

INSPECTION REPORT

STOBERRY PARK SCHOOL

Wells

LEA area: Somerset

Unique reference number: 132227

Headteacher: Mr M Hawkins

Reporting inspector: Miss M A Warner
17288

Dates of inspection: 27 – 30 January 2003

Inspection number: 248954

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	North Road Wells Somerset
Postcode:	BA5 2TJ
Telephone number:	01749 672516
Fax number:	01749 670822
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Ms J Hodgson
Date of previous inspection:	Not previously inspected

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
17288	M A Warner	Registered inspector	Information and communication technology Religious education	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?
13762	N Shelley	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?
14706	B Knowles	Team inspector	Special educational needs English Art and design Design and technology	
23055	W Lucas	Team inspector	Science Music Foundation stage Educational inclusion	

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
30717	G Tompsett	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History Physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

The inspection contractor was:

PkR Educational Consultants Ltd
6 Sherman Road
Bromley
BR1 3JH

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33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Stoberry Park School is a primary school in the centre of the city of Wells. It was opened in 2001 following the amalgamation of Stoberry Park Infant School and Stoberry Park Junior School. The school is bigger than most primary schools nationally, with 304 pupils on roll and 12 classes of pupils aged four to 11 years old. Pupils are admitted to the reception class in the September of the year they are five years old. There are considerably more boys than girls in three of the classes. Pupils come from a wide catchment area, which includes two council-owned housing estates and a smaller amount of private housing. Almost all pupils come from white heritage backgrounds, with a very small minority coming from Asian or other backgrounds. No pupil speaks English as an additional language. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is uncertain, as cooked meals are not provided and claims are not always made. The known percentage, of 5.6 per cent, is below the national average. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs is 18.4 per cent, which is below the national average. The percentage of pupils who are additionally funded by the Local Education Authority, 0.9 per cent, is below the national average for pupils who are usually given a Statement of Special Educational Needs. These include severe learning needs, emotional and behavioural needs and autistic needs. Pupils enter the school with standards that are similar to those expected nationally for children of their age. The school is very committed to new initiatives involving information and communication technology to help raise standards.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Stoberry Park School is very well led and managed. Significant improvements and developments have been made since amalgamation, as a result of the headteacher's excellent leadership. The quality of teaching is good, overall, and often very good. The large majority of pupils have very good attitudes to learning and they leave the school having reached the nationally expected levels. Recent developments, in this new school, have yet to have an impact on promoting higher standards. Costs have been higher than usual because of the implications of the merger of the previous schools. However, the underlying cost of education is close to the national and local averages. The school is giving good value for money.

What the school does well

- Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) is very good and is being used to raise standards in a number of ways with the result that pupils' skills in ICT are above those expected nationally by the end of Year 6.
- Standards are above those expected nationally in art and design, design and technology and physical education at the end of both Years 2 and 6.
- The school provides an excellent range of extra-curricular activities.
- Teaching in the reception year, Years 2 and 6 is often very good or excellent.
- The management of pupils is very good and the school successfully promotes very positive attitudes and good standards of behaviour.
- The leadership of the headteacher is excellent and he is very ably supported by the deputy headteacher. The staff and governors have a shared commitment to school improvement and a considerable capacity to succeed.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and all pupils are fully integrated into the many aspects of school life. There are well-trained and well-briefed support assistants.

What could be improved

- The raising of standards in English, mathematics and science.
- Assessment and its use to plan lessons to cater for the range of abilities in the classes.
- Teaching in Year 5 so that it matches the quality in other year groups.
- The roles of the senior management team and subject leaders, which are beginning to be developed.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

This is a new school, so improvement since the last inspection does not apply.

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	N/A	C	E
Mathematics	N/A	N/A	D	E
Science	N/A	N/A	C	E

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

Pupils start school with standards that are similar to those expected of children of their age in all areas of learning except their language and number skills, which are below those expected. By the time they leave the reception classes they are reaching standards that are above those nationally expected in their personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world, and physical development. They are reaching the expected standards in their communication, language, literacy, numeracy and creative development. Overall, these children make good progress and achieve well.

As this is a new school there are no statutory test results before 2002. In the tests at the end of Year 2, the pupils' performance in reading was the same as in most schools, but they did less well in writing and mathematics. In the teachers' assessments in science, the pupils' results were lower than in most schools across the country.

In the tests at the end of Year 6, the pupils' results in English and science matched the national average, but they were lower than in most schools in mathematics. The targets set for English and mathematics were not reached. The pupils' performances at ages seven and 11 are well below those of pupils in schools with similar characteristics, relating to entitlement to free school meals. Results in the previous infant school were low and the new systems in place have not had time to make a full impact on present standards throughout the school.

In the National Curriculum tests in 2002, boys underachieved in Year 2 and girls in Year 6, in all three subjects. There was no evidence of any significant variation in the attainment and progress of boys and girls during the inspection. Pupils with special educational needs achieve standards that are appropriate for their age and ability.

During the inspection, standards were found to be above average in art and design, design and technology and physical education at the end of both Years 2 and 6 and in ICT, music and religious education by Year 6. They were in line with what is nationally expected in English, science, geography and history at the end of Years 2 and 6 and in ICT, music and religious education in Year 2. They are below what is nationally expected in mathematics at the end of Years 2 and 6. In Years 1 to 6 pupils' achievement is satisfactory, overall, as they make satisfactory progress.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are justifiably very enthusiastic about school. They like almost all their lessons and have a high regard for their teachers. They participate well in activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. It is sometimes very good and the behaviour of only a small minority of pupils is unsatisfactory. Two pupils were excluded last year, but there have been no exclusions since.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils get on very well together at work and play and have very good relationships with adults. They work well in teams and in pairs, offering and accepting ideas between them. They respond positively to the limited opportunities that they are offered to exercise initiative and take on responsibility.
Attendance	Good. It is above the average for primary schools. Unauthorised absence is negligible. Absence, owing to family holidays, is more than that usually found in primary schools nationally.

Strengths: pupils' enthusiasm; their participation in activities; their behaviour and personal development; their relationships and attendance.

Weaknesses: the unsatisfactory behaviour of a small minority of pupils, an underdeveloped use of initiative and experience of responsibility.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching was good, overall, in all three key stages. Teaching was very good or excellent in nearly one half of the lessons in reception, Years 1 and 2 classes and in Year 6. The quality of teaching was good or better in four-fifths of lessons in Years 3 and 4 classes and good or better in one half of the lessons in Year 5. A very small amount of unsatisfactory teaching was observed, mainly due to lack of confidence.

The effectiveness of the teaching of literacy skills is good and the effectiveness of the teaching of numeracy skills is satisfactory. Strengths in teaching are teachers' subject knowledge, the management of pupils and the use of time and resources. There is inconsistency in quality of teaching and pupils' knowledge and understanding in science across year groups, and the teaching of religious education within year groups. The setting of targets is not consistent across the school.

The quality of pupils' learning, overall, is good in all years except Year 5 where it is satisfactory. Strengths in learning are in the pupils' interest and concentration and the effort that they put into their work. The main weaknesses relate to lack of focus on their work and the pupils' own knowledge of what they have learned and how they can improve.

Pupils with special educational needs are taught well, with basic skills taught very well. Support staff are used effectively, with pupils making good progress in their skills, knowledge and understanding. The needs of higher attaining pupils are not addressed as successfully in all classes.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. The school provides a very good, purposeful and relevant curriculum with a very good range of worthwhile learning opportunities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. The very good provision enables pupils to make good progress towards their personal targets in their individual education plans.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The school makes satisfactory provision for pupils' personal development. The provision for social development is very good and the development of moral and spiritual provision is good. There has been a significant improvement since the school opened.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The pupils are treated in such a way that they feel encouraged, valued and safe. However, governors have not yet implemented formal procedures to ensure that relevant risk assessments and safety checks are carried out.

Parents are confident about the school and mainly positive. Most negative comments were by very few parents and were often in the spirit of improvement rather than complaint. School works closely with parents.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school, is supported very ably by the deputy headteacher and has built a very effective team. Key stage co-ordinators are able teachers and very good role models. Many of the subject co-ordinators are specialists in their subject.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors fulfil their responsibilities well. They are fully aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and, together with the headteacher, take a full part in shaping the direction of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The school has good systems in place and is making very good use of new initiatives to raise standards. Staff use, analyse and evaluate different initiatives well.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. Costs have been higher than usual because of the implications of the merger of the previous schools. This additional funding has been used strategically and the underlying cost of education is close to average.

Particular strengths are the headteacher's vision for the school, his excellent leadership and success in team building and the support given by the deputy headteacher. The management roles of the co-ordinators and senior management team are in the process of being developed. The principles of best value are applied very well.

The school has a very good match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum. Accommodation is adequate, but the separate buildings do not help to promote the ethos of one school.

There is a satisfactory range of learning resources and very good resources for information and communication technology.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The leadership and management of the school.• The good standard of teaching and the progress that pupils make.• Their children like school and behave well.• The staff are very approachable.• The school helps their children to become mature and responsible.• Many improvements have been made.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The amount of homework given.• Information about their children's progress.

Inspectors generally agree with parents' positive views. Parents' views about homework are justified, because it is not set consistently throughout the school. Inspectors judge that information about pupils' progress is good, overall, although reports are not sufficiently clear about attainment other than in Years 2 and 6. There is, however, inadequate feedback to parents about progress, with regard to improvement targets.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

Strengths

- Standards in personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world, and physical development in reception classes.
- The performance of higher attaining pupils in Year 2 in science.
- The performance of higher attaining pupils in Year 6 in mathematics.
- Standards in art and design, design and technology and physical education at the end of Years 2 and 6.
- Standards in information and communication technology, music and religious education by the end of Year 6.

Weaknesses

- Overall standards in writing and mathematics in National Curriculum tests and science assessment in Year 2.
- Overall standards in mathematics National Curriculum tests in Year 6.
- Standards in English, mathematics and science, in both Years 2 and 6, when compared with similar schools, which are based on pupils' entitlement to free school meals.

Reception Year

1. Children start school with standards that are similar to those expected of children of their age in all areas of learning except their language and number skills, which are below those expected. By the time they leave the reception classes they are reaching standards that are above that expected in their personal, social and emotional development, their knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development. They are reaching the expected standards in communication, language, literacy, numeracy and creative development. Overall, these children make good progress and achieve well.

National Curriculum tests

2. In 2002, standards in the National Curriculum tests in reading were in line with the national average and in writing were below the national average at the end of Year 2. Results of tests in English were in line with the national average at the end of Year 6. The percentages of pupils reaching the higher levels, at the end of Years 2 and 6, were in line with the national average. When compared with similar schools, standards in reading and writing, at the end of Year 2, and English at the end of Year 6, were well below the national average. The school did not reach the targets set for pupils in English at the end of Year 6, which were set too high on inadequate data. Whilst the percentage of higher attainers was average, the number reaching the expected levels was well below average, mainly because of inadequate reading and writing skills of the majority. The introduction of new reading schemes linked to ICT, however, are beginning to improve standards in reading and comprehension across the school, and a new handwriting scheme has been introduced to help pupils to write more fluently and, thereby, be able to concentrate on the content rather than the skill of writing in Years 3 to 6. Pupils are making satisfactory progress towards the targets, based on previous results, for this year.
3. In mathematics, in 2002, standards in the National Curriculum tests were below the national average at the end of Years 2 and 6, although the results for higher attaining pupils at the end of Year 6 were above the national average. When compared with

similar schools, standards in mathematics at the end of both Years 2 and 6 were below the national average, with the percentage reaching the higher Level 5 being in line with the national average. The school did not reach the targets set for pupils in English at the end of Year 6. The school had few pupils who were just below the expected Levels 2 and 4 standards, and this brought down the overall results. The school has, as a result, found that 'booster' classes are not always successful.

4. In science, in 2002, teachers' assessments in Year 2 and National Curriculum tests in Year 6 showed that standards were below the national average at the end of Year 2 and in line with the national average at the end of Year 6. The percentages of pupils who attained the higher Levels 3 and 5 were in line with national averages. When compared with similar schools, standards were well below the national average at the end of Years 2 and 6 with the percentage reaching the higher Level 3 well above the national average and the percentage reaching Level 5 below the national average. As in mathematics, the school had few pupils attaining at the just below Levels 2 and 4 standards and this brought down the overall results. Results compared with similar schools are not reliable because of the unknown factor of how many pupils are entitled to free school meals. However, results in the previous infant school were low and the new systems in place have not had time to make a full impact on present standards throughout the school.
5. Boys outperformed girls overall in National Curriculum tests, although inspection findings did not find any significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls.

Inspection findings

6. During the inspection, standards were found to be above average in art and design, design and technology and physical education at the end of both Years 2 and 6, and in ICT, music and religious education by Year 6. They were in line with what is nationally expected in English, science, geography and history at the end of Years 2 and 6 and in ICT, music and religious education in Year 2. They are below what is nationally expected in mathematics at the end of Years 2 and 6. In Years 1 to 6 pupils' achievement is satisfactory, overall, as they make satisfactory progress.
7. The school analyses its test data and, as a result, has identified some variations between boys and girls in the end-of-key-stage tests. It has been noted that there is a trend for boys to underachieve in reading and girls in science and mathematics. As a result, the school has taken steps to ensure that boys' interests are met by providing a wider range of books that interest them. Tests show that teachers overestimated the standards reached by girls. However, the school has already begun to improve teachers' assessment skills through training. The school has an ongoing determination to improve the attainment of all groups of pupils. There was no evidence of any significant variation in attainment and progress of boys and girls during the inspection.
8. Pupils with special educational needs achieve standards that are appropriate for their age and ability. Arrangements for identifying and supporting these pupils are good. They are well supported in classrooms by teachers and learning support staff, so that they make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. This support is particularly effective in English. In other subjects, teachers and learning support assistants spend extra time with these pupils to ensure that success and work are matched carefully to the pupils' needs.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

Strengths

- Pupils are very enthusiastic about school and participate very well in activities.
- Pupils' behaviour and personal development are good.
- Relationships between the pupils are very good.
- Attendance is good.

Weaknesses

- The behaviour of a small minority of pupils is unsatisfactory.
- Pupils' use of initiative and the opportunities given to take responsibility are underdeveloped.

Pupils' attitudes to school

9. The pupils are justifiably very enthusiastic about school. They like almost all their lessons and have a high regard for their teachers. They particularly enjoy the various extra-curricular activities in which many of them take part, and older pupils value the recent training they have received for peer mediation. They are disappointed that a school newspaper did not go ahead and say that there is too little to do in the playground. Almost all pupils work conscientiously and co-operate with their teachers. They arrive at school each morning in a positive frame of mind and take advantage of all the experiences that are available to them. The pupils with special educational needs enjoy the activities planned and have very good attitudes to learning. They wish to succeed, take a pride in their work and have positive self-esteem.

Pupils' behaviour

10. The pupils behave well. Their behaviour is sometimes very good and the behaviour of only a small minority of pupils is unsatisfactory. One pupil was excluded last year, but there have been no exclusions since then. Parents are very pleased with the improvement that has been achieved in the standards of behaviour. Much of the good behaviour is attributable to the good learning experiences that teachers provide. A minority of pupils have difficulty exercising self-control and sustaining concentration, but they are usually managed well by teachers. In instances where a pupil's behaviour is persistently unacceptable, the pupil is required to reflect on his or her actions and complete an isolation form that calls for the pupil to take responsibility for his or her actions by explaining them and describing intended improvement. The school finds that this approach effectively brings about improvement. Movement around the school is orderly and the pupils generally conduct themselves sensibly. The pupils confirm that bullying is rare.

Pupils' personal development and relationships

11. The relationships between pupils and with the adults in the school are very good. The pupils get on very well together at work and play. In an English lesson, pupils worked in pairs to prepare a draft text for a story. They offered and accepted ideas between them, made decisions about how to go about it and were very tolerant and mutually supportive. In a class-led assembly, the pupils presented news flashes about a country they had previously researched. They worked as a team and were watched and listened to with respect and interest by pupils in other classes. The experiences that the pupils undergo; for example, at residential outdoor centres, visits to places of interest, raising funds for charities, taking part in dramatic and musical productions and other extra-curricular activities, contribute very much to building their confidence, independence and relevant skills. They respond positively to the limited opportunities they are offered to exercise initiative and take on responsibility, whether it is routine or

more demanding such as peer mediation. Older pupils are pleased to sit next to younger pupils while having lunch, talk with them and help them if required.

12. The pupils show respect for different faiths. In a lesson about Jewish religious practices, pupils learnt about the observation of Shabbat and asked numerous questions, showing genuine interest. The pupils' spiritual awareness is less well developed because little attention is given to the wonder of life and the world around them, although they do explore the effect of music and art on feelings and perceptions. The pupils develop very well their understanding of right and wrong and a range of moral and social issues.

Attendance

13. The pupils' attendance is good because it is above the average for primary schools. Unauthorised absence is negligible. Absence owing to family holidays is more than that usually found in primary schools as many families travel widely. Whilst this means that pupils miss valuable school time it also means that they bring considerable knowledge to lessons; for example, as seen in a religious education lesson in Year 6. The pupils arrive on time for the start of the school day.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

Strengths

- The teaching in reception and Years 2 and 6 is often very good or excellent.
- The teaching of information and communication technology is very good and is being used well to help raise standards.
- History, music and physical education are taught well throughout the school.
- Strengths in learning are in the pupils' interest and concentration and the effort they put into their work.

Weaknesses

- There is inconsistency in the teaching of science and history.
- The main weakness in pupils' learning is in the pupils' own knowledge of what they have learned and how they can improve.

The quality of teaching

14. The quality of teaching in the school is, overall, good. Teaching is very good or excellent in one third of lessons and good or better in two-fifths of lessons. In the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 teaching is good or better in nine-tenths of lessons. There is a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching. Particular strengths in teaching are in reception and Years 2 and 6 and in the management of pupils across the school. Effective methods are used and support staff are mainly well deployed. Time and learning resources are also used well. Teachers' expectations are suitable high in Years 1 and 2 and in Years 3 and 6, but could be higher in Year 5 and sometimes in Year 4. The school is being supported by the local education authority in identifying gifted and talented pupils and a training day has been planned. These pupils can attend workshops locally; for example, in music.
15. Teaching of the reception-aged children is generally good and there are examples of very good and excellent teaching. All staff work well together as a team and the very good support given by learning support assistants complements and enhances the work of the teachers. The very good management and example set by the early years co-ordinator, ensures that a good climate for learning is provided for adults and children. Good planning, co-operative, skilful teaching and a very stimulating

environment, ensures that the Foundation Stage underpins all future learning by promoting all areas of the early learning curriculum.

16. In Years 1 and 2, teaching was good or better in mathematics, history, music and physical education. In Years 3 to 6 teaching was good or better in art and design, history, information and communication technology, music, physical education and religious education.
17. The teaching of the 'knowledge and understanding' aspect of science is inconsistent across year groups. A further weakness in teaching is in the fact that target setting is not consistent. A very small number of unsatisfactory lessons were observed. This was because the lessons lacked pace and focus during group work activities and learning objectives were not met as pupils became restless, the teacher lacked confidence and the management of pupils was unsatisfactory. There is much good practice in teaching in the school and opportunities to share this good practice could be developed more.
18. The effectiveness of the teaching of literacy skills is good and the effectiveness of the teaching of numeracy skills is satisfactory.

How well pupils learn and make progress

19. The quality of learning is very good or better in one quarter of lessons. In Years 1 and 4 the quality of learning is good or better in all lessons. Strengths in learning are in the pupils' interest and concentration and the effort they put into their work. The main weakness is in the pupils' own knowledge of what they have learned and how they can improve.
20. Pupils with special educational needs are well taught. Teachers know their pupils. All staff are familiar with pupils' individual education plans and try to ensure that tasks are relevant, so that pupils make good progress. Basic skills are taught very well. Support staff are used effectively, with records of gains in skills, knowledge and understanding maintained. Autistic children are encouraged well to communicate; for example, by means of the 'Pets as Therapy (PAT)' scheme, when a girl counted the spots on the dog's coat.
21. Teachers' planning and provision enables equality of access and opportunity for their pupils with both lower and higher attaining pupils included in all activities. Higher attaining pupils achieved well in Years 2 and 6 because of very good teaching, however, they are not consistently taught to the level of their ability and the 'booster' classes are not proving to be as effective as the school would wish. However, the school is presently reviewing the organisation, and plans to make adjustments to ensure that there is greater benefit for those pupils involved. The school has not yet identified pupils who are gifted or talented. Pupils, who are talented in music, however, and those with special educational needs, make good progress in relation to their individual education plans.

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

Strengths

- The school provides a very good, purposeful and relevant curriculum.
- The curriculum is enhanced very well by the use of information and communication technology.
- The provision for extra-curricular opportunities is excellent and greatly enhances the curriculum.
- There is good provision for pupils' social and moral development.
- Arrangements for identifying and supporting pupils with special educational needs are very good.

The quality and range of opportunities for learning provided by the school for all pupils, including whether statutory requirements are met

22. The school provides a very good, purposeful and relevant curriculum with a very good range of worthwhile learning opportunities that successfully meet the interests, aptitudes and special educational needs of its pupils. The curriculum for the youngest children is carefully planned to meet the requirements of the Early Learning Goals and the Stepping Stones for learning. The curriculum for Years 1 to 6 meets statutory requirements to teach all subjects in the National Curriculum and religious education. There have been significant improvements in the whole-school curriculum since the two schools were amalgamated, in particular, the adoption of appropriate schemes of work for all subjects and long and medium-term planning. The schemes of work provide for secure continuity and progression in learning and appropriate guidance to teachers. A concern is the use of assessments in the planning of work, to ensure that it matches the needs of all the pupils. The use of ICT across the curriculum is a major strength of the school. The main assets are the introduction of the 'Expresso' software, a computer-based learning resource of, for example, newsreel films as far back as the 1900s for history, appropriate support material that supports many areas of the curriculum and the accelerated reading program, which is improving standards in reading and comprehension through a progressive software package.
23. Personal, health and social education includes both sex education and drugs awareness. The whole subject is taught well, as the impact of the teaching is seen in the, overall, good behaviour and relationships of the vast majority of the pupils. However, there is no formal written policy and a designated time for the subject on the timetable. The school has implemented the government's recommended National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies effectively, and planning and teaching take appropriate account of the recommendations, both for lesson format and lesson content. There is a very positive school ethos, which reflects the school's commitment to equality of opportunity for all pupils. For example, the curriculum provides good equality of access and opportunity for pupils to learn and make progress; all staff are very well aware of the need to ensure that all pupils are fully included in all aspects of the school's life and, as a result, all pupils are included in activities very well. The school reflects equal opportunity in all its aims and objectives, curriculum and organisation and offers relevant role models to all pupils.
24. There are clear guidelines for responding to the needs of pupils with special educational needs. The school provides good support for these pupils, who are fully integrated into school life. Additional support in lessons is carefully considered and relevant to pupils' particular needs. The use of the computer for pupils with special educational needs to record their work is a particularly successful arrangement and the school is considering further ways to develop this through 'booster' classes.

25. An excellent range of well-supported extra-curricular activities takes place after school and at lunchtimes throughout the year. It includes two choirs, a recorders club and peripatetic music lessons. French, computer, art, chess, recorders, and country dancing and maypole dancing clubs, as well as sporting activities, such as football, cricket, athletics, netball, tennis, rugby and hockey are offered. A very good programme of educational visits, including a residential trip and 'special event' days is provided to further enrich the learning opportunities very successfully; for example, a major Commonwealth project, based in the first years on Jamaica and culminating in a celebration of dance, story-telling and drama on the Cathedral Green, and a Victorian Day. Pupils have also carried out a project on Bristol and a Greek Market day has been enjoyed with pupils preparing slide-show presentations using their newly-learnt ICT, 'PowerPoint' skills. The school's good links with the community, local schools, business and parents, enhance the curriculum provision and benefit the pupils greatly.

How well the school provides for pupils' personal, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development

26. The school makes satisfactory provision for pupils' personal development. Provision for their social development is very good and for their moral and spiritual development is good. This is a significant improvement, according to parents and governors, from the time when the school opened one year and a half ago. The school has plans to improve its provision for pupils' cultural development.
27. The curriculum provides a good range of opportunities for pupils to share the experience of people who have a range of religious beliefs and to understand some important elements of faith. For example, the religious education lesson in Year 4 featured the Jewish Shabbat and helped pupils to understand the Sabbath, why Jewish people rest and the reasons for many features of their observance. However, more opportunities could be provided in assemblies and collective worship for pupils to experience spiritual aspects of their own lives and to reflect on their response to them. The recognition of a supreme being is not always evident in these assemblies. The school provides a very supportive environment for children, where each individual feels valued and can gain self-confidence. Teaching styles value pupils' questions and give space for pupils' thoughts, ideas and concerns. Friendship was the theme of assemblies for the week of the inspection, where pupils were helped to understand and respect each other's feelings and to know what effect their actions have on others. They discuss and think about how they treat each other and how they would like to be treated themselves.
28. Pupils are given very clear guidelines about how they are expected to behave. As a result, there is good behaviour throughout the school. Discipline comes from the pupils. They know that if they have done wrong they will be punished, and the system of the isolation form helps pupils to reflect on their misdemeanours. They are developing confidence to act consistently in accordance with their own principles and develop a moral attitude to life. Opportunities to express their own views on ethical issues were evident; for example, in their work on balanced arguments about fox-hunting. Care for the environment is evident in their reasoning about the use of grass for play during the winter.
29. Very good provision is made for pupils to develop social relationships and for older pupils to take personal responsibility. As 'buddies' they recognise the needs of younger pupils, take a lead in initiating games and gain maturity in their relationships with adults. Older pupils are trained in peer mediation to resolve conflicts. The school council, representing each class, has been effective and adds to the sense of family, which

permeates the school. Pupils work effectively in small groups and pairs in lessons, contributing to each other's work, some teachers demonstrating that co-operation means interdependence without conflict. There are a limited number opportunities for pupils to take responsible leadership or understanding citizenship, but the school well responds to initiatives put forward by pupils; for example, to run Blue Peter events such as 'Water for Africa'.

30. A good range of opportunities are provided to develop an awareness of pupils' own cultural heritage, through theatre visits and studies of artists. Provision for their multicultural awareness is less well developed. Some opportunities are presented, however, such as when a Muslim parent spoke to the children about Ramadan, and the school has a visit from an Afro-Caribbean band.
31. The school has begun to make satisfactory provision for pupils' personal, social and health education through a variety of school assemblies, 'circle times' and through the science and religious education curriculum. Year 5, for example, has shared thoughts on emotions, actions and teasing. The Programme of Study has not yet been formalised to ensure that all aspects are fully covered.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

Strengths

- The quality of pastoral care.
- The promotion of good standards of behaviour.
- The personal support and guidance for pupils.

Weaknesses

- Formal procedures for health and safety are not in place.
- Opportunities for initiative and responsibilities for pupils are limited.
- Academic assessment is not used well enough to inform teaching and raise standards.

The steps taken to ensure pupils' welfare, health and safety

32. Pastoral care is very good. Relationships between teachers and the pupils are constructive, trusting and mutually respectful. The pupils are treated in such a way that they feel encouraged, valued and safe. They have no hesitation about confiding in their teachers and requesting help. Teachers go to considerable lengths to try to meet the personal needs of individual pupils.
33. Child protection procedures are in place and are supported by a policy that includes very comprehensive guidelines for staff. Governors have not yet implemented formal procedures to ensure that relevant risk assessments and safety checks are carried out, and this is unsatisfactory. Provision for first aid is good. Specialist education and health agencies provide a good service to the school.
34. Teachers and support staff know their pupils very well and ensure that everyone is included in all aspects of school life. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and all statutory requirements are met. Needs are identified early. Outside agencies are used effectively. Teachers ensure that such pupils receive the necessary support. All pupils are encouraged to do well, with achievements rewarded and praised. The very good provision enables pupils to make good progress towards their personal targets in their individual education plans. The targets are shared with pupils, parents and teachers, along with regular reviews of progress. In the reception classes, early assessment information is used effectively to plan children's learning. Teachers' assessments are detailed and help to identify specific achievable learning targets.

The effectiveness of the school's assessment and monitoring procedures

35. The school's procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress are satisfactory, but the use of assessment to plan lessons is unsatisfactory in Years 1 to 6. As a result, work is not always planned to match the abilities and attainment of different groups of pupils. There are very good systems in place for assessing pupils' reading and comprehension and satisfactory systems in place for assessing other aspects of English, mathematics and science. Pupils assess their own work in reading, followed by discussions with the teacher as to how they can improve. Teachers keep records of pupils' reading and spelling ages. Pupils' self-assessment is also being developed well in science and ICT. In other subjects, such as physical education, pupils who are achieving above or below the expected levels are recorded.
36. The pupils' attendance is carefully monitored. A record of attendance is enclosed with the pupils' annual school reports. The school sees no need to promote attendance because pupils enjoy school and want to come and attendance is above the average for primary schools. The school successfully engages the co-operation of parents to promptly provide reasons for absence, but needs to monitor the effect that pupils taking holidays in term-time has on their attainment and progress.
37. Parents confirm that the school has very successfully improved behaviour. The new policy has contributed much to this and most teachers consistently apply the procedures and manage behaviour well in lessons. They have high expectations of the pupils and ensure that they, and the prominently displayed rules, are clearly understood and valued. Rewards and recognition work well, and good behaviour is celebrated in assemblies. Monitoring and improvement strategies are used to support those pupils who persist with unacceptable behaviour.
38. Instances of bullying and every other form of antisocial conduct are almost entirely eliminated because of the strength of relationships in school. Teachers ensure that the pupils understand the unacceptability of bullying and they believe that most incidents are reported. In order to provide other ways for pupils to receive support; for example, when they fall out with friends or feel left out, pupils in Year 6 have recently undertaken extensive training in peer mediation skills, but have not yet started to offer their services.
39. The school monitors closely the personal development of those pupils who have particular difficulties and uses the results of the monitoring well to deal with the pupils concerned; for example, by making appropriate allowances for them or by using selective techniques to effectively engage them in activities. However, the personal development of the majority of pupils is not formally monitored, although their teachers know them very well. Various experiences are organised for the pupils, which contribute to their personal development. They include an excellent range of extra-curricular activities, trips to various places of interest, including two residential visits to outdoor centres, and involvement in the community such as dancing on the cathedral green. Pupils are expected to carry out relevant research and use their findings; for example, to present them during a class-led assembly. Older pupils are encouraged to look after younger ones. Routine classroom tasks are available to all pupils in turn. However, overall, opportunities for the pupils to take on responsibilities and use their initiative are limited.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

Strengths

- Parents hold positive views of the school and are confident in it.
- Relationships between school and parents are good.
- Parents are well informed, overall.
- There is good attendance at consultation meetings and school activities.

Weaknesses

- Parents do not receive feedback about pupils' progress with their improvement targets.
- Parents are unhappy with the amount of homework set and guidance to support it.
- A lack of opportunities for pupils to develop their independent learning experiences at home.

Parents' and carers' views of the school

40. Parents hold positive views about the school and express confidence in it. They are pleased with the quality of education and care provided and with recent improvements. Parents are well justified in their views of the school. The small proportion of less favourable comments were made by parents, but were mostly in the spirit of suggesting improvement rather than complaint. Relationships between school and parents are good with many examples of close co-operation; for instance, almost all parents promptly provide reasons for their children's absence.

The effectiveness of the school's links with parents and carers

41. A significant number of parents are unhappy with the arrangements for homework and the school accepts that it is not consistently set throughout the school. Some parents would like more guidance about how to assist their children with work at home. The school organised a meeting for parents to provide guidance about information and communication technology (ICT), but it was extremely poorly attended. The school and parents are not yet working together effectively with regard to maximising the opportunities for pupils to develop their independent learning experiences at home.
42. The school keeps parents well informed, overall, about life in the school and their children's progress. Annual school reports provide very detailed information about what has been taught and what their children understand, know and can do.
43. The improvement targets are relevant and helpful, but the three consultation meetings per year are not used to provide feedback to parents about pupils' progress in meeting their targets. Parents' attendance at the meetings is very good and parents say that they are very helpful.
44. The school provides good information about the life of the school through half-termly newsletters and interim letters, a very well-developed website and notice boards. The prospectus omits several matters of detail and does not meet requirements. Teachers are accessible daily and parents are welcomed in the school. The school has begun to seek the views of parents about aspects of the school's provision.
45. Parents and guardians of pupils with special educational needs are actively involved at all stages of the Code of Practice and are fully involved in review procedures. They are very supportive of the work of the school and happy with the provision for their children.

46. A few parents frequently provide assistance in school. Their support for school performances and trips out of school is very good. Some assist with extra-curricular sport. The Circle of Friends Association arranges many social and fund-raising events to support the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

<p><i>Strengths</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The headteacher's vision for the school. • Team building. • The shared commitment to improvement of staff and their capacity to succeed. • The number of specialist teachers. • Action to meet the school's targets. • Very good planning and control of finance. • There are excellent resources for information and communication technology and good resources for art and design, history and physical education.
<p><i>Weaknesses</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The roles of the senior management team and co-ordinators are underdeveloped. • There are limited facilities in the mobile classrooms. • There is limited storage space. • The variety of buildings does not contribute to the 'one-school' ethos. • The hall is small for whole-school events.

How efficiently and effectively the headteacher and key staff lead and manage the school, promoting high standards and effective teaching and learning

47. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school where pupils achieve the performance expected in a primary school, they are treated as children and develop a joy in learning, and good behaviour and discipline come from within the child. The headteacher has built a very effective team. Teaching and support staff attended residential in-service days before the school opened, when they thought through what the aims and values of the school should be. As a result of this, the governing body set up a working party and produced the school's prospectus. The roles of the senior management team and the subject co-ordinators are in the process of being developed. The headteacher has been instrumental in ensuring that the day-to-day running of the school is successful, and a good number of initiatives have already been implemented. However, the more formal structures and regular meetings of a senior management team are in the process of being put in place. The headteacher is supported very ably by the deputy headteacher who has a range of responsibilities, including staff induction and training, performance management, support staff line manager, assemblies and communications between the different buildings. She is also responsible for the implementation of the 'Investors in People' programme and keeps the governing body informed about its progress. Key stage co-ordinators have developed a very effective way of enabling subject co-ordinators to monitor their own subject and the progression of it through the school by re-ordering teachers' half-termly plans. Senior staff, including the key stage co-ordinators, are able teachers and very good role models.
48. One of the most noticeable improvements, recorded by parents and governors, since the school opened, has been in the improvement in pupils' behaviour. The staff have worked hard at this. The management of pupils is very good, high standards of behaviour are expected and, as a result, there is now a positive learning environment built on mutual trust in and outside classrooms. The appointment of new staff has ensured that teaching, overall, is now very good in one third of lessons and good in two-fifths of lessons. The headteacher and governors have identified that staffing and small

numbers in classes are fundamental to improvement, and keep class numbers as low as is possible within budget restraints.

49. The governors have appointed specialist subject and special educational needs co-ordinators and this is having a positive effect on teachers' knowledge and understanding of subjects, the needs of pupils with special educational needs and in the raising of expectations. They have control of a budget for their subjects and are beginning to monitor teaching. This is at present at an early stage of development. Whilst they are developing action plans for their subject these do not sufficiently focus on how standards are to be raised. The school has taken positive action in the area of supporting children with, at times, severe special educational needs and behavioural issues. These pupils have appropriate care in the classroom. The support staff are well trained. Together, the staff have a shared commitment to raise standards and they demonstrate a considerable capacity to succeed.

How well the governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities

50. Governors fulfil their responsibilities well. Some of the governors have seen the previous two schools through a time of considerable change and others have joined the governing body for this new school. Long-term governors have had the vision to see the amalgamation through and have appointed key staff to implement that vision. They have initiated a number of building alterations to enable the curriculum to be better taught. One of the main improvements, in regard to the workings of the governing body, has been in the setting up of committees and working parties. Governors are well informed about test results, teacher predications and target setting. They are beginning to review the progress of different groups of children and monitor the value added by the school. The school has drawn up a useful 'visiting policy and guide' booklet for governors who, as a result of this and their other involvement, are fully aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and, together with the headteacher, take a full part in shaping the direction of this new school.

How well the school monitors and evaluates its performance

51. The senior management team already analyses the National Curriculum test results, and Key Stage co-ordinators and the headteacher have been on recent training for analysing data. From their analysis so far, the issue of poor spelling has been identified and targets in writing have been set across the school. There are well-thought-through performance management structures in place and the school is in the process of completing its first cycle. Teachers and support staff are all involved in this process. General observations of teaching take place in the autumn term, literacy and numeracy are observed in the spring term and paired observations of other subjects are observed in the summer term.
52. The school has good systems in place and is making very good use of new initiatives such as the accelerated reading programme to raise standards. Results of different initiatives are analysed and evaluated well.
53. There is good management and administration of the provision for pupils with special educational needs. The co-ordinator has expertise and maintains the list of pupils efficiently. Once identified, pupils receive additional support and different work, if necessary to meet their needs. Outside agencies are involved as required and the governing body is kept well informed by the headteacher, special educational needs co-ordinator and the responsible governor. There is a very positive school ethos, which reflects the commitment to the inclusion of all pupils in the life of the school. The

school reflects equal opportunity in its aims and objectives, curriculum and organisation and there are effective links with parents, other schools and local organisations, which extend opportunities for pupils and teachers to raise achievement and promote inclusion. All involved ensure that they promote a community where everyone is made to feel welcome, and where staff, governors and parents work well together for the benefit of the children.

The extent to which the school makes the best strategic use of its resources

54. Financial planning and control have been very well managed during a period of considerable change and complexity. Full consultation about budgeting takes place between governors and the senior managers, and expenditure fully supports the school's development plans. Priorities are to provide suitable teaching and non-teaching support staff, to maintain the smallest teaching groups possible and improve the learning environment. Effective systems are in place to monitor expenditure and they are very well managed. Standards and other funding and grants are fully accounted for and used for their intended purposes. The school is currently investigating methods of delivering the 'booster' classes, which until now have been unsuccessful. The possibility of promoting them through the use of information and communication technology is being considered.
55. Administrative support is very good and the use of modern technology is incorporated very well into the school's systems. Costs have been higher than usual because of the implications of the merger of the previous schools. However, the underlying cost of education is close to average compared to similar schools nationally and locally. In view of the quality of education provided, the standards that pupils achieve and the average cost, the school is judged to give good value for money

The extent to which the principles of best value are applied to the school's use of resources

56. The principles of best value are being implemented satisfactorily, although they are in the early stages of being implemented. The principles are supported by the governing body and headteacher and the best value is now being sought when purchasing and considering services and recruitment. This needs to be extended to all aspects of management.
57. The school has a very good match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum. Many of the teachers are specialists in their subject. Very well-trained support staff are available to ensure that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum and to support and develop effective teaching. Teachers and classroom assistants work very well together and, by providing very good role models, the pupils develop tolerance, kindness and care for each other. All resources for reception-aged children are of a good standard. There is a satisfactory range of resources throughout the school and a very good range of ICT resources, which are used both by pupils and parents.
58. The accommodation is adequate for the purposes of teaching the curriculum. The accommodation for Foundation Stage children is as expected for young children, with good sized rooms and outdoor play facilities. The number of rooms for Years 1 to 6 is sufficient, although some are small and restrict practical activities. Small, shared work areas are adjacent to some classes and provide further usable space that is suitable for some activities. The combined library and computer suite is a good resource. The hall is adequate, but small for the purpose of whole-school activities. Playgrounds are adequate in size, but lack cover. Toilet facilities in some temporary classrooms are

unsatisfactory. The space available for storage is inadequate, but the governors have identified the covering of the quad to help reduce the current problems. The numerous buildings that comprise the site are not conducive to the vision for a single-school ethos and, for example, make communication between teachers very difficult.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

Governors and staff in this new school have worked hard over the first year and a half of amalgamation and good progress has been made in bringing the two schools together and moving its development forward. In order to continue this progress the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- (1) raise standards in English, mathematics and science by ensuring that teachers:
 - are fully aware of National Curriculum / National Numeracy Strategy Levels;
 - assess pupils to find out the level that each pupil has reached;
 - set individual targets, and ensure that these targets are sharply focused and measurable;
 - use assessment data more effectively in planning lessons, so that the needs of pupils of varying abilities are better met.(paragraphs: 7, 22, 35, 81, 87, 91, 94 and 95, 102, 109, 130)

- (2) raise standards in English additionally by:
 - considering introducing joined handwriting at an earlier age in order to improve spelling, handwriting and fluency;
 - introduce texts that promote the ability of the pupils to infer and deduce meaning;
 - give pupils greater opportunity to write at length.(paragraphs: 79 and 80)

- (3) ensure that the quality of teaching is consistent across the school by:
 - giving greater opportunities for teachers to share and observe good practice;
 - ensuring that all teachers use assessment information when planning their lessons;
 - ensuring that the marking of pupils' work is constructive and enables them to know what levels of attainment they have reached and what they need to do to improve;
 - raising teachers' expectations of what higher attaining pupils are capable of achieving.(paragraphs: 14, 17, 22, 35, 87, 91, 94 and 95, 102, 130)

- (4) develop the roles of the senior management team and subject co-ordinators.
(paragraphs: 47, 49)

Minor issues

- Improve health and safety procedures by undertaking risk assessment and regular safety checks. (paragraph 33)
- Formalise the work that is already in progress on personal, social and health education. (paragraph 31)
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to use their own initiative and take on responsibilities. (paragraph 39)
- Provide more consistently for the higher attaining pupils. (paragraph 21)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	60 + 4
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	42

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	4	15	30	9	2	0	0
Percentage	7	25	50	15	3	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	304
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	17

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	53

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	22
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	23

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.2
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	18	16	34

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	13	15
	Girls	16	16	15
	Total	28	29	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (n/a)	85 (n/a)	88 (n/a)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	16	15
	Girls	16	15	15
	Total	30	31	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (n/a)	91 (n/a)	88 (n/a)
	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	27	19	46

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	20	19	24
	Girls	13	13	15
	Total	33	32	39
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	72 (n/a)	70 (n/a)	85 (n/a)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	(n/a)	(n/a)	(n/a)
	Girls	(n/a)	(n/a)	(n/a)
	Total	(n/a)	(n/a)	(n/a)
++Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	n/a (n/a)	n/a (n/a)	n/a (n/a)
	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	300	2	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	3	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	12
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24
Average class size	25

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	18
Total aggregate hours worked per week	400

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
	£
Total income	748,003
Total expenditure	758,628
Expenditure per pupil	2,447
Balance brought forward from previous year	42,840
Balance carried forward to next year	32,215

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	5
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	304
Number of questionnaires returned	216

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	56	38	4	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	50	41	3	2	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	37	54	4	1	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	30	48	19	2	1
The teaching is good.	48	43	5	1	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	29	47	19	4	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	59	33	3	4	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	48	44	6	1	1
The school works closely with parents.	37	45	13	3	1
The school is well led and managed.	48	43	3	4	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	41	50	5	1	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	42	46	6	2	3

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

Strengths

- Good knowledge of the curriculum and how young children learn.
- The provision of a very stimulating environment is very good.
- The imaginative teaching and quality of planning are very good.
- The provision for personal, social and emotional development is very good.
- A very wide range of activities stimulates children to learn.

Weaknesses

- Ensure that the teaching of mathematics and literacy is consistently rigorous enough across the classes to challenge all children, but particularly the higher attainers.
- Fully develop the provision for outside activities to ensure that all areas of the curriculum are supported.

Introduction

59. Children receive a very good introduction to their education. The curriculum is very well planned, has been fully adapted to include the Stepping Stones leading to the Early Learning Goals and takes account of the needs of young children. All children begin in reception the September of the year they are five and are part-time for as long as the teacher and parents of the child think is appropriate for the child, up to the autumn half-term.

Personal, social and emotional development

60. Children are very happy to come to school. They know and follow the daily routines well, confidently finding an activity to do or a friend to talk to after hanging up their coats. They quickly respond when required to sit on the carpet for register time or a story and they enjoy receiving awards for good behaviour or being chosen to be the special helper and wear a badge for the day. They respond politely to their teachers during registration and speak confidently about their own experiences and of things they do at home. During discussion times, they listen to and respect the views of others. For example, when examining an old lace-trimmed dress brought in by a child, they learn that people had to wear different clothes in times gone by as a result of the different activities they did and the materials available.
61. Children show very good levels of self-control. They know that resources have to be shared with others. They sit quietly and listen with sustained interest when a story such as 'Bob the Builder' is being read, and during school assembly times. Good relationships and consideration for others are fostered during snack time, when children sit in a group discussing topics of interest and listening to each other's conversations while being supported by an adult. The very good relationships between children and adults enable children to feel secure, and encourage them to persevere when engaged in tasks. They are developing sensitivity and an understanding of the needs of others through the good examples set by adults. Children dress and undress themselves with the minimum of help for physical development lessons, and manage their own personal hygiene. Most children enter school at the expected level for personal, social and emotional development. They are taught well and having already achieved the levels expected for their age, they are on course to exceed them by the time they leave the reception class.

Communication, language and literacy

62. Children clearly express their ideas using complex sentences, and confidently talk to each other and adults in the reception classes. Their speaking skills are well developed when they enter school, but their reading and writing skills are more limited.
63. They are given very good support by adults and a range of situations and experiences, which encourages them to develop their speaking and listening skills. For example, when they arrive in school, a group of children spontaneously discuss a frieze that illustrates, 'clothes for cold and hot weather'. When playing in the 'building site', they take 'tea breaks' and discuss how to build a wall safely so that it does not fall on anyone. The children enjoy listening to stories and are developing an interest in books. They are occasionally seen browsing alone or sharing a book with a friend.
64. Although the school's assessment on entry indicates that the skills of reading and writing are limited when they enter the school, the children are beginning to develop satisfactory reading and writing skills and they make good progress. For example, they make the appropriate sounds for phonemes such as 'oa', 'sh', 'ch', 'th' and offer suggestions for what should be written in a letter of thanks to the builder who visited and make good attempts to spell simple words such as 'it', 'was' and 'at'. One child was able to sound out a complex word such as 'sunglasses' correctly. They make good attempts at explaining the meaning of words such as 'tripod' when they occur in stories and songs. The work shows that higher attainers independently write words beginning with different sounds and they make good attempts at writing their own sentences using well-formed, evenly spaced legible letters.
65. The majority of children read their class reading books very fluently, easily and with expression. They use simple strategies to help them read unfamiliar words. Whilst teaching is very good, overall, progress could be accelerated by ensuring that the books they read are more closely matched to their ability in order to speed up the rate of progress. Nevertheless, pupils are expected to achieve the Early Learning Goals in communication, language and literacy by the end of their reception year.

Mathematical development

66. The school's assessment at entry shows that the children have a level of mathematical knowledge a little below that expected for the age when they start school. They generally make good progress and quickly build up their skills because of the good teaching they receive. Most children count reliably up to ten and many beyond that. They place numbers in the correct order and explain where they should be placed on a washing line of socks, sort sets of clothes, add one or two more to a given set of objects and roll a dice and record the correct number. Higher attaining children complete a number sentence such as $3+2=?$. They record using marks, copying under teachers' writing and numbers or with pictures. Teachers incidentally take opportunities to consolidate mathematical language and to develop children's ability to think. After registration, for example, one child was able to subtract five from 22 correctly, by counting backwards. However, teaching does not consistently take account of pupils' level of attainment and a quicker pace to lessons and more use of challenging questions, particularly during plenary sessions, would accelerate the progress of all pupils, but particularly the higher attainers. However, as a result of the good experiences and generally good teaching provided, children are expected to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the time they leave the reception class.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

67. Children start their school with the general knowledge expected for their age. There are many very good experiences planned for the children to ensure that they are fully developing their knowledge and understanding of the world. They are stimulated by the very interesting environment where they use their senses to explore the world around them.
68. They develop technical skills very well particularly through the use of the computer. For example, they know that you need an address to access the Internet, and how to move the program on by using a pen. When using an art program they know how to start again using the correct icon, control the mouse in order to draw a picture, make a symmetrical drawing and print their picture. Visitors to the school such as the vicar, nurse, and members of the Autistic Society, help children to understand the importance of caring for themselves and other creatures. Effective use of the school grounds and places of interest in the locality such as The Coombe and the local church extends their experiences, gives opportunities for learning about the natural world and fosters an interest in things past. They learn about other countries by hearing where 'Travel Ted' has been taken on holiday.
69. Children learn about religions by re-enacting events such as a wedding, and discuss human experiences through well-focused plans based on the expectations of the agreed syllabus. The very good quality and variety of materials encourage children to explore, investigate, build, make, talk, and co-operate with one another. This, together with good teaching, ensures that pupils benefit from their environment, which results in them making good progress and contributes to the expectation that they will exceed the standards expected for their age by the time they leave the reception class.

Physical development

70. Children enter school with physical skills expected for children of that age. They make good progress, as there are many opportunities for them to develop finer movements by handling small equipment such as beads, construction pieces, jigsaws and scissors. They also use pencils to write their names, for copying over teachers' writing and for writing their own sentences. They take part in regular physical education lessons indoors and daily activities outside.
71. During a physical education lesson, all pupils listened very well and carried out instructions. They showed awareness of space, themselves and of others as they carried out the warm-up activity of running, stretching and stopping. When using the apparatus they showed imagination as they moved in a variety of ways. For example, they crawl, jump, and move backwards and forwards, in a controlled manner taking the safety of others into consideration, particularly when they jump from the apparatus onto a mat.
72. Easy access to the outside play areas enables children to develop gross motor control through the use, for example, of wheeled toys and footballs. Although opportunities to climb and balance are limited as there is no climbing apparatus outside, most children are well co-ordinated and agile and have already met the Early Learning Goals for children of this age. The good teaching and regular opportunities given to the children contribute to the expectation that they will be beyond the standards expected for their age by the time they reach the end of the reception year.

Creative development

73. The children enter school with a level of creative development expected of children of their age. The good range of experiences and good planning ensure that children achieve well in their creative development and they are expected to reach the Early Learning Goals by the time they leave the reception year.
74. They learn an increasing repertoire of songs and rhymes such as, 'Do as I'm doing', 'Stamp, stamp, stamp your feet' and 'Building a house'. They sing with enthusiasm as a result of encouraging teaching and planning linked to the current topic. They are beginning to explore the sounds various instruments make. They accompany the class when singing, using percussion instruments to keep the beat, with limited success. They demonstrate their ability to persevere when they practise their singing in order to improve.
75. High quality displays on the walls and work completed by children show that they experience a wide range of media. They paint, use collage, clay and play dough. They investigate ways materials can be joined by designing and making their own slippers and they arrange table decorations for a wedding using flowers, leaves and oases. They use a variety of tools and equipment in order to carry out their tasks.
76. The children's creativity is particularly well stimulated in the role-play areas. For example, the home corner is turned into a building site where they build with bricks, order materials on the computer and take tea breaks. There is very good support given by learning support assistants when they interact with the children and when they teach the appropriate language to inspire creative play. Children with special educational needs take part in all activities and are sensitively supported as appropriate. Overall, the teaching of this area of learning is very good.

ENGLISH

Strengths

- Standards are in line with national expectations.
- Teachers have implemented the National Literacy Strategy.
- The quality of English teaching throughout the school is good.
- The use of assessment in Years 3 to 6 raised levels of achievement by pinpointing achievable targets.
- Accelerated Reading has had a significant impact on reading and comprehension.

Weaknesses

- Handwriting and spelling throughout the school.
- Deduction and inference through the use of more advanced texts.
- More opportunities for pupils to write at length.

National Curriculum test data

77. Pupils' attainment in English by the end of Years 2 and 6 is in line with national expectations. In 2002, the National Curriculum test results for pupils in Year 2 in reading and writing, were the same as those of pupils nationally, with one third of pupils achieving Level 3 (attainment more usually expected of nine-year-olds). By the end of Year 6, one third of pupils reached the higher Level 5 in the English test. This is lower than the national average.

Inspection standards

78. When they enter the school, a significant minority of children are attaining below average standards in communication skills such as speaking and listening, but achieve in line with national expectations in language and literacy skills such as reading and writing. Most pupils make steady progress and reach the national average by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6. The progress they make is not yet measurable in this new school. The school has implemented the National Literacy Strategy well. Teachers have undergone appropriate literacy training and have good knowledge of the national strategy. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in English due to well-focused support and well-targeted group activities in literacy lessons. They are included well in all curriculum activities.
79. The teachers, who systematically encourage pupils to talk and put forward their ideas during lessons, provide very good opportunities for speaking and listening across the school. Most pupils listen well to others and this ability has a significant, positive effect on pupils' progress. Pupils, however, do not speak confidently. For example, when sharing their findings in assembly in the 'World News Flash', they were not audible. Pupils under seven could explain their findings confidently in terms of different types of homes they had found when photographing the neighbourhood. In reading, some Year 2 pupils achieve well and read at a level above that expected of pupils of their age, while others are at the pre-reading stage. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 read a variety of texts appropriate for their age and ability and show a developing enthusiasm for books. 'Big books' and group readers, used for shared and class reading in literacy lessons, fiction with stories from a range of cultures, traditional stories and poetry and factual books provide a wide range to read. For Years 1 and 2, books are available in class libraries with a good range of subjects of interest to boys and girls. Some books in the fiction section are old and unattractive. As they progress through the school, pupils acquire a liking for books and develop a range of strategies and skills to enable them to tackle new words and understand text. By the end of Year 6, comprehension of reading will have been helped by the Accelerated Reading programme, which enhances pupils' understanding of the texts read. The school has successfully challenged the boys' interest as well as the girls'. Until they are independent readers, class teacher and classroom support assistants hear pupils read regularly. They take their reading books home regularly and their reading records also show that they are changed regularly. In addition to the reading books for Accelerated Reading, there is a good range of non-fiction books in the library. However, opportunities for them to use inference and deduction in advanced texts is limited.
80. By the end of Year 2, some pupils have made good progress in writing, but, overall, attainment is average because children begin their school life at a low level of achievement. Pupils make a good start in writing in the reception classes, learning the letter shapes and sounds, learning to form their letters and to make their own independent efforts. The writing of the higher attaining pupils in Year 2 shows a satisfactory understanding of the use of capital letters, full stops and sentence structure. These pupils use a good range of vocabulary and spell most short words correctly. Lower attaining pupils make progress more slowly, showing less control in handwriting and knowledge of punctuation. Across the curriculum these low standards for some continue to influence the standards achieved in other subjects in Years 3 to 6. Pupils have opportunities to write for a wide range of purposes; for example, science, history and geography. In Years 3 to 6 they are beginning to show an appropriate sense of audience in their writing and are adapting their writing to suit different audiences. Year 6 pupils were able to identify features of a balanced argument and Year 3 were writing stories for younger children. However, there are too few

opportunities for them to write at length. Pupils throughout the school regularly practise forming their letters, but handwriting standards are poor in use. Pupils were not seen to practise spellings from the list provided in the National Literacy Strategy and standards of spelling, although variable, are low throughout the school. Good use of information and communication technology is made in English lessons to encourage pupils to read with understanding.

Teaching, learning and behaviour

81. During the inspection, pupils in Years 1 and 2 were observed on a visit to the church. During this visit, pupils had the opportunity to act out a wedding, in costume, learn new vocabulary and listen to each other and adults. Teaching, learning and pupils' attitudes and behaviour were all very good. Teaching in English lessons in Years 3 to 6, which ranges from satisfactory to very good, is good overall and, because of teachers' good classroom management skills, pupils' attitudes and behaviour in lessons are similarly usually good. Where the pace of the lesson is brisk, pupils work well at their tasks. The needs of the special educational needs children are well met by their grouping within the lesson and taken by the trained learning support assistants. Some pupils in Years 3 to 6 respond with enthusiasm and interest, while a few are less well motivated. Those who respond well are enthusiastic, doing their best to contribute constructively to lessons. As a result of good teaching and good attitudes and behaviour, the quality of learning is good. Teachers have good rapport with pupils, but they are sometimes over relaxed. They use good questioning skills to draw out meanings. Teachers plan well and have good understanding of their subject and are adjusting to use of the National Literacy Strategy, which enables them to teach the subject effectively. They have adopted the National Literacy Strategy well and literacy lessons are well planned and organised in detail, with resources readily available for pupils to use. An effective method of half-termly assessment of the end of Year 6 written work enables pupils to be aware of the areas they should target to improve their standard in written work. The weekly general marking tends to lavish praise with insufficient guidance as to how to improve the standard. Teachers need to become more aware of standards required for each National Curriculum level of attainment. Although teachers encourage pupils to speak up confidently, this is an area that needs attention. The plenary session of each lesson is ineffective if other children do not benefit from others' contributions because they cannot hear.

Leadership and management

82. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory as the co-ordinator continues to oversee the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. This has been at the difficult time when the two schools have merged. There have been new initiatives such as the Jolly Phonics in Years 1 and 2 and Accelerated Reading in Years 3 to 6 to challenge skills and improve understanding. These have had a significant effect on learning. The school acknowledges that handwriting and spelling are now a priority.

MATHEMATICS

Strengths

- The higher attaining pupils achieve well at age 11 years.
- The quality of teaching is good in early years.
- Support for pupils who have learning difficulties is very good.
- The pupils enjoy their mathematics.
- The mental mathematics sessions are good.

Weaknesses

- Not all lesson planning provides work that is matched to the abilities of all the pupils.
- The use assessment information is not always used to plan for well-matched work.
- There is a need for target setting so that pupils are more aware of their own learning.
- Standards in the national tests for the majority of pupils at age 11 need to be raised.
- The National Curriculum test results indicate a weakness in shape, space and measures.

National Curriculum test data

83. Standards in mathematics are below average at the end of Years 2 and 6, although the results for higher attaining pupils were above average at the end of Year 6.

Inspection standards

84. Pupils' knowledge of number is good and they are good at explaining the methods used in calculating their answers. They are good at mental calculation and when using pencil and paper methods to solve problems. By the end of Year 2 most pupils add and subtract numbers up to 20 mentally. They understand the value of numbers that have more than one digit and use different methods to solve addition and subtraction problems. Pupils are very good at explaining the methods they use, such as when adding two numbers to make 11, they add ten first, then another one. They understand rounding numbers to the nearest multiple of ten and with regular emphasis from their teachers, develop a good mathematical vocabulary. Pupils understand that fractions are parts of one whole. Their main weakness is in problems that involve shape, space and measures. Mental strategies are beginning to be used well by pupils in Years 3 to 6 now. They are also able to articulate, with correct vocabulary, what strategies they have used to solve a problem. As a result, during the inspection they were reaching expected standards. The oldest pupils in Year 6 have a good knowledge of fractions. The properties of fractions and equivalent fractions are understood with an awareness of the correct mathematical vocabulary. They also understand the links between fractions, decimals and percentages. Pupils add, subtract and round up and down decimal calculations to two places. Most of the pupils know their tables and have a sound grasp of the four rules and place value. This enables them to be able to calculate long division and multiplication successfully. The pupils are familiar with the standard units of measure and two and three-dimensional shapes. They use their mathematical knowledge in real life problems and set out their calculations in a logical and explanatory way.

Teaching, learning and behaviour

85. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Teachers' good subject knowledge and understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy enables them to plan effectively. Learning objectives are precise, so that pupils know what is expected of them. Mathematical ideas and the tasks that follow the teaching are explained clearly, enabling pupils to understand and progress in their learning. There is good emphasis on the teaching of basic number skills. The mental and oral sessions at the start of lessons are brisk and test pupils' mental agility well. Pupils in Year 2, for example, began their lesson with some rapid sequencing and ordering of numbers up to one hundred. The teacher then tested pupils further by giving them problems to solve, with doubling and halving.

86. Teachers' expectations are good, so time is used well in lessons and teachers remind pupils regularly of what they expect them to achieve. A majority of the teachers manage pupils very well. There are clear routines and codes of conduct for lessons and these are consistently applied. Teachers immediately challenge pupils who are not fully attentive. They skilfully help pupils to sustain attention by asking them questions and praising their efforts. As a result, relationships are excellent, behaviour is generally good and pupils achieve because they are interested, enthusiastic and concentrate on their work.
87. Pupils who have learning difficulties are supported very well in lessons. Teachers and assistants are sensitive to their needs and make sure that they are included in discussions. Learning support assistants sit close to pupils to help them to listen, and teachers give these pupils more time to think and answer questions. In the best lessons teachers set different levels of both mental and written tasks to the different levels of ability within their class. Not all the teachers use assessment information very well to plan work for pupils of different abilities.

Leadership and management

88. The satisfactory leadership and management in mathematics have resulted in the National Numeracy Strategy having an impact on the teaching and learning. However, there is now a need for some rigorous monitoring of the teaching of the subject so that consistency is achieved. The resources available are used effectively in lessons. The subject manager has a clear overview of the strengths of the subject and the areas for development. The school has a good capacity to improve pupils' current levels of achievement.

SCIENCE

Strengths

- An enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator.
- Very challenging, open-ended questioning and mini-plenary sessions in some classes.
- Clear, well-focused plans for 2002/2003 are in line with the aims and objectives of the school.
- A good variety of activities and investigations, which interest pupils and foster a love of the subject.

Weaknesses

- Variations in the quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6.
- Assessment information is not used sufficiently to plan lessons and accelerate learning.
- Presentation skills are weak.
- The marking of pupils' work is not used as an ongoing tool for assessment.
- Methods of recording do not always allow pupils to successfully show what they know, can do and understand.

National Curriculum test data

89. In 2002, teachers' assessments showed that the percentage of pupils who attained the expected Level 2 or above was below the national average while the percentage who attained the higher Level 3 was above the national average. Pupils' knowledge of life processes, materials and physical processes was well above the national average at Level 3, but at Level 2 it was in line with the national average for scientific enquiry, and below national average for materials and their properties and physical processes. It was well below in life processes. When compared with similar schools, the percentage reaching the expected Level 2 was well below average, but was well above average at the higher Level 3.

90. In Year 6, the percentage of pupils who attained the expected Level 4 or above was below the national average while the percentage attaining Level 5 was average. When compared with similar schools, the percentage of pupils attaining the expected Level 4 was well below the national average, while the percentage of pupils attaining Level 5 was below. Boys outperformed girls overall, although inspection findings did not find any significant differences between the attainment of boys and the attainment of girls.
91. Predicted results are over-estimated for girls at Levels 3 and 4 in Year 6, but the school is aware of the need to improve assessment skills of teachers across the school. Results at the end of Year 2 are higher than at the end of Year 6, which may be explained by the variation in the quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6, in particular, and the insufficient use of assessment information to guide planning across the school. The schools' appropriate target for science was achieved in 2002.

Inspection standards

92. The pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 is at the level expected of pupils of their age, as investigative work has improved. For example, through the study of materials and their properties pupils know that water is a liquid that ice turns into a liquid when it melts and that water turns into a solid when it freezes. They carry out investigations and use scientific vocabulary to communicate what they know. They make reasonable predictions about their findings and present them using bar charts, flow diagrams, word puzzles, pictures and collage. Coverage of the curriculum is good. They have gained knowledge of how taking exercise and eating the right food helps to keep them healthy and they are beginning to learn about the role of drugs in the use of medicine. They have carried out observations of the differences between eye and hair colour of children in the class, observed and compared materials such as leather, fabric, plastic and rubber and sorted the differences between mammals such as humans and cats. They complete a simple circuit involving batteries, bulbs, wires and switches and they know how a switch can break a circuit. Their investigations are well planned and challenging and they are beginning to draw conclusions from their findings.
93. In Year 6, a substantial number of pupils attain at levels in line with the expected levels for their age. For example, they are working at Level 4 when investigating how to separate a mixture of solids, deciding on an appropriate approach to solve the problem, considering what equipment they need, predicting the sequence of events, recording their ideas in a flow diagram and communicating their answers and thoughts using scientific language. Higher attaining pupils; for example, clearly explain why they need to mix the sand with water in order to separate it from the salt and why the mixture then needs to be filtered and the resulting liquid heated in order to retrieve the salt through the process of evaporation.
94. In the Years 3 and 4 classes, pupils in both age groups attain at about the same level. While Year 3 attains the expected levels for their age, Year 4 pupils attain levels below those expected. Although pupils gain knowledge and understanding through the areas of study, lessons lack pace and there is an underuse of questions that challenge pupils to think. Expectations of what all pupils can do, but particularly higher attainers, are not high enough and planning based directly on rigorous assessment of what pupils can and cannot do is underused. This results in progress being too slow.
95. The work in books in Year 6 shows that despite making good progress, pupils are not yet working at the higher levels. The reason for this appears to be because they have not been taught effectively enough during their previous years, assessment is not being used to identify the significant weaknesses in their knowledge and understanding in

order to take remedial action, teachers' expectations and pace of teaching is not high enough and the use of marking as a tool for raising standards and improving self-esteem has not yet been maximised.

96. When the weather allows, the school grounds are used to enhance the opportunities offered to the pupils. Invitations to people with particular expertise such as the caver, who spoke about rock formation, enhance the curriculum for the pupils and make it relevant.

Teaching, learning and behaviour

97. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory, overall, although the quality of teaching is more varied at Years 3 to 6. However, pupils' behaviour is good and this reflects the emphasis the school has placed on building good relationships between pupils and staff and the opportunities available for pupils to experience an interesting range of activities. In a Year 2 lesson to investigate the time it takes for ice cubes to melt in different situations, pupils listened well to instructions given by their teacher and to explanations given by their peers. When they were struggling, they made very good attempts at refining their language and thinking, as a result of the teacher rephrasing questions and using alternative vocabulary in order to help them. This technique is a particular strength of the teaching, as it helps pupils to develop their ability to concentrate, to apply themselves to what they are trying to learn and to develop their linguistic and analytical skills.
98. Pupils are encouraged to work in groups, where they co-operate well and are particularly enthusiastic when carrying out investigative work. Occasionally, pupils, particularly the lower attainers, are required to record in a way that is too difficult for them. This results in poorly presented and unfinished work. Although the work is generally marked, comments made by teachers do not encourage pupils to evaluate their work as they do not generally indicate what is good, what needs attention and how improvements could be made. Standards of presentation are also affected because pupils are not guided sufficiently to consistently write in a cursive hand or to print when appropriate. This results in pupils being unable to take pride in their work and foster a feeling of self-worth.
99. In Year 3, during the study of the body and the variations between people, pupils enjoy measuring each other's muscles to discover what happens to them when they are contracted; they co-operate well with one another. They record their findings on a chart. Lack of pace in lessons, the absence of challenging questioning or the opportunity to predict any variations they might expect to find when, for example, an arm is bent compared with when it is straight, limit pupils' opportunity for learning, and results in slow progress being made. As a result, the standards achieved by the majority of pupils in Year 3 were only satisfactory and those for the Year 4 pupils in the same classes were below those expected for that age.
100. In Year 6, teachers are knowledgeable, explain objectives well at the start of lessons and offer real challenges. For example, pupils were required to predict and record the sequence of events that would be carried out in order to separate a mixture of materials, to draw on their previous knowledge of materials that are soluble and those that are not, to decide on the equipment needed, and to think of any particular problems they might encounter, before they began the investigation. Teachers keep pupils very well focused and help their understanding by stopping the class during the activity to clarify points, illustrate a particularly good example of work or to correct misconceptions. The use of these mini-plenary sessions is a particular strength in

Year 6 as it ensures that a good pace is maintained in lessons and all pupils are helped to concentrate and remain on task. Pupils are encouraged to work in groups or with partners to share their ideas and discuss their findings. As a result, good progress is made by these pupils.

101. In the lessons seen, there was no difference between the attitudes and attainment of boys and girls. Very good support from both class teachers and support staff enable pupils with special educational needs to take part in the activities and record their work appropriately and successfully. The use of the computer by these pupils enhances their learning and enables them to take part more productively. Specific targets are met and class members are sensitive to their needs.

Leadership and management

102. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and very enthusiastic. In line with the school's priority to develop the role of the co-ordinator and making improvements in pupils' progress, the monitoring of teachers' planning and levels of attainment achieved by pupils in scientific enquiry has begun. There are plans to improve teaching by sharing the good practice that is evident in the school. Teachers find the schemes of work helpful. Although assessment is built into the schemes and good examples of pupils' self-assessment such as, 'I can name the different parts of my body' are included, assessment is not sufficiently developed for teachers to be knowledgeable about the precise levels of attainment pupils in their class have reached. The result of this is that remedial action cannot be taken, if needed, and pupils' progress accelerated as necessary. The subject is a priority in the school for 2002/2003 and the subject co-ordinator has a clear action plan of what she hopes to accomplish.
103. There is a satisfactory range of science books in the school library and classrooms. and resources in the school are of sufficient quantity. The co-ordinator manages the budget for science and plans to ensure that resources are always of the highest standard and quality to support teaching. The use of ICT to enhance the subject is an area for development and pupils are currently quickly developing their skills through regular lessons in the newly installed ICT suite.

ART AND DESIGN

Strengths

- Standards in exploring and developing ideas involving colour and texture to express what they think.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is good.
- Basic art skills are taught well.

Weaknesses

- Use of sketchbooks for the intended purpose, dated and annotated as part of assessment.

Standards

104. Standards are above national expectations for pupils at the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils use colour, line and texture well to explore and develop ideas. They evaluate their work and gain a good knowledge of styles and techniques of artists. They work in a range of materials paint, clay and fabric creating two and three-dimensional images using collage and printing. The structure of the art and design syllabus is now more clearly defined. All pupils, including those who have additional learning needs achieve well.

Teaching, learning and behaviour

105. The quality of teaching and learning is good and has a direct impact on pupils' achievements. Basic art and design skills are taught well. Pupils learn to use media skilfully and approach their work confidently. Teachers' good subject knowledge enables them to plan and demonstrate techniques clearly for pupils. A Year 6 class was learning masked monoprinting techniques. Teachers encouraged pupils to be bold in the design, praising all efforts of pupils, including those with special educational needs. The learning process involved following written instructions to remind pupils of the process explained earlier, to make successful prints and to realise that a print reverses the positive design made. Year 3 created wall hangings from fabric and wool, working in pairs on a chosen natural theme. Pupils combined the tactile and visual qualities of materials, plaiting and twisting wools and fabrics for flames to represent a volcano or blues and yellows for the seaside. Behaviour in lessons is good as pupils enjoy the success of their work. Relationships in classrooms are good. Teachers and support assistants praise and encourage pupils. This helps pupils to work more purposefully and to develop good attitudes to art and design. Teachers demonstrate the value they place on the pupils' work in the quality of display in classrooms and around the school. In Years 1 and 2 children had created a collage of homes and in their rhyming work about 'under the ocean', their three-dimensional display on fish was very effective.

Leadership and management

106. The subject is led and managed well. There is a new scheme of work to help teachers plan for the development of skills and knowledge of art and design. Resources adequately meet the needs of the curriculum and are used imaginatively to support pupils' learning.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Strengths

- The subject is led by a trained design and technology secondary teacher.
- Years 1 and 2 teaching follows sound principles of design and technology teaching.
- Enthusiasm for competition entry.

Standards

107. Inspection standards were judged to be above average. Pupils investigate, plan and communicate design ideas. Standards of work seen by the younger children demonstrate that they have considered people's needs and the opportunities of making products for them. Although in Years 3 to 6 pupils were not seen in design and technology lessons at this stage of the term, artefacts made last term and discussion with the co-ordinator and pupils revealed above average standards.

Teaching, learning and behaviour

108. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 were involved in designing a new bag for 'Postman Pat'. Having undertaken scientific investigation of different materials to be used, they concluded that his bag should be waterproof and a suitable size. The appearance of the product was important, with 'ER' boldly displayed. Methods for fixing the sides of the bag challenged their speaking and listening skills. Making and evaluation of the product will follow. Teaching is good with good preparation and planning and control in the two-year age class. Another good lesson in Years 1 and 2, followed observation of

the homes in the neighbourhood of the school. Pupils had learnt the different kinds of homes and understood that people's needs in a home varied. This prompted good discussion as the children designed accommodation suitable for the needs of a specific family or individual. Pupils were enthusiastically employing their creative skills in this activity. Alternating design and technology with art and design each half-term meant that it was not possible to see a design and technology lesson in Years 3 to 6 at this stage of the term. However, evidence was seen on the Internet where their work last term on monsters with hydraulically controlled mouth opening was displayed, showing the effectiveness of teaching and high standards expected. Models of the xylophones made last term demonstrated accuracy of measurement in their design, manipulation of tools and use of the glue gun. Model-making was a feature of the Knex competition held at the school where the team from the school, a boy and girl were successful in the first round. They were judged on how well they worked together and their evaluation of the design.

Leadership and management

109. The co-ordinator, who is trained in the subject for secondary students, has been in the post for under a year. He has based work mainly on a published course, but before constructing a scheme of work for the school will look at other sources of primary structures of work; for example, on the Internet. He will hold an action plan review in the summer. He plans to keep examples of work to illustrate different levels. Storage and work space is at present limited, but there are plans to expand the existing practical area.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

Strengths

- There is a very good range of additional activities both within and outside school that enrich the humanities curriculum significantly and lead to a high level of interest, enthusiasm and motivation.
- Pupils' geographical knowledge is good.
- Use of historical artefacts in the classroom.

Standards

110. Only one geography lesson with Year 6 pupils was observed during the inspection and four history lessons with Years 2 and 5 were undertaken. However, evidence from the limited number of lessons seen and a scrutiny of the work in pupils' books, and photographic and video evidence provided of activities during the current and previous school year, suggest that pupils make satisfactory progress in history and geography as they move through the school. Attainment at the end of Year 2 and by the end of Year 6 in both history and geography is in line with national expectations. Many examples of good opportunities taken to enhance and enrich the curriculum by visits, trips, theme days and the classroom use of real historical items were observed during the inspection. Scrutiny of previous work indicates that, during the year, pupils have opportunities to undertake a good range of interesting activities in geography and history.
111. In history, pupils in Years 1 and 2 are planning to once again visit a local Victorian museum, where they dressed in Victorian costume for their 'Victorian Days' topic and identified differences between school then and now, and their lives with those of Victorian children. Years 3 and 4 pupils have studied Ancient Rome and visited the Roman Baths. Years 5 and 6 are studying Tudors. In one lesson seen, the personal

problems of being Henry VIII were well taught and understood, with the pupils writing letters from Henry to a close friend outlining the stresses of being a Tudor king.

112. In geography, pupils throughout the school visit places of interest relevant to the curriculum. In Years 1 and 2 visits are made around the school and into Wells so that the immediate environment can be studied. The pupils have made maps of their journey to school, described the route and studied physical and human features of the school grounds and the local environment. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 study an Indian village comparing the climate, houses, occupations and lifestyles with their own. In Years 5 and 6 the pupils compare Wells with a larger city, and a visit to Bristol is part of their studies. All pupils have been involved in the school's 'Jamaica Day' activities, which also involved other schools in the area. Plans are being made for a similar day in the near future on the problems of trade with the Third World.

Teaching, learning and behaviour

113. There was insufficient evidence to make secure judgements on pupils' attitudes and behaviour and the quality of teaching and learning in geography. However, in the geography lesson seen, the quality of teaching was good and the pupils extended their knowledge of the world and the continents well. The teaching and learning in history are good with two lessons seen in Year 2 being very good. Here the use of historical items on loan from the local museum service were very well used to bring out a sense of time and the differences between life long ago and today. The teachers motivated pupils very well, used questioning well to probe and guide pupils' learning, and they managed the pupils very well. As a result, the quality of learning was very good and pupils' attitudes and behaviour were similarly very good.

Leadership and management

114. Both subject co-ordinators are enthusiastic and demonstrate good subject knowledge. History and geography units are taught in a series of lessons during the year. The units are currently organised on a two-year rolling programme of topics so that pupils undertake half-termly topics for each of the two subjects during each year. This does not appear to adversely affect the development of skills, knowledge and understanding in history and geography. The current plans to integrate more history and geography into literacy, information and communication technology and design and technology will provide opportunities to enhance the teaching and learning in history and geography.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Strengths

- A very well-developed website.
- The expertise of staff because of successful training.
- Very good resources in terms of the ratio of pupils to computers, the very good range of software and the position of the computer suite within the school.
- The confidence of pupils in using their ICT skills and their achievement as a result of it.
- Standards by Year 6.
- The use of ICT to improve reading.
- The use of ICT across the curriculum.
- Pupils' self-assessment booklets.
- Team-teaching as part of training/modelling.

Weaknesses

- The teacher's dual co-ordinator and class-teacher responsibilities, with respect to the time needed to maintain computer hardware and software.
- Computers in classrooms.

Standards

115. Standards by the end of Year 2 are in line with, and sometime above, those nationally expected of pupils of their age. Pupils use word-processing to produce sentences that convey meaning, such as in a story they wrote, 'The wizard cast a spell on the dragon to make him good'. They name items in a picture, such as, 'This is a frog' or, 'This is tyrannosaurus rex'. They use 'Textease' to combine words and pictures, writing a short story and illustrating it from a bank of pictures. Pupils know how to use a graphic package to create a picture, and an understanding of pattern is developed. They use 'Dazzle' when studying the work of artists such as Mondrian and make calendars using 'Fresco'. Lessons were observed in all year groups. In these lessons, pupils' attainment was in line with what is nationally expected in Year 1, and was in line and above that expected in the two Year 2 lessons observed. Year 1 pupils learned how to make a flexi-tree to sort information about different materials. They first carried this out in person and then transferred the information to the computers. In Year 2, pupils are able to use word-processing to produce a short story. In Year 2, pupils were learning about different types of control. For example, on a digital camera, microwave, computer, video and television and a telephone.
116. Years 3 and 4 pupils learned how to group animals into sets and were confident using the ICT skills that they had acquired. In the lessons observed, standards were in line with what is nationally expected in Year 5 and above those expected in Year 6. Year 5 pupils were able to perform a multicondition search to find information on a database. They could copy and paste from the Internet and design a database of their own. They worked confidently and quickly, finding the data they needed and using data on spreadsheets to access information. In Year 6, the confidence of pupils is well above that usually seen and a minority of pupils are achieving well above expected levels. Pupils have a very good range of ICT skills, time in lessons is very well used, the software provides exciting and stimulating tasks and, as a result, pupils make very good progress. Year 6 pupils, demonstrated exceptional confidence and skill when using control mechanisms to illustrate a story that involved a lighthouse inner light going on and off, a fog horn sounding and being turned off and the lighthouse main light flashing at given intervals. Their confidence and ability to follow the story and logically record the sequencing was well above that normally observed in this year group. By the end of Year 6 pupils have gained many ICT skills. They know how to pause a video and copy and paste. They know how to find links to other websites, write a newspaper using text and pictures and produce a presentation using a range of multimedia information. They make slides, use 'PowerPoint' with sound effects and use speech bubbles to show what people are thinking or saying, when preparing a presentation.
117. ICT is used exceptionally well across all areas of the curriculum. In science, pupils use computers to insert arrows to diagrams to show in which direction a force is and then explain this in text. They collect pictures of things they are interested in and know how to transport them to a document. They find pictures from a video to illustrate a food chain. In geography, they use 'Google' or another search engine website to find pictures to illustrate their own writing. They colour over rivers, motorways, 'A' roads and railways to show a particular route on a map and use different photographs of places with their own text when studying; for example, tourism in Bristol. In history,

they use word-processing to write about the life of a Spartan warrior and film clips to illustrate work about the first man to fly or an Ancient Greek market. In English, they write poems using different font sizes, letters and colours as well as illustrating them. They also use 'Expresso' to research the lives of famous authors such as Dick King-Smith. When making a cover they use 'autotext', 'Word', and Microsoft on-line clips from an old film and describe their favourite television channel. In religious education they use the package 'belonging' when thinking about rules and clubs. A course for higher attaining pupils in the use of ICT in music is to be run in March. The school is continually finding ways to promote the subject and use it to pupils' best advantage. The use of it for 'booster' classes in English and mathematics is next on the agenda.

Teaching, learning and behaviour

118. Almost all teachers are confident in teaching the subject and team-teach when less confident. The quality of teaching is good in Years 1 and 2. Support staff, including office staff (with reference to the telephone), were particularly well deployed for the Year 2 lessons on control technology. Each small group of pupils was taught by an adult and, as a result, learning was very good. The large library/computer suite room contributed particularly well to the organisation of these lessons. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour were good and they made good progress, building on knowledge learned in previous lessons.
119. The quality of teaching ranges from good to excellent in Years 3 and 6. Overall, it is very good. Lessons are planned well and are taken at a good pace, direct teaching is clear and linked directly to lesson objectives and previous learning, and classes are managed well. Higher attainers are challenged well by highly-skilled teaching that leaves room for initiative, and lower attainers are supported well by adults and their peers and as a result make good progress. Work builds on previous learning and pupils are told at the end of the lesson what the next lesson will be about. A Year 6 lesson observed was excellent in every way. Teachers also use the installed packages to further their own practice such as in using stickers for awards. As a result, pupils are highly motivated and work at speed to produce their work. They work very well with partners and support and learn from one another very well.

Leadership and management

120. The subject is very well led and managed. The co-ordinator has run in-service sessions for her colleagues, on 'Fresco' (a new graphics package), databases, e-mail and programmable robots. She has produced planning and record sheets (which encourage cross-curricular activities) and has compiled and ensured implementation of pupils' self-assessment books in each class. Teachers and learning support assistants have also been on other in-service training courses. National guidance is being followed and a scheme of work is almost written for Years 1 and 2 and is being developed for the rest of the school. The co-ordinator is very well supported both by the headteacher and the local education authority. There are many people she can turn to for advice including an on-line help page from the local educational authority. ICT is one of the main curriculum developments of the school and takes a prominent place in the life of the school. The school uses digital cameras, laptop computers, programmable 'Romers' and scanners. The computer suite is housed in what was once one of the school halls, which has been tastefully converted to a large combined library and ICT room. The area is near to the entrance and central, with classrooms on the other three sides. As such, it is used before and after school by parents and pupils waiting for each other, in addition to during the school day. Use of computers in classrooms is limited. As the equipment is new, few problems arise at present.

However, the co-ordinator is responsible for inputting all software, which is time-consuming. The school needs to consider how best it can support the co-ordinator, who also has class teacher responsibilities, to ensure that ICT continues to have a strong focus in the school. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' plans against the national guidance. ICT is supporting a wide range of subjects and the co-ordinator, along with other subject co-ordinators, needs also to monitor in what way the use of it actually raises standards in their subject. There is very good liaison between the co-ordinator and the governor responsible for the website, with the co-ordinator often collecting the information for the governor to put on the website.

MUSIC

Strengths

- An enthusiastic, knowledgeable co-ordinator who is a music specialist.
- A climate where both teachers and pupils want to improve.
- A very good variety of extra-curricular activities, which enrich the subject and interest pupils.
- Good opportunities for all pupils to take part in a variety of musical experiences.

Weaknesses

- To ensure that the co-ordinator's expertise is maximised across the school so that all teachers teach to a high standard.

Standards

121. Standards in music are above national expectations in Year 6 and in line with expectations in Year 2. Pupils learn to appreciate music composed by different composers, gaining knowledge of composers such as, Brahms, Beethoven, Bach and Mozart. They learn to appreciate a variety of styles of music from different countries through the study of class topics and during their music lessons.
122. In both Years 1 and 2, pupils learn to sing songs such as 'He's got the whole world in his hand', clearly and tunefully. They sing in unison, changing the tempo of the song when requested. In a Year 1 class, pupils learn to explore simple skills. They accurately copy and repeat rhythms made by the teacher, and represent words such as 'waterproof' and 'happiness' by clapping. They practise until different groups of pupils are playing different rhythms in unison. While singing songs such as, 'John has great big waterproof boots on', they use percussion instruments, hand clapping and they stamp their feet to make various rhythms. They persevere in order to improve their work and learn to stop and start at the right time.
123. In a very good singing lesson in Year 6, pupils warm up their voices using different sounds such as, 'pop, pop, pop..., pip, pip, pip, pip..., zzzz..., fff', changing the tempo and volume as requested. They draw on their knowledge and skill to sing songs such as 'Rise and shine' with clear diction and musical expression. They refine and improve the quality of the sounds they make by controlling their breathing and through practise.

Teaching, learning and behaviour

124. Teaching in Year 6 is very good. The teacher is very knowledgeable, has very good behaviour management techniques and tremendous enthusiasm and energy for the subject. During music lessons, Year 6 pupils are given the opportunity to express their opinions and asked to evaluate the effect different instruments and the tempo, pitch, and rhythm have on music such as 'blues' music. When teaching all Years 3 to 6 pupils to sing, the teacher showed a very clear understanding of precisely what she wanted them to learn and how they could improve. Her high expectations in terms of

behaviour, application and perseverance and an expectation of total commitment by the pupils resulted in good progress being made.

125. Pupils in Year 2 are enthusiastic and show perseverance when they need to improve. The good teaching included demonstration and instruction of how, for example, they should hold and care for instruments, and it was particularly effective in encouraging pupils to apply themselves in order to improve their performances. The use of appropriate resources, such as using a wall chart with the words written up and techniques such as those used for pupils in Years 3 to 6 to warm up their voices, would raise attainment further.
126. The excellent teaching of individuals in instrumental work, results in good attitudes being fostered, and interested, well-behaved pupils making very good progress. Quality playing by individuals is also the result of detailed planning and appropriate demonstrations, which address the needs of the individual.
127. Good opportunities for pupils with special educational needs to perform and learn with their peers in their own and other schools develop personal skills and pride in their abilities and this is a particular strength of the subject.
128. The organisation of a variety of activities for the pupils demonstrates the good team work that is evident in the school. Through the breadth of activities, which include two school choirs, a brass ensemble, string players, woodwind instrumental players and regular recorder clubs, pupils build up self-confidence to work in large and small groups, learn to take turns and listen to one another. In addition, by taking part in local activities such as the folk dance festival they broaden their experiences and not only learn to enjoy making music, but to develop socially and culturally.
129. The recent school production of 'Hosanna Rock' was highly praised and appreciated by parents. Both the concerts and key-stage singing practices provide additional times when music is taught successfully. The very good variety of opportunities for music, and the good teaching they receive, results in pupils enjoying the subject, making good progress and wishing they could do more.

Leadership and management

130. The management of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator's role has not yet been fully developed. However, she has worked very hard to improve the skills of staff and the attitudes of pupils and, although this has generally been on an incidental basis rather than as a whole-school strategy, she is rightfully proud of her efforts. Assessment has not yet been developed, but it is a priority in the 2002/2003 school development plan. The timetable is organised so that the co-ordinator teaches other classes in order to raise attainment. Future plans include her teaching alongside colleagues in order to improve teaching.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Strengths

- Good standards are evident because of very good leadership.
- Teachers' subject knowledge has improved because of the good scheme adopted.
- Excellent provision for extra-curricular activities and teacher enthusiasm.

Weaknesses

- No monitoring of the teaching of the subject and consequent staff training.

Standards

131. Standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 are above those nationally expected of pupils.
132. By the end of Year 2, pupils, including those with special educational needs, select appropriate actions that they practise and combine imaginatively into sequences of movement. They balance confidently and there is fluency in their movements when they respond to music. Pupils know the importance of fitness and understand the need to exercise by doing activities. Pupils in Year 6 talk about the effects of exercise on their bodies and demonstrate a growing understanding of how to constructively analyse and criticise both their own and the performance of others. Overall, pupils make good progress and achieve well.

Teaching, learning and behaviour

133. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. The range and quality of resources, the scheme of work, planning and teachers' subject knowledge are good. This has resulted in the good quality of teaching in gymnastics and dance, with two of the four lessons observed being very good.
134. The most effective learning occurred when teachers' expectations of pupils were high, and there was briskness and good pace to the lesson. This was exemplified in very good lessons seen in Years 2 and 6, during which pupils combined explosive and gentle movements in their dance, with a great appreciation of the moods of the music. Learning was strengthened by the good evaluative discussion that also took place.
135. A published programme of work has been thoughtfully integrated with national subject guidance to develop a supportive scheme for planning. As a result, most teachers plan their lessons well and use their subject knowledge effectively to coach individual pupils and groups. Teachers and assistants are active during lessons and their example enhances the pupils' performance.
136. Many clubs in a very wide range of sports and dance activities provide very good opportunities for pupils to develop their skills and interests outside school time. Swimming is part of the curriculum and the school reports that nearly all pupils achieve the national target of swimming 25 metres by the age of eleven.

Leadership and management

137. The subject manager provides very strong leadership and manages the subject well by seeking new developments. The school uses the subject specific knowledge of teachers from the local secondary school and coaches from outside professional bodies. Competitive matches and events are held in a variety of sports, and the school has been successful. The quality of teaching and pupils' performance now need to be monitored by the subject manager, to effectively maintain these good standards.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Strengths

- The specialist knowledge of the co-ordinator.
- Good subject knowledge among teachers.
- Pupils' interest and behaviour.

Weaknesses

- Limited resources.
- The presentation of pupils' work.

Standards

138. Standards in Year 1 are in line, overall, and sometimes above what is expected by the locally agreed syllabus, with a good amount of work recorded well. The recorded work of Year 1 pupils is sometimes of a better quality than that of Year 2 pupils, where a few higher attainers reach good standards and the majority achieve at average levels. The recorded standards seen in Year 1 need to be maintained into Year 2. However, standards, overall, at the end of Year 2, are in line with what is expected by the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils learn about the importance of the family and sequence pictures of people of different ages and list some of their favourite possessions. They list things that they can do, how they take responsibility and how they could help someone in difficulties, such as on a slide. They comment on how you feel sorry when you have done something wrong. They know a few of the parables and miracles recorded in the Bible and that 'Jesus met some sensible disciples'. Various moral issues are discussed, such as forgiveness, care, self-esteem, responsibility and fairness. During the inspection, Years 1 and 2 pupils visited the church, where they acted out a wedding ceremony. The vicar, robed, explained the different parts of the ceremony as it progressed, such as the taking of vows and the signing of the register. It was a joyful celebration with pupils accompanied by a good number of adults. All sang hymns from a sheet and prayers were said. It contributed well to pupils' spiritual development.
139. Overall, standards in Years 3 to 6 are above what is expected by the locally agreed syllabus in lessons, but below what is expected in their recorded work in Year 5 and just satisfactory in Year 6. However, pupils have gained a good range of knowledge and understanding of the subject by the time they leave the school in Year 6. In Years 3 and 4, pupils learn about Judaism, the beliefs, holy books and the prophet Isaiah. In the lesson observed in Years 3/4, pupils learned about the Jewish Shabbat, why it is a rest day and recalled the creation story from the Torah. They learn about Christian festivals such as advent and Christmas and famous Christian people, such as Mother Theresa. They consider their own beliefs and shared beliefs in clubs, such as brownies and horse-riding. They learn about organisations that help people. Both attainment targets are covered well and pupils reach satisfactory standards. In Years 5 and 6, pupils consider right and wrong, learn about Buddhism and discuss the Jewish, Christian and Muslim concepts of God as judge, creator and ruler. Good work is produced when they think about the different questions one might ask at different times of one's life; for example, when leaving school and starting a job, or in old age. They make posters about how one should take care of things and list questions they would like to ask God. Lessons have obviously involved a good deal of discussion and, in the lessons observed, above average standards were observed when pupils quickly found biblical texts in different versions of the Bible and discussed them. Pupils discuss the concept of 'pilgrimage' when studying Islam in Year 5, and are able to relate to those who take journeys through the wide experiences that many of them have of travel, in both Years 5 and 6. In Years 6 they consider whether different opinions are important and how belief may affect how one lives. They pose some deep questions to ask the local rector, showing very good attitudes, and find Bible references very quickly in different versions of the Bible to find out what the key areas of Christian belief are.

Teaching, learning and behaviour

140. The quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good. However, teachers throughout the school have not sufficiently thought through how the subject could be recorded imaginatively so that pupils have a pride in their work and have something to help them to recall what they have learned. Literacy skills in pupils' books tend to be below

average, but a small minority of books show above average standards. Pupils' understanding, however, is good and higher attainers show a considerable sense of responsibility through their writing. There is some support for lower attainers through worksheets and adult help. No suggestions are made through marking, to tell pupils how they could improve their work in Year 1, but spellings are corrected in Year 2. The teaching in the lesson seen, where both years visited the church, was very good. Pupils' behaviour, especially that of the main characters, was controlled and the dignity of a church service was understood. Almost all pupils remained attentive throughout. The teachers and the vicar had put a considerable amount of effort into the planning of it and it was a very worthwhile occasion if role play is seen to be the way to teach about sacraments.

141. The quality of teaching in Years 5 and 6 ranges from good to excellent and, overall, is very good. As a result, the quality of pupils' learning is also very good. In Years 3/4, teaching was good because of the good pace of the lesson and the positive involvement of pupils. The teacher generated enthusiasm for the subject very well, using support and resources well. The questions pupils posed showed a good degree of thought, and their responses showed that previous teaching had been effective. Pupils' attitudes are generally very good, with pupils interested and sustaining concentration. In Year 5 pupils occasionally lack self-discipline, but the teaching is mainly good. However, subject knowledge is barely adequate and whilst enough is known to teach the lesson, additional knowledge is not sufficient to answer pupils' wider questions. In Year 6, the quality of teaching is exceptionally good. A very good range of resources is used and the pace of lessons is appropriate to the pupils in the different classes. The teachers' knowledge of the subject is very good. Questioning is sharp and focused on the learning objectives of the lesson, and good use is made of learning support assistance to help the lower attaining pupils. Due to good and very good teaching pupils' achievement in the subject, across the school, is very good.

Leadership and management

142. The leadership and management of the subject by the specialist co-ordinator are satisfactory. She is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and keen to develop the subject, but opportunities have not arisen for her to do so. She has a clear action plan to implement when the subject is a focus on the school improvement plan in the summer term of 2003. The Somerset Locally Agreed Syllabus is followed satisfactorily. Very good use is made of the local resources such as the church and the vicar to promote pupils' understanding of the subject.