higher attaining children are articulate in explaining their findings. All children are skilful in using tape recorders. They have good skills in using computers. Children competently build model houses by joining together boxes, cards and paper with glue. They have a simple understanding of other cultures through stories and costumes, such as the story of Ganesh the elephant god. They develop an understanding of celebration and thanksgiving, for example at harvest time. Activities also successfully develop children's awareness of time passing.
93. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, with good teaching of early scientific knowledge and understanding. In science-related lessons in the nursery and reception classes, planning and organisation are well focused. Good resources are used to support the learning, such as magnets in the nursery and food with food colouring in the reception year. These features of teaching ensured that children quickly gained understanding of magnetic force on different kinds of objects in the nursery. In the reception year, they helped children to predict and test their hypotheses through research. The good use of time and support staff enhanced the speed of children's learning. In a very good lesson with computers for a reception class, the teaching was very well focused, so that children learned a new skill quickly by following precise instructions. In the nursery, careful recording of children's skills in a building and joining activity ensured that they developed their previous learning. There were missed opportunities in a reception lesson about maps, for children to experience a range of activities to promote their learning before recording formally on paper. In the nursery, activities that children select for themselves from a range provided are not used well enough to develop knowledge and understanding of the world. This is because often there is not a clear enough purpose to the activities planned. Adults are not specific enough about what they want children to learn.

Physical development

94. Children, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language, are making satisfactory progress. Most are on course to achieve the expected standards at the end of the reception year. In the use of small apparatus and physical activity in lessons in the hall, many show a level of skill beyond that expected for their age. They understand the importance of warming up before physical activity and how exercise contributes to health. Children climb, balance and slide with safety and confidence. They move around with a good awareness of the space around them when walking around the classrooms and when using a range of large wheeled toys outdoors. They hold pencils and use drawing and writing tools with the skill expected for their age. When gluing, pouring water, building with sand or cutting dough, they use a range of brushes, sticks and implements with the expected safety and control.
95. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. However, it is better in the reception year where there is some good teaching, than in the nursery. In the nursery, a wide range of interesting experiences is provided for children to develop their manipulative and movement skills. These activities are not always carefully enough focused to build fully on skills acquired indoors, or to develop children's imaginative play further outdoors. A nursery hall lesson with a balloon used for demonstration gave children a good understanding of growing bigger and getting smaller. The activity helped children to quickly join in and develop their movement skills. In a good reception class lesson in the hall, there was very good management of children. As a result of this and clear instruction, children quickly learned to use small apparatus and further developed control of movement. By the teacher asking children to evaluate their performance, they improved their skills further. The co-operation between members of staff ensures that children make satisfactory progress in physical development and also that there is good attention to matters of health and safety.

Creative development

96. Children, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress in this area. Almost all are likely to achieve the expected standards at the end of the reception year. All sing songs and rhymes and keep a steady beat. Nursery children respond thoughtfully to a musical story about the three pigs and join in with sounds to represent straw, sticks, bricks and the wolf. Music is used in all classes as a signal for 'tidy up time' and children respond to this well. Nursery children recognise the sounds and names of some instruments. Reception children discuss shades of wood or colours such as blue knowledgeably, finding words to describe the shades. All children successfully use a range of equipment to make collages. They are satisfactorily developing their drawing and painting skills. The outside environment gives opportunity for children to share in imaginative play. They show enjoyment in acting out parts of stories they have heard, such as 'Hansel and Gretel' or 'The Gingerbread Man', successfully sustaining a make-believe situation. Boys and girls turn boxes into castles, pretend to cross the three goats' bridge, or act out being fire fighters sliding down a pole.
97. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Planning ensures that all children have opportunities to take part in a range of activities to promote learning in this area. Checks kept on the choices children make ensure all have equal opportunities and experience, so that the highest attaining can be challenged and those with special educational needs can be supported. Adults demonstrate skills well to ensure learning. However, they are not always so carefully focused in their planning for these areas in the nursery in order to ensure the development of specific skills. A good range of materials is provided for creative development indoors. Good training is given in caring for and clearing away the equipment. Outdoors, imaginative play is enhanced with dressing up clothes, but occasionally there is not enough equipment out to enable all children to participate if the whole class is outside together. Teachers use focused question and answer techniques to stimulate children's thinking in creative development and are ably supported by the nursery nurses in these activities.

ENGLISH

98. Pupils' results in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 in 2002 were below the national average. They were also below average when compared with the results achieved by schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. The 2002 results were lower than those of 2001, which were average. The evidence of pupils' school work is that standards at this point in Year 6 are average, returning the school to the position of 2001. In the National Curriculum tests for Year 2 pupils in 2002, standards were above the national average and the average for similar schools in reading and writing. This was a considerable improvement on the results of 2001, which were below average in both these key areas. As in Year 6, standards at this point in Year 2 are average. The difference between the standards seen in pupils' school work and the results of 2002 in Years 2 and 6 simply reflects the natural variation often found in year groups of pupils, rather than any change in the quality of the school's provision.
99. Girls tend to do better than boys in the National Curriculum tests in Years 2 and 6. However, there is no evidence in pupils' school work of any difference in the rate of progress of boys and girls. The overall rate of progress of all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language, is satisfactory as they move up through the school.
100. Standards in speaking and listening are average in Years 2 and 6. Pupils are generally confident in speaking out in lessons and assemblies. They listen carefully to their teachers and to each other as they take part in oral parts of lessons. There are some very confident and articulate speakers in all classes throughout the school who set a good example to others. This is particularly evident in Year 6 where pupils speak with the expected awareness of audience for their age. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in group activities in classrooms where good relationships with the support staff help them to speak with confidence in front of their classmates.
101. Reading standards are average in Years 2 and 6. In all year groups there are a significant number of pupils who read fluently and with confidence. Most enjoy reading and read frequently at home. Year 2 pupils competently use a variety of strategies to help them read words that they do not recognise. Many carefully look at the pictures for guidance and sound out letters. Those who are higher attaining have good skills in reading comprehension, understanding the key events in stories and the involvement of characters. Lower attaining pupils are interested in the events in stories and recognise some familiar words in print. By Year 6, most pupils are reading with the fluency expected for their age and with expression. Lower attaining pupils successfully apply strategies such as letter sounds to master difficult words, showing independence in this. Average and higher attaining pupils name favourite authors, describe characters in some detail, and outline the plot of the book they are reading. Many successfully read challenging and lengthy texts such as 'Lord of the Rings' and 'The Hobbit' as well as the more familiar modern classics by authors such as J K Rowling and Jacqueline Wilson. Pupils in Years 2 and 6 have the expected skills for their age in using non-fiction books and locating information in a library.
102. While writing standards are average overall, pupils are not as skilled in writing as in reading. Writing is a relative weakness within attainment in English. Pupils in Years 2 and 6 write for a suitable range of purposes. In Year 2, for example, they write descriptions of things that have happened to them, reflect on their memories, and make lists, as well as giving answers to questions. Although overall standards in spelling and punctuation are generally adequate, higher attaining pupils make errors in spelling some frequently used words, such as the months of the year. Average pupils are not consistent in using full stops and capital letters despite the emphasis placed on this in teachers' marking. Grammatical errors are not uncommon. Very few pupils are starting to join their handwriting. Almost all the work of average pupils is printed. By Year 6, higher attaining pupils select vocabulary well to describe, for example, when writing about a storm. They write fluently in ink and set their work out neatly in different styles for a variety of purposes. Punctuation is used correctly and these pupils are starting to organise their writing in paragraphs. Average attaining pupils perform satisfactorily in all aspects of writing. Many lower attaining pupils write neatly in ink and successfully adapt their writing according to the purpose for which it is intended. Those with special educational needs who have support with literacy produce written work that is legible and coherent. Most pupils have the expected awareness for their age of the audience for which their writing is intended. By Year 6, drafting skills are adequate overall.

103. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory throughout Years 1 to 6. Several examples of good teaching were seen, with one very good lesson in Year 6. A poor lesson was seen in one Year 1 class. Class teachers are often good role models for reading, using expression and pace. This was seen, for example, in a Year 2 lesson when a teacher read aloud from a 'big book' with the class following the text. Teachers usually check that the pupils understand what they are reading and use the text well to focus on spelling, vocabulary and punctuation. Pupils' work is marked regularly. Often constructive comments in marking take pupils' learning forward.
104. In lessons in which teaching and learning are good, there are appropriate activities matched to the range of pupils' needs in the mixed ability classes. Support assistants are well informed about what they are required to do and pupils make good progress in these lessons. An effective partnership between the teacher and the support assistant was seen in a Year 4 lesson about play scripts. The two acted out the playscripts written by pupils, causing much amusement, and also successfully highlighting the need for expression, punctuation such as exclamation marks, and stage directions. Well directed questioning challenged pupils and focused their thinking. Such questioning is a feature of much effective English teaching. In this lesson, pupils' learning was moved on at a good pace. In the very good lesson seen in one of the Year 6 classes, the teacher very successfully developed pupils' awareness of how language can paint a picture, for example of a storm. He very ably gave a demonstration of language, such as 'whining wind' and 'rustling leaves'. In this lesson, pupils showed a good understanding of terms such as 'figurative', 'personification', 'simile' and 'metaphor'.
105. Where teaching and learning are satisfactory, the work is not as effectively matched to the range of pupils' needs. However, there is usually support in the lesson for those who have special educational needs or who are finding the work difficult. Occasionally, support assistants are not used fully, for example to support the lowest attaining pupils during whole class sections of the daily literacy lessons, as was seen in a Year 2 lesson. At times, there are too many different activities planned, for example for five different groups. This makes it difficult for the teacher to manage all that is happening at once, and restricts the extent to which intensive teaching can take place with the teacher having a focus group. In a lesson for the lower Year 6 group, when the year group was being taught in three classes based on prior attainment, there was not enough to challenge the highest attaining pupils within the group. Even though the pupils were in a group with a more limited range of prior attainment than the normal class groups, there was still a wide range of individual needs to be considered.
106. In Years 3 to 6, targets inserted at the beginning of the pupils' workbooks are generally used well. Pupils respond positively to them, knowing what it is that they are aiming to achieve. The same is true of lessons where teachers carefully and clearly explain what it is that they want pupils to learn. However, the effectiveness of this is somewhat reduced when there is not enough variation of the level at which pupils are expected to work in relation to their differing needs. Homework is used satisfactorily, with some good examples in Years 3 to 6. Computers are used satisfactorily to support pupils' learning in English, but there is variation between classes in the amount they are used. Opportunities for the use of literacy skills in other subjects are satisfactory, with some good use of them in history lessons.
107. In the one lesson seen in which teaching and learning were poor, there was an absence of pace and challenge. Pupils were given the answers to questions instead of being encouraged to provide them. The teacher was insufficiently aware that pupils were not motivated by the lesson and were getting little out of it. Inadequate management of pupils and activities compounded these weaknesses.
108. There is an appropriate partnership for the management of the English curriculum, with two co-ordinators, one for Years 1 and 2 and one for Years 3 to 6. Much purposeful work has taken place, for example in the effective implementation of a reading scheme used throughout the school. Good use is made of external support from local education authority advisers, for example for staff training. Five days each year are allocated to the co-ordinator to lead and develop the English provision. Some of this time has been suitably used for the preparation of a parents' evening on reading and for a staff in-service training day. However, there is no clearly defined plan for the use of the rest of this release time. The co-ordinator has no systematic procedures for the regular

checking of teachers' planning, for scrutinising pupils' work, or for checking teaching in her subject. There has, nevertheless, been checking of teaching in lessons by the headteacher, who knows each teacher's strengths and areas for improvement.

109. The school has started to develop a system for tracking pupils' progress through the school in English, but this is at an early stage and does not presently provide adequate checking of pupils' progress. Neither does it support the setting of accurate targets for individuals or groups of pupils. The result of this weakness in assessing and recording pupils' attainment and progress is that teachers cannot use assessment information well enough to plan learning opportunities to meet all pupils' needs.

MATHEMATICS

110. Pupils' results in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 in 2002 were below the national average. They were also below average when compared with the results achieved by schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. The evidence from the inspection of pupils' school work is that standards at this point in the present Year 6 are average. This returns the school to the position of 2001 when standards were also average. While the difference in the results this year to some extent reflects variations in year groups of pupils, the school has also taken successful action to bring about improvement. Pupils have been taught in three classes based on prior attainment in Years 5 and 6 for two days a week. There has also been an emphasis on developing pupils' mental strategies and the problem-solving aspect of mathematics. Pupils now in Years 3 to 6, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language, are making satisfactory progress as they move up through the school.
111. In the National Curriculum tests for pupils at the end of Year 2 in 2002, results were above the national average. Pupils' performance was also above average when compared with the results achieved by schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. The 2002 test results were a good improvement on those of 2001, which were well below the national average. The evidence from the inspection of pupils' school work is that standards in the present Year 2 are average. The lower standards now, although still better than those of 2001, simply reflect the natural variation found in year groups of pupils. They do not indicate any change in the quality of the school's provision. The overall progress of pupils in Years 1 and 2, including that of pupils with special educational needs, is satisfactory. Boys and girls achieve equally well in mathematics in Years 2 and 6.
112. Pupils in Year 2 are beginning to recognise odd and even numbers and confidently count on in twos or fives when adding to a two-digit number. They have a satisfactory understanding of the place value of digits, and most successfully sequence numbers to 100. In their mental numeracy work, higher attaining pupils competently apply their understanding of addition and subtraction to solve simple problems. They are beginning to explain their mental strategies when solving problems. Pupils with special educational needs work successfully with lower numbers, even when they do not have the support of an adult. Nearly all pupils use the correct mathematical names for common two-dimensional shapes. They also identify and name some three-dimensional shapes, for example cones and pyramids, but most have a problem in naming the various prisms. Nearly all pupils successfully measure everyday objects in metres and centimetres and use reasonably accurate estimation before measuring. Most tell hourly and half-hourly times on both analogue and digital clocks. They have a secure knowledge of the days of the week and months of the year. In their work on data handling, they have compiled a block graph indicating the birthdays of all the pupils in the class. A few pupils still have difficulty in writing some numbers correctly.
113. In Year 6, most pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of place value, including the correct position of the decimal point. They have the expected understanding for their age of the relationship between multiplication and division, and they multiply numbers by 10 and 100. Lower attaining pupils mentally recall the two, three, five and ten times tables, but need adult support to work out the associated division facts. Most pupils successfully explain their method of working in solving mental numeracy problems. Most have the expected competence for their age in working with fractions and percentages. In their work on shape, space and measures many calculate correctly the perimeter of a simple compound shape by dividing it into a number of rectangles. Higher attaining pupils are developing the ability to link the number measurements of these shapes to

algebraic symbols to devise a formula for finding perimeter lengths. Lower attaining pupils draw specified parallelograms on squared paper with support. In work on data handling, many pupils understand the mode and range of a set of data obtained from a pie chart.

114. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory throughout Years 1 to 6, with many instances of good and even very good teaching seen during the inspection. One poor lesson was seen in one of the Year 1 classes. In Years 5 and 6, pupils are taught in classes based on their prior attainment for part of the week and for the rest of the week they are in mixed ability classes. When taught in the classes based on prior attainment, the highest attaining pupils are challenged well but this is not always the case in mixed ability class lessons. Pupils with special educational needs are sometimes supported well, but they do not always receive extra support during mathematics lessons. Nearly all teachers' knowledge and understanding of mathematics and the teaching of basic skills are good, owing partly to the successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. The management of pupils in almost all classes during mathematics lessons is also good.
115. In Years 1 and 2, most teachers clearly communicate to pupils what they want them to learn at the start of the session. They use the time at the end of lessons appropriately to ascertain what has been learned, and how well the lesson's objectives have been achieved. In a very good Year 1 lesson, the teacher used a 'magic duster' to cover over a number of ten beanbags to introduce pupils to the concept of subtracting numbers from ten. The teaching assistant was used well to support a group of special educational needs pupils and the lesson was divided into short timed sessions to stimulate pupils' interest and understanding. Activities were well matched to the needs of all pupils, and opportunities provided for practical 'hands on' work to extend their understanding. As a result of all these features of teaching, pupils developed their understanding very well in this lesson. In the other Year 1 class, in which the lesson seen was poor, the work was not well enough matched to the needs of all pupils. Concepts were not sufficiently consolidated before the teacher moved on to the next topic. Time was not used effectively and the teacher found it difficult to manage the pupils, especially when they were organised into five groups. The work in pupils' books shows that there is normally much more effective teaching in one Year 1 class than in the other.
116. In Years 3 and 4, lessons are planned satisfactorily reflecting the requirements of the National Numeracy Strategy. Work is appropriately matched to all pupils' needs, including those of pupils with special educational needs. Some good and even very good lessons were observed in these age groups due to good classroom organisation and management. During the group activities in lessons, most pupils stayed well involved even though only one class received extra support through the presence of a support assistant. In a very good lesson observed in Year 3, all pupils made good progress as a result of confident teaching. The approaches used were varied, adding interest to the lesson. Well-directed support for pupils, together with tasks matched to all their needs, moved learning on at a very good pace.
117. In a very good lesson in Year 6 when pupils were in classes based on prior attainment, very high expectations were apparent for the performance of the top class. The pace of the lesson was lively and challenging. The teacher used any mistakes made by pupils in their answers as a follow up teaching point. The excellent planning was comprehensive and well matched to the needs of this top class. Questions from the teacher were focused, challenging and 'open ended'. In a Year 5 lesson, also with a top class, the teacher's enthusiasm and lively manner resulted in pupils responding well to the challenge provided. Resources were used well for pupils to order five digit numbers on a 'washing line' for the initial activity. Pupils' knowledge and understanding about changing an improper fraction to a mixed fraction progressed well because of the good pace and the opportunity provided for pupils to discuss their understanding with a partner.
118. Most work throughout the school is appropriately presented and regularly marked, but few teachers provide comments to support and improve pupils' learning when they make mistakes. Homework is set for all age groups and this is well linked to the work in lessons. There is some use of numeracy and mathematics in subjects such as geography, science, history and information and communication technology, but this could be usefully further developed.

Computers are used to support mathematics topics, but there is inconsistency between classes in the amount they are used.

119. The leadership and management of mathematics are satisfactory. Although the present co-ordinator has only been in post since the start of this term, he is keen and enthusiastic and has already given some informal educational direction for the subject. A second co-ordinator 'shadows' the subject to give further direction. Neither has had the opportunity of checking mathematics lessons for teaching and learning but this is a priority for next term. There is good, shared commitment to improvement of the subject and there is a good capacity to succeed with the present managers. Although pupils are assessed by end of year group national and optional tests, these results have not yet been incorporated into a whole-school document for tracking progress to allow the co-ordinator to identify trends and to set meaningful targets. Information from assessment is not used well enough to ensure that work is always matched to all pupils' needs, for instance those of higher attaining pupils in Years 5 and 6 when they are taught in mixed ability classes.

SCIENCE

120. Pupils' results in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 in 2002 were close to the national average. They were also average when compared with the results achieved by schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. Boys and girls achieved equally well. Teachers' assessments of pupils at the end of Year 2 in 2002 showed standards as broadly average. The evidence from the inspection of pupils' school work shows that standards at this point are also average in Years 2 and 6. All groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress overall as they move up from Year 1 to Year 6. However, while standards are average and progress is satisfactory overall, standards in practical and investigative science are below those expected nationally when pupils reach Year 6. This is because this important aspect of the science curriculum is inconsistently covered in the different classes as pupils move up from Year 3 to Year 6.
121. In Year 2, standards are broadly average in all aspects of science, although few pupils are working at a higher level than expected for their age. Pupils name and label external parts of the human body. They recognise that living things grow and reproduce when they match adult animals with their babies. Pupils describe some of the conditions needed for plants and animals to survive, such as water, food and light. They are beginning to recognise the effects of exercise on the human body. They know that there are different kinds of food. This is seen as they sort foods into different groups, showing an awareness that some foods, such as fruit and vegetables, are healthier than cakes and sweets. Pupils name the main external parts of a flowering plant. Higher attaining pupils have a developing awareness of the functions of these parts of a plant. Through simple investigations, pupils are beginning to develop knowledge and understanding of forces such as pushes and pulls and of materials and their properties. They use suitable equipment and record their observations using simple tables when appropriate.
122. In Year 6, most pupils have the body of scientific knowledge expected for their age. They know, for example, that light comes from a variety of sources and travels in straight lines, travelling through materials that are transparent but not through those that are opaque. Pupils have a basic understanding of how shadows are formed. The highest attaining pupils give detailed explanations of the way in which light beams change direction when reflected. They present their findings in carefully drawn diagrams that reflect secure understanding. Pupils demonstrate the expected knowledge and understanding of the human skeleton. They label bones and describe their function. They draw diagrams to show the location of the main organs in the human body and know their functions.
123. Pupils in Year 6 have unsatisfactory skills in scientific investigations. They have not made sufficient progress in this aspect of science as they have moved up through the school. This is evident both in lessons seen and from scrutiny of their work. Pupils do not have the expected knowledge and understanding of the process of investigation from hypothesis to conclusion. They are not sufficiently independent in recording investigations, and still require a given framework for

this purpose. While pupils engage in experiments and satisfactorily develop specific knowledge, for example of forces such as air resistance, even those with potential for higher attainment do not have the independence expected for their age in this key area of science. Pupils make predictions, use tables and diagrams to record findings under instruction from teachers but do not, for instance, take initiative in answering or posing scientific questions. Recent improvements to the science curriculum have given greater emphasis to the teaching of scientific enquiry. However, there is still some inconsistency in the way that this key aspect of science is taught. In some lessons, there are missed opportunities to challenge pupils further, including through discussion and debate. Teachers sometimes overly direct investigations and independence is not built up progressively as pupils move through the school. As a result, pupils currently in Year 6 do not yet devise their own tests or decide on their own equipment and measures.

124. The overall quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory. Some good lessons were seen during the inspection in Years 2, 3 and 6. With the exception of one Year 1 class, teachers manage pupils' behaviour effectively. This means that most pupils are attentive and settle to tasks with the minimum of fuss. They share equipment and resources sensibly and work co-operatively in pairs or groups. Lessons are planned and organised satisfactorily, with a suitable balance between whole-class sessions and group or individual work. In the lessons seen during the inspection, pupils with special educational needs and those who are lower attaining were given good help by support assistants. This allowed them to access the same work as other pupils and to make satisfactory progress.
125. One feature that distinguishes good lessons from those that are satisfactory is high-quality questioning. Such questioning challenges pupils' thinking and picks up on their answers to develop ideas further. Another feature is the effective use of time, with exposition and instruction moving forward at a good pace. For example, in a good lesson in a Year 6 class, the teacher set a five-minute time limit for pupils to record their predictions and to write their ideas on how to make the test 'fair' before they began an investigation. This meant that they were well focused and aware that they needed to work at a good pace without any time wasting. In another good lesson in a Year 2 class, the teacher took every opportunity to check pupils' understanding of key vocabulary associated with woollen materials. She ensured that they were not confused between words with the same sound but different meanings, for example, 'died' and 'dye', developing literacy skills well within the science lesson. In the other good lesson seen in a Year 3 class, the closing session was used very effectively to consolidate and review the knowledge and understanding gained from practical activities about trees.
126. A scrutiny of pupils' school work shows that marking is inconsistent. In some cases it is minimal. Poor presentation and incorrect spelling of scientific and other frequently used words are not corrected. In other cases, marking is good and suggests ways that pupils can improve their work. While it is right that pupils should know what teachers are looking for in their work and that pupils should have a clear idea of what they are expected to learn, some lesson targets are too rigid. As a result, all pupils are expected to achieve the same goals, regardless of their capability, and are often all given the same tasks. In most instances, pupils with special educational needs and those who are lower attaining are given additional help to enable them to succeed. However, the rigidity of some lesson targets mainly restricts the learning of pupils who are capable of higher attainment. These pupils are not always challenged well enough to achieve levels above those expected for their age. Computers are used satisfactorily to support pupils' learning, but this is better in some classes than others.
127. While some informal testing and checking takes place at the end of a unit of work, and at the end of a school year, assessment procedures in science are inadequate. Teachers do not have enough information on how well pupils are achieving in the different aspects of science to ensure that work is planned to meet the needs of different pupils or to pass on to the next teacher at the end of the year. Although the school has information from formal tests and assessments, this information is not used well enough to guide pupils' next steps of learning or to check their progress as they move up through the school.

128. The leadership and management of science are satisfactory overall. By checking samples of pupils' work, the co-ordinator has already recognised some of the weaknesses in teaching, which the inspection has highlighted, and has identified them as priorities for development. Although she has been allocated some time out of class to observe teaching and learning later this term, opportunities to check on the quality of teaching and to evaluate standards have not been delegated as part of her role, and this is a weakness.

ART AND DESIGN

129. Standards of pupils' work in art and design are as expected nationally in Years 2 and 6. In all year groups there are examples of good work. Pupils in Year 2 achieve some good results in their computer-generated designs in the style of Mondrian and other designs related to topics such as 'The Seaside' and 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears'. They competently use a variety of materials with the skill expected for their age, such as pencil and crayon for drawing, felts to create a collage effect and tissue paper for stained glass windows. Those in Year 1 successfully use materials in a collage style for features of their self-portraits. They add wool for the hair, for example.
130. By Year 6, pupils have the expected awareness for their age of the visual impact of their work. This is seen, for example, in their work showing cut out pictures and chalk pastels on black backgrounds to create an impression of movement. Some of this work is very effective, linking well with work in science on forces in action. In drawings of shoes, pupils successfully explore a range of shading techniques and show satisfactory pencil control. Pupils have developed satisfactory skills in using materials such as oil pastels, charcoal and paint by Year 6. Some achieve a good standard of line drawing and have produced very carefully drawn diagrams of the human skeleton and the human body, showing internal organs and plants to show the parts of a flower.
131. Pupils throughout the school, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress in art and design. This is seen in the development of illustrations, charts and diagrams in the pupils' books and in the display work in classrooms, corridors, halls and other workrooms.
132. The overall quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory. Teachers provide a range of suitably challenging activities and encourage pupils to produce their own illustrations in work across the curriculum. Some good examples are the opportunities for drawings of food items and Christian objects in Year 3, pictures of Boudicca and King Alfred in Year 4, and Greek soldiers in Year 5. In Years 1 and 2 teachers provide opportunities for the development of drawing and colouring skills in topic and science books, as well as supporting some written work with photocopied illustrations which give the pupils examples of line drawings. The reduction of this support and a greater emphasis on independent drawing as pupils move up through the school help them to develop their line drawing, shading and colouring skills.
133. Teachers provide pupils with appropriate experiences in using a range of materials. In Year 3, for example, pupils are given opportunities to develop skills in using charcoal to produce tone and shading in work on bones. In producing Roman mosaics, there is effective use of gold and silver foil to enhance the designs. The opportunities in Years 5 and 6 help pupils to develop skills in using a wide range of materials to produce different effects. Some pupils have used a colour wash well to produce an ageing effect for drawings of Victorian artefacts where pencil shading is well used. Oil and chalk pastels are used effectively in art and design work linked to a history topic on ancient Greece. Work on display includes some work of a high standard by pupils with special educational needs. The display of this work boosts the confidence of the pupils who produced it.
134. In all classes in Years 3 to 6, pupils are provided with sketchbooks. These are used for a variety of purposes, not only for art and design work, so it is not possible to use these books to track the development of particular skills. There is no consistent approach to how sketchbooks are used throughout Years 3 to 6 and this is an area requiring improvement. Art and design work makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development, for instance through linking with history work on the Ancient Greeks or the Romans. Pupils are also introduced to the work of some famous artists. Although some work has a focus on other cultures, the role of art and design in developing pupils'

awareness of other cultures is less well established. However, in the art and design club that normally meets weekly, there is a current focus on multi-cultural aspects of art and design. Computers are used satisfactorily to support pupils' learning in art and design.

135. The co-ordinator for art and design has been in post for just over a year and is satisfactorily leading and managing the subject. She has met with teachers throughout the school and has updated the school policy and scheme. She is presently modifying national guidance for art and design in order to give teachers greater flexibility to develop cross-curricular themes and also so that the pupils have more opportunities to develop their skills. A good example for others is set by the co-ordinator in her display work. She is in the process of checking display work in other classes in her own time. She has not so far checked teachers' planning or matched it with pupils' work in order to get a picture of the quality of teaching throughout the school. This restricts how effective she can be in improving provision and raising standards. There are no whole-school assessment procedures in place for art and design. This limits how well teachers can adapt the learning opportunities to meet pupils' differing needs. There is no school folder of examples of work or photographic record of work that has been done.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

136. The standard of pupils' work in design and technology is as expected nationally in Years 2 and 6, although few pupils are working at a level above that expected for their age. All groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress as they move up from Year 1 to Year 6.
137. Pupils in Year 2 show enthusiasm for tasks undertaken and a clear understanding of designing, making and evaluating their end products. In their work on making finger puppets, they demonstrate the expected knowledge for their age of designing, labelling and listing resources, such as felt and tools. They identify possible changes to their designs before making. They successfully practise new skills, such as sewing on binka, before using stitching on felt as a joining technique, which they then ably carry out. All pupils are able to make choices and add a range of decorations, for example using stitching or glue. The highest attaining pupils produce very well sequenced drawing and labels. The lower attaining ones and those with special educational needs achieve a satisfactory standard because of the support they are given by adults. Through discussion with adults, pupils evaluate their work during the design-and-make process as well as at the end of the project. They successfully identify improvements that they might make. Basic skills and understanding from Year 1 are built on in Year 2. Year 1 work includes making moving parts for toys such as a Jack-in-the-box, and exploring pivots and levers on simple toys or scissors.
138. At the time of the inspection, Year 6 pupils were designing a 'moon buggy' that would be capable of running on the surface of the moon. They used the Internet effectively to research information about the surface of the moon and motorised vehicles that might run on such terrain, prior to making their own design. They thoughtfully made sequenced drawings of parts of their proposed models and labelled them clearly. Pupils understand the importance of the chassis, drive mechanism and suspension and how these may need to be adapted with the need for motorised propulsion. Working with different materials and tools and using a range of joining techniques in earlier years has provided a sound basis for this development. Pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 demonstrate that they have a clear grasp of designing or evaluating for a specific purpose when looking at sandwiches, torches, or making biscuits and decorating them.
139. The overall quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory. The planning for the lessons observed was very specific. The activities involved all pupils in generating ideas, such as when preparing to make moon buggies in Year 6. Pupils are generally managed well and good attention is paid to health, safety and hygiene. This was seen, for example, in a Year 3 lesson with bread and a Year 5 lesson in the food technology room where pupils showed a good response to teachers' expectations of what they should do and how they should behave. Guidelines provided to help pupils to evaluate their work use challenging questions to direct their sequential thinking right through the design and make stage. Pupils are helped to consider how well their product matches the purpose for which it is intended.
140. Good support given to a pupil with low concentration skills in one lesson enabled him to improve in this area because of his enthusiasm for completing his decorated crocodile puppet. In a Year 5 class, the carefully thought out grouping of pupils and deployment of adult support meant that topics such as designing and making biscuits and exploring packaging were linked well. However, some lack of resources in the early part of the lesson slowed the pace for some pupils and affected their behaviour. Good preparation and questionnaires in a Year 3 lesson allowed pupils to be independent in their research of different kinds of bread. However, the use of time for the activity was less well planned, resulting in some pupils being unable to consider their task carefully enough.
141. There is satisfactory leadership and management of design and technology. A new co-ordinator took over responsibility at the start of this term. There is also a 'shadow' co-ordinator to provide additional support for the subject. Together, they have begun a process of reviewing the school's provision, which is detailed as a current priority on the school development plan. They have checked teachers' planning and discussed with staff the changes that are needed. They have not

so far checked teaching and learning in lessons in order to further evaluate the effectiveness of what the school does in this subject.

142. There are no whole-school assessment procedures to ensure the continuity of standards or to identify higher or lower attaining pupils. This restricts how well teachers can modify the work provided to meet the needs of all pupils. There are good links with other subjects such as mathematics and art and design, and especially science.

GEOGRAPHY

143. The standard of pupils' work in geography is as expected nationally in Years 2 and 6, although few pupils are working at a higher level. All groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress as they move up from Year 1 to Year 6.
144. Pupils in Year 2, including those with special educational needs, identify and record the countries of the United Kingdom on a map of the British Isles. They competently express views on environmental features of a locality when they describe and draw their idea of an island holiday home. They demonstrate an awareness of localities beyond their own by following the travels of 'Barnaby Bear', a toy bear, to such places as Dublin and Brittany. Nearly all pupils of this age are beginning to use appropriate geographic vocabulary. Pupils also compare their own locality with another by studying the environment of a seaside town.
145. Year 6 pupils satisfactorily recognise the features of the water cycle. Most sequence the components of the cycle and understand that humans are a part of it. They also have the understanding expected at this age of the ways that the water cycle affects the environment and their own lives. They show a good awareness of environmental factors appertaining to water and successfully explain the good or bad effects that human beings have on their water supply. Most pupils explain their own views about the environmental changes brought about by flooding or lack of water. Some higher attaining pupils use the Internet in order to access and research information about water supplies. Pupils with special educational needs understand the main elements of the water cycle and record and label the 'cycle' with adult support.
146. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory throughout Years 1 to 6. Just one geography lesson was seen during the inspection, in Year 6. In this lesson, the teacher successfully assessed pupils' previous knowledge of the topic through a lively brainstorming session. This included appropriate activities such as pupils writing on their whiteboards their existing knowledge of the water cycle. There was a good emphasis on key vocabulary to ensure that all pupils used appropriate geographic language. The lesson content was organised well with the teaching assistant supporting a lower attaining group, including pupils with special educational needs, and higher attaining pupils being involved in independent research by using the Internet. A good link to literacy was organised in the form of a ten minute playscript, 'Water Cycle Adventure' to include nearly all pupils in the class, at the beginning of the lesson. The teacher managed pupils well and struck an appropriate balance between giving information and allowing opportunities for pupils to participate in independent research. The weakness in this particular lesson was that a few pupils spent too much time on drawing the various components of the water cycle and not enough time on labelling. This led to them losing interest for a short while.
147. A scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning indicates that the geography curriculum is satisfactorily covered in all year groups. There is some good enrichment through residential visits. Pupils produce neat, well presented work in topic folders, with some good writing by higher attaining pupils. Teachers use the ends of lessons well to ascertain whether the lessons have been successful and if any particular topic needs to be revised or covered at a deeper level. Teachers have secure subject knowledge. The evidence of the lesson seen and the scrutiny of pupils' work indicate that pupils have good attitudes to geography.
148. The leadership and management of geography are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has only been in post since the start of this term, but is well qualified and experienced. The long-term planning is

based on national guidance, which ensures that National Curriculum requirements are met. End of topic assessment is also carried out using this guidance. However, this assessment is not used fully to guide the planning of learning opportunities and to ensure that work provides appropriate challenge for all groups of pupils. The long-term plan has only recently been introduced and the co-ordinator intends to check its effect on pupils' standards in the near future, but has not had the chance to do so yet. Computers are used to support pupils' work in geography, mainly for map-work. The use of computers and new technology is an area identified by the school for development.

HISTORY

149. The standard of pupils' work in history is as expected nationally at the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress as they move up from Year 1 to Year 6.
150. Pupils in Year 2 are aware of the passing of time and know that memories relate to past events. They show this when discussing past events in their teacher's and their own lives. Through their study of the Great Fire of London they are developing an understanding and factual knowledge of major events and people in the past. They use their literacy skills of speaking and listening appropriately in whole-class discussion and question and answer sessions. Pupils have devised a simple time line to develop their awareness of chronology. Most pupils are beginning to use appropriate historical vocabulary in discussion to answer questions about the past.
151. By Year 6, pupils use their factual knowledge and understanding of aspects of the history of Britain to develop their awareness of Victorian life. They recognise the similarities and differences between their own school life and that of Victorian children. Most pupils are starting to select and link information from a variety of sources, such as books and artefacts. However, their use of computers in their history work is limited, except for homework. All pupils have produced topic folders on aspects of the Victorian period and it is evident that higher attaining pupils have participated in independent research to produce useful, comprehensive work. Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs cover the same topics as other pupils, but their research and recording methods are at a simpler level.
152. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in Years 1 to 6. Examples of good teaching and learning were seen in lessons in Years 3 and 4. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and use a range of suitable strategies to develop pupils' historical knowledge and understanding as well as their enquiry skills. In the good Year 4 lesson, artefacts were used well to help pupils of all levels of prior attainment answer questions and form their own conclusions about Ancient Egypt. This practical aspect of the lesson caught pupils' interest and increased their attentiveness and concentration. The lesson was well organised and managed so that each group of pupils had the benefit of a box of artefacts. Adults helped pupils to develop their understanding as they explored the artefacts, especially supporting the pupils with special educational needs. Independent learning was encouraged well by pupils looking at books to identify any artefacts that they did not immediately recognise. In the good Year 3 lesson, pupils developed their understanding of Roman times well in their work on Boudicca. The teacher's confident introduction and skilful questioning at the beginning of the lesson reflected a good knowledge and interest in history.
153. In a satisfactory lesson in Year 2, pupils discussed their memories of childhood. The teacher organised the lesson so that pupils were, at one point, paired to discuss their memories with a partner. This helped them to share their ideas in a focused way and ensured that no pupil was left out of sharing a memory. However, the activities in the lesson did not promote any deeper understanding of chronology, such as ordering events or photographs might have achieved. Throughout the school, there is little evidence of pupils with potential for higher attainment being given more challenging extension tasks. While there is some use of computers to support learning in history lessons, for example, in Year 4 in work on Ancient Egypt, this is not a strong feature of provision in history. The school recognises this as a priority for development.

154. The leadership and management of history are satisfactory. The main co-ordinator and a 'shadow' co-ordinator are both enthusiastic about the subject, but both were appointed only at the start of this term. The subject policy was reviewed in 2001 and a long-term plan covering all year groups is based on national guidance. Writing in the subject, especially at the top end of the school, makes an effective contribution to the development of pupils' literacy skills. Resources for history are good, especially the artefact collection evident in a 1940s display. The school makes good use of the Stevenage Museum for the loan of artefacts, for instance, for the present Year 4 topic on the Ancient Egyptians.
155. The co-ordinator has analysed teachers' planning, pupils' work and classroom displays. She has the use of a folder of pupils' work in order to check the standards achieved with National Curriculum requirements. Pupils are assessed at the end of each topic using the assessment documents that form part of the national guidance. However, this information is not used fully to guide the planning of learning opportunities. Visitors to the school enhance the history curriculum. These include a visiting history group who perform for Year 4 in connection with their work on the Tudors and Year 6 with reference to Britain since 1940. Members of pupils' families have also visited Year 1 classes to discuss and compare the toys they used with those of today. The work in history contributes well to pupils' cultural development. Activities that involve pupils working together, for instance to explore the use of artefacts, benefits their social development.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

156. The standard of pupils' work in information and communication technology in Years 2 and 6 matches that expected nationally for pupils of this age. All groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress as they move up from Year 1 to Year 6. Few pupils, however, are working at a higher level than that expected for their age. This is because there is a lack of specific planning to challenge pupils with potential for higher attainment. Good resources in a new computer room and additional computers in classrooms linked to the Internet are supporting a developing use of computers in subjects, as well as the teaching of specific skills. However, there is inconsistency across subjects and classes in how well computers are used at times other than specific lessons.
157. Pupils in Year 2 have the expected skills for their age in accessing computer programs confidently, for example, to support the development of their reading skills. They are familiar with the keyboard and the function of many icons on the computer screen. When using a text program most pupils competently highlight text, changing its colour and style. Higher attaining pupils successfully change 'mood' sentences to a colour they believe will match the feeling. Lower attaining pupils, and those with a special educational needs, are well supported to undertake the same activities as other pupils. Most pupils use different tools in a paint program independently. They create pictures in the style of Mondrian as well as other illustrations. They understand control such as in programmable toys, and change or move items on screen when using programs to represent real or imaginary situations. They print their work with adult support. Most pupils have the expected knowledge for their age of how work is saved and retrieved for future use. They have a clear understanding how computerised household devices work, and operate tape players in school. They know that information and games can be found on the Internet.
158. By Year 6, pupils have a broad knowledge of the use of computers in the wider community and also for social, commercial and security use. For example, they recognise the use of security cameras and devices. They are aware of the computerised control of traffic lights and train crossing barriers. Pupils have satisfactory experience of practical control through the use of programmable toys, on-screen routes for a 'screen turtle' and the use of sensors to measure pulse rates before and after exercise. Pupils ably discuss how information from a range of sources, including the Internet, pictures, photographs and books can be gathered together for use in a multi-media presentation. They are excited about a multi-media presentation they are working on to share in an assembly. When discussing it, they use the correct technical terms. In using the Internet for research, pupils are aware of different avenues of searching and that some are better than others for specific searches. All are aware of the dangers of unsupervised activities on the Internet that involve contacts unknown to them. Pupils have gained a wide experience of using

word processing skills in writing stories and poems, and presenting information through publishing packages to make a newspaper. They have a satisfactory understanding of organising information in databases and graphs. All understand email.

159. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in Years 1 to 6. During the inspection a very good lesson was seen in one Year 5 class, but a poor lesson was also observed in one Year 1 class. Throughout the school, teachers show generally satisfactory knowledge to teach the skills at each age group. Lessons move at a pace that matches pupils' needs. Planning for work, organisation and management of pupils in the computer room is very precise, so that the time available is used to the full.
160. Day-to-day assessment and reinforcement of skills in the classroom ensure that teachers know each pupil's needs. Some challenge is evident for higher attaining pupils, but their needs are not specifically planned for and this is to some extent holding down standards. Additional support is given to pupils with special educational needs and those who are lower attaining to ensure that they can access the class activities. In the Year 2 classes, an additional task for higher attaining pupils did successfully require them to use and apply the knowledge they had just learned. Opportunities to practise in the classroom what has been learned in the computer room reinforce the skills acquired. Pupils are given effective help by support staff when working on computers in the classroom.
161. In the very good lesson in a Year 5 class, time was used extremely well for the whole class to fully cover the lesson content for that day and to achieve the lesson objectives very effectively. Very good planning and organisation, combined with direct teaching and opportunities to think for themselves, ensured pupils made very good progress in the use of an art program to produce a collage. Very good relationships, challenge for all pupils and the use of very focused questions ensured that pupils worked well and evaluated their learning at the end of the lesson.
162. In the poor lesson in Year 1, pupils did not understand what the lesson was about because this had not been communicated clearly to them. The management of pupils was weak. The time allocated was not used well enough, resulting in pupils not covering enough work. While the instruction in basic skills was secure, further help given to pupils was very directed and did not encourage pupils to think for themselves. This resulted in pupils achieving a lower standard than expected and their attitudes and behaviour were not good enough.
163. The leadership and management of information and communication technology are satisfactory. A new co-ordinator took over responsibility for this area at the start of this term. The co-ordinator is aiming to extend the use of computers in other subjects and also to check the effectiveness of teaching and learning throughout the school. She already scrutinises teachers' planning, gives advice to colleagues and checks that work is at the correct level for the age of the pupils. She also discusses with staff any changes in the learning opportunities required. While much good use is made of the Internet and computer programs in other subjects, the school recognises that this needs further development. There is little use of new technology in music. Good use is made of school trips, including residential visits, to enhance the learning in information and communication technology. Although day-to-day assessment takes place, there are no formal whole-school assessment procedures by which teachers can check pupils' overall progress. This limits the identification of those who are higher attaining and those who may need help. There is a home-school agreement in place to protect pupils in the use of the Internet.

MUSIC

164. The standard of pupils' work in music is as expected nationally throughout the school. During the inspection, direct evidence was collected of standards in Year 2, but no lessons were observed in Year 6. However, in all year groups observed, pupils' work was at the level expected for their age. All groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress as they move up through the school.

165. Pupils in Year 2 have a developing sense of pitch when using voices, instruments and actions. They show a good understanding of 'high', 'low', 'fast' and 'slow' and can demonstrate these with voices and actions. Some distinguish between a glockenspiel and a xylophone and use chime bars to indicate pitch. Most tap the notes in sequence up and down the scale and understand that the notes are going 'up' or 'down'. Almost all pupils in Years 1 and 2 sing tunefully, clearly and confidently during hymn practice when the hymn is one that they already know. When introduced to a new hymn, they sing showing a secure sense of the melody's shape and maintain the beat in simple patterns.
166. Although no Year 6 lessons were seen, the standards observed in Year 5 are as expected for pupils of this age. Year 5 pupils perform a 'switch pattern' with a sound every four beats. Nearly all, including those with special educational needs, satisfactorily improvise repeating patterns and show an awareness of the combined class effort. They understand how to layer rhythmic patterns and also recognise rhythmic patterns in simple well-known tunes and songs. In the hymn practice for pupils in Years 3 to 6, standards of singing were adequate overall, but not particularly robust or enthusiastic. Singing improved as pupils learned a new hymn.
167. The overall quality of teaching and learning in music is satisfactory. Some examples of good teaching were seen during the inspection in Years 2 and 3. In the Year 2 lesson, the teacher showed good subject knowledge and had clear expectations for pupils' attitudes and behaviour. The activities appropriately supported pupils in learning to develop a sense of pitch, using instruments, voices and actions. The challenge was limited slightly by all pupils being engaged in a whole class activity without anything additional to push on further those capable of higher attainment, but they all listened and responded well.
168. In the Year 3 lesson, each activity built logically on that which had gone before, so developing pupils' musical skills and awareness at a good rate. The teacher successfully encouraged pupils to get into a 'musical mood' by passing a tambour around the circle to the tune of, 'London Bridge is Falling Down'. Through these activities, pupils developed their awareness of rhythm well and gained insight into how tempo affects music and expression. They also developed understanding of the relationship between sounds and the way they can be used expressively. In a less successful although satisfactory lesson in Year 5, the teacher gave too much emphasis to frequently reinforcing the lesson's purpose and this interrupted the flow of the activities. As a result, the pace of learning was slowed.
169. While individual teachers assess pupils' attainment and progress on a day-to-day basis, there are no formalised whole-school assessment procedures, for example with records passed on from one teacher to the next at the end of the school year. This limits how well the learning opportunities can be modified to meet pupils' differing needs. In particular, this sometimes results in a lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils even in lessons that are otherwise good. Resources for the subject are good and there is a large, impressive display of musical instruments in the main hall, including a few instruments from different cultures. The music curriculum is enhanced by a recorder club, which takes place during lunchtimes and is attended by pupils from Years 2 to 6. Guitar, violin and flute lessons are provided for pupils whose parents pay for tuition. Music makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development. Through working together on a variety of activities, pupils' social development is enhanced. The content of the music lessons contributes to pupils' cultural development, although there is not a strong emphasis on learning about other cultures.
170. The leadership and management of music are satisfactory overall. Areas for development have been identified, including raising the profile of music in the school, more use of new technology including computers, and inviting musicians into the school more frequently. Presently, there is very little use of new technology to support pupils' learning in music. Towards the end of last term the co-ordinator updated the overview of the long-term plan for work in music. So far she has had no opportunity to check class lessons by observing them, but the subject is due to become a priority on the school development plan shortly. There is, however, adequate checking of teachers' weekly planning.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

171. Standards in physical education are as expected nationally in Years 2 and 6. There are some examples of pupils achieving good standards throughout the school. All groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress as they move up from Year 1 to Year 6.
172. Pupils in Year 2 have the expected skills for their age in controlling a ball. About a third of the pupils show considerable accuracy in throwing and catching, and around half have good control in rolling a large ball around their bodies. Several pupils roll a ball very accurately along a bench in a straight line. Pupils have the expected control in stretching movements during a warm-up activity. In moving about the hall, they show a satisfactory awareness for their age of others and the space around them. The overall control of their movement is also as expected at this age.
173. Year 6 pupils achieve satisfactory standards in developing a sequence of movements that contain jumps, rolls, balances, and held shapes. They make appropriate use of apparatus to devise and practise a sequence of movements. The control and fluency of pupils' movements are as expected at this age. A few higher attaining pupils achieve a particularly good standard in balancing, for example, on their upper torsos. They use each other's bodies to jump over and move through. Most pupils can swim by the time they reach the end of Year 4 and parents are informed if a pupil cannot swim 25 metres. Most successfully swim 25 metres by the end of Year 6. Many Year 4 pupils show good posture when following the teacher's instructions about how to stand and move when bowling. When using bats and balls, many watch the ball closely and this helps the accuracy of their actions.
174. The overall quality of teaching and learning throughout Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory. Examples of good teaching and learning were seen in Years 2 and 4. In the best lessons, teachers share the lesson purpose with pupils at the outset and have good dialogue with them about previous work. In these lessons, pupils begin the lesson secure in knowing what they are aiming to achieve and they are eager to start. The teachers make good use of demonstration, carefully selecting pupils who are performing an activity well. They give the pupils sufficient time to develop their skills before moving on to the next activity. Pupils are actively engaged in examining their own performance and making suggestions about how they and others might improve. Most teachers demonstrate what they want the pupils to achieve and some show strong enthusiasm that is matched by that of the pupils.
175. Almost all lessons are satisfactorily planned and in some there are additional activities to challenge the pupils whose skills are well developed. For example, in a Year 4 lesson, smaller balls were given to the pupils who handled larger balls easily. There are occasions where examples of very good practice are not used effectively to set standards for others. For example, in a dance lesson in Year 5, some pupils who attend dance classes show excellent body control and movements that are ignored. The result is that there are missed opportunities to help all pupils to improve through observation of this high quality work.
176. Teachers throughout the school give clear explanations to which pupils respond positively by working well. Most teachers exercise good control of pupils and the activities. This ensures that pupils listen well and are able to learn at least satisfactorily. When using tape recordings, for example for instruction in dance, the teachers make appropriate interventions to ensure that pupils understand what is required of them. They also join in the activity themselves. However, the tape recordings themselves are not always effective in capturing pupils' interest, especially where a long string of instructions is given that are difficult for pupils to remember. The result is some inappropriate behaviour, especially by boys. Support staff are not always actively involved in physical education lessons and sometimes seem uncertain as to what to do other than reinforce the teachers' instructions. This is a waste of a valuable resource.
177. The quality and range of activities for physical education are satisfactory. Action is taken to help pupils who cannot swim 25 metres at the end of Year 4, for example by letting them join in with Year 4 swimming in the next year. There is a good range of extra-curricular provision. Pupils in

Years 5 and 6 have opportunities for outdoor pursuits during residential visits. The school has good indoor and outdoor facilities for physical education and takes part in a number of competitions with other local schools. A local secondary school also provides opportunities for extra sporting activities during school holidays.

178. The physical education co-ordinator has held responsibility for the subject for the last two years, since Lodge Farm Primary School was established. She has reviewed and updated the policy with the advice and support of the local education authority adviser. There is an appropriate partnership in overseeing the curriculum with another member of staff who acts as a 'shadow' co-ordinator. There are as yet no formal arrangements for checking the teaching of physical education. The co-ordinator does not, for example, see teachers' planning. Standards of attainment are checked for the pupils who take part in award schemes for swimming, netball and athletics. However, there are no formal whole-school arrangements for regularly checking the attainment and progress of all pupils in physical education. These are areas requiring development. There are good resources for physical education and the resources are well stored and accessible.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

179. Standards in Years 2 and Year 6 are broadly as expected in relation to the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils make satisfactory progress as they move up from Year 1 to Year 6 in their learning about and from religion. This applies to all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language.
180. In Year 2, pupils have developed an understanding about some features of the life of Jesus, such as the stories of Christmas and Easter. From this, they are developing awareness of the importance of giving as well as receiving and of saying 'thank you'. Teachers make effective use of religious artefacts to enrich pupils' learning. As a result, pupils are beginning to recognise some signs and symbols associated with religion, such as the Christian cross. They have a simple understanding about the importance of a prayer mat in Muslim worship. Good cross-curricular links are made with other subjects, such as art and design and design and technology, when pupils make cards and design their own prayer mats. In these activities, they successfully use their knowledge and understanding of religious education. Pupils talk enthusiastically about their work and are keen to answer questions and show what they know.
181. By Year 6, pupils have increased their knowledge of Christianity. They have been introduced to Sikhism, Judaism, Hinduism and Buddhism. They know something of the values, beliefs and customs associated with these religions. They have an adequate understanding of some of the different ways of describing God and the influence of religion on rules for living. For example, pupils are familiar with the Ten Commandments and their importance in the Jewish religion. They are starting to think about issues related to how faith affects behaviour and the way people live their lives. Most pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of key religious figures and leaders. They know that Christians believe Jesus is the Son of God and that there is more to being a Christian than going to church on a Sunday. Most pupils show interest in religious education, are fascinated by stories from different religions, and are keen to learn.
182. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in Years 1 to 6. A good lesson was seen in one Year 3 class. In this lesson, secure subject knowledge was imparted to pupils through direct teaching, exploration of artefacts and information provided by a Muslim pupil. Pupils' learning took place at a good pace. Respect for Muslim artefacts and the sacredness of the Qu'ran was encouraged. The success of this was evident in the pupils' response. Good use was made of a computer to access an Internet site for further research. As a result, pupils' learning about aspects of Islam was good.
183. Most teachers manage pupils' behaviour well. In response, pupils are attentive and listen to adults and each other, showing interest and respect. In the lessons in which teaching and learning were satisfactory, there were missed opportunities to promote understanding at a higher level and to make links between another faith and Christianity. Teachers across the school do not do enough

to challenge pupils capable of higher attainment, other than by just giving them more of the same work. The use of computers is not established in religious education teaching in all classes, although they are used satisfactorily overall.

184. Learning opportunities, which are satisfactory, are planned in line with the recently revised locally agreed syllabus and the accompanying plan of work. They make a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual and moral development. However, similar topics and themes are revisited in different year groups. When drawing up their plans for each half term, teachers are not taking enough care to ensure that they identify content and learning goals, which are at a higher level than was previously taught. Currently, pupils' depth of understanding does not always develop in a sequential manner through the school and some work is repeated at a similar level to that undertaken earlier. This is partly because there are no whole-school procedures for checking pupils' attainment and progress in religious education. Therefore, when pupils move on to the next year, teachers do not have sufficient information from which to plan pupils' subsequent steps of learning.
185. The leadership and management of religious education are satisfactory overall. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and provides satisfactory support and guidance for colleagues. While she has had some opportunity to check pupils' books to ensure that the revised syllabus and plan of work are being implemented, she has not yet had the opportunity to observe teaching and learning in the classroom. This aspect of checking the school's provision has not been delegated as part of her role. Consequently, weaknesses in teaching and planning have not been identified.