

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **BUSHMEAD PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Luton

LEA area: Luton

Unique reference number: 132246

Headteacher: Mr A Miller

Reporting inspector: Mr Barry Allsop  
1245

Dates of inspection: 3 – 6 February 2003

Inspection number: 248967

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Bushmead Road Luton Bedfordshire
Postcode:	LU2 7EU
Telephone number:	01582 725 387
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr I Ward
Date of previous inspection:	n/a

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
1245	Mr B Allsop	Registered inspector	Art and design	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? <i>The school's results and pupils' achievements.</i> How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
11096	Ms M Davie	Lay inspector		How high are standards? <i>Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development.</i> How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with its parents?
12112	Ms G Carter	Team inspector	English History Special educational needs	
12198	Ms L Weatherley	Team inspector	Geography Music Religious education	
30266	Ms H Rask	Team inspector	Foundation Stage	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
27635	Ms D Cinamon	Team inspector	Science Physical education Educational inclusion, including race equality English as an additional language	
25778	Mr A Hicks	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Design and technology	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Bushmead primary was formed in September 2000 by the amalgamation of an adjacent infant and junior school. It has 654 boys and girls plus 20 attending part time in the nursery. Pupils are aged between four and eleven. They are taught in 24 single age classes and a nursery. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is low around five per cent. There are 57 children with special educational needs (SEN) this proportion, 15 per cent, is also lower than average. There are eight pupils with statements of special educational needs. These pupils have support requirements ranging from physical to behavioural and special learning needs.

Whilst the vast majority of pupils are White British, there are pupils who are Indian, Pakistani, Black Caribbean and Black African, Chinese and a few representatives from other ethnic groups. There are 76 pupils with English as an additional language a higher proportion than most schools and of those eleven are at an early stage of acquiring English.

The school serves an, overall, advantaged area. The majority of pupils have some pre-school experience before starting school. Children's' attainment on entry to the school is broadly average.

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

This is a very good school. The teaching is good and often very good. The pupils attain high standards. They have very positive attitudes and very good relationships. The pupils are eager to learn. Pupils with English as an additional language generally make good progress although those very few at an early stage of learning English require better levels of support to help them achieve as well as their peers. There is very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils respond well to the wide-ranging curriculum and excellent extra-curricular activities. The leadership of the school is very good and has ensured a successful new school. The school offers good value for money.

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

- Pupils attain high standards at the end of Year 6
- The vast majority of pupils make good progress over their time in the school
- The quality of teaching is good and often very good
- Pupils have very good attitudes and form very good relationships
- Links with parents and the community are very good
- Provision for personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is very good
- The curriculum is very good and extra-curricular activities are excellent
- Provision for special educational needs is very good
- Management and leadership are very good

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

- Improve the support for the very few pupils who are at an early stage in learning English

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

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

This is the school's first inspection. The former infant and junior schools have been most successfully unified into a single institution through the very clear vision and hard work of the headteacher, senior staff and governors. All the teaching and support staff have worked as a unified team determined to create a successful primary education for the pupils.

## 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	A	A	B
Mathematics	n/a	A	B	C
Science	n/a	A	A	A

<b>Key</b>	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The new school has a short but very good track record with eleven year old pupils attaining almost consistently well above average in the national tests each year. The school does well when compared to schools in similar circumstances. Unusually, boys generally attain at a higher level than girls in the tests. The vast majority of pupils make good progress throughout the school and a high proportion of pupils achieve above average standards.

The results of tests taken by seven year olds are not as high despite the good progress children make from the start of the school. A proportion of the past groups of children have been hampered by the lack of any access to full or part-time education during the reception year. Until 2002 some children have had a year's less education than their classmates. This effected their scores when they came to take the national tests. Results have been average to above in English, mathematics and science in the past two years for pupils at the age of seven.

Those children in the nursery and in reception classes make a good start to their life in school and achieve well. The vast majority meet the targets set in all areas of learning at the start of Year 1.

The quality of work seen during the inspection was also generally of a very high standard. The vast majority of children in the school are achieving close to their capacity. Throughout the school the standards achieved in science are well above average and are well above in mathematics by age eleven. Standards in music are above average for pupils aged seven and well above for those aged eleven. Standards in religious education (RE) and geography are above average throughout the school. Standards are above average in English for pupils by the age of eleven and in also in art by the age of seven. Standards in PE are above average throughout the school and well above in games for those aged eleven. Standards are average in English for pupils aged seven. Standards in design and technology (DT), history and information and communications technology (ICT) are as expected for pupils throughout the school.

Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and make good progress. Pupils with English as an additional language generally make good progress. The very few who are at an early stage of acquiring English need more carefully targeted support during some lessons to improve their rate of progress.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good: the pupils are enthusiastic and co-operative and eager to learn. They thoroughly enjoy the experiences offered in the school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good behaviour in the classrooms and playground. There were examples of excellent behaviour in some classes.

Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils show good initiative and take responsibility. The school encourages them to participate fully in the life of the school. The relationships between the staff and pupils are very good. Staff and pupils treat each other with great respect.
Attendance	Very good. The school has very good systems to monitor attendance.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Nursery and reception	Year 1 and Year 2	Years 3 to 6
Lessons seen overall	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 in the school is good and often very good. Of the 134 lessons seen 109 were good or better; 3 lessons were excellent. Aspects of teaching were unsatisfactory in only three lessons. Staff are knowledgeable, enthusiastic, organise their rooms well and have good subject knowledge. They show great respect for the pupils. They manage pupils well, use a wide range of teaching techniques, and have high expectations at all times. Teaching in the nursery and the reception year is good. Well planned, stimulating activities promote good progress. Better planned use needs to be made of the outside area for reception children.

Whilst the work is generally well matched to the needs of pupils, on a few occasions, there is a lack of well planned work for the very few pupils who are at an early stage of acquiring English.

Literacy and numeracy are taught very effectively. ICT skills are well taught in the ICT suite. The pupils are eager to learn and staff effectively exploit that enthusiasm. Very good behaviour and co-operation between pupils support the effective learning. The number, skill and enthusiasm of the learning support assistants all help the pupils to feel fully included, concentrate and generally make good progress.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The overall curriculum is very good. There is very good provision for personal, social and health education and an excellent range of extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision is very good. The learning support assistants offer very good support.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language.	Satisfactory. Overall, pupils with English as an additional language make sound progress. At times, work needs to be better matched to the needs of those very few starting to acquire English.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Provision for social and moral education is excellent. Cultural and spiritual education is very good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school takes very good care of the pupils. The systems for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very good. There is very good assessment of pupils' academic progress.

The well planned, active and stimulating curriculum is a strength of the school. The wide range of art, music and physical education activities successfully capture the pupils' interests and enthusiasms. The school takes great care of the children and has very good links with parents, many of whom take an active interest in the children's education.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school is very well led. The headteacher has a very clear vision and high expectations. All staff are very committed to the improvement of the school and the standards attained. Senior staff and subject managers work hard to continually improve the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil their responsibilities well and take an active and informed part in shaping the development of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good: monitoring and evaluation of the school by senior staff is thorough and effective.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school's spending decisions relate closely to priorities. Good use is made of staff, resources and the accommodation.

The school is well staffed and resourced. The school accommodation is good. The team of staff is hardworking and dedicated. The governors monitor the work and finances of the school closely and are keenly aware of its strengths and weaknesses. They are very aware of the need to apply the principles of best value when purchasing goods and services. The current high financial reserves are appropriately allocated for the new library and the outside environmental area.

### PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children enjoy going to school</li> <li>• The teaching is good</li> <li>• Children make good progress</li> <li>• The school expects the children to work hard and achieve to their best</li> <li>• The behaviour is good</li> <li>• The school helps children to mature and become responsible</li> <li>• The head and staff are approachable</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The information they receive about the children's progress</li> <li>• The amount of homework is not sufficient</li> </ul>

Six hundred and twenty-four questionnaires were sent out and two hundred and eighty six returned; thirty parents attended the parents' meeting.

Inspectors found that children do work hard, enjoy the school, behave well and adopt mature attitudes to their work. There is good teaching and the range of extra-curricular activities is excellent. The amount of homework is about normal for children of this age. Parents receive good information about the curriculum and pupils' progress during the year, although some of the annual written reports do say too little about individual pupil's progress.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

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

1. The majority of pupils who attend the school start in the reception class. Until this academic year not all pupils had the benefit of a full year in the reception classes and a significant number started school at Year 1. This affected standards attained in the national tests taken at the end of Year 2 as some pupils have had twelve months less education than many. Early assessments in the reception year show that children enter with levels of attainment that are very varied but overall are average. The teaching in the nursery and reception classes is good and enables children to make good progress. The majority of children reach the expected standard in all areas of learning at the end of the reception year. As pupils move up through the school they continue to make good progress. They achieve well in English mathematics, science, music, PE, geography and RE.
2. At the start of Year 1 the vast majority of pupils meet the expected standards in; communication, language and literacy; mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical areas of learning and also in personal, social and emotional development.
3. The inspectors found that by the end of Year 2 pupils have generally made good progress and attain well above average standards in science and above average standards in mathematics, art, music, PE and RE. Standards are average in English, ICT, DT and history. The consistently good teaching, pupils' good attitudes, their eagerness to learn and very good support from classroom assistants lead to the overall good gains in skills, knowledge and understanding.
4. In the 2002 national tests for pupils aged eleven, the results were well above average in English and science, above average in mathematics and were, overall, well above average. When compared to schools in similar circumstances standards were above average in English, average in mathematics but well above in science. It is not feasible to analyse any trend in improvement as the school only has two sets of national test results. These pupils, however, made very good progress from the age of seven to the age eleven.
5. The inspectors found that pupils' attainments at the age of eleven are above average in English and well above in science and mathematics. The implementation of the national numeracy and literacy strategies and associated, intensive training of staff are having a positive effect, particularly in mathematics. Standards in music are well above average. Standards in PE are above average and well above in games. Standards in RE and geography are also above average. Standards in ICT, DT, art and history are average.
6. Boys and girls are generally attaining at similar levels in all subjects. However, in the annual national tests the boys attain higher levels than the girls. Neither the school nor the inspectors are able to offer any secure explanation for this reversal of what is normally found.
7. The school has established, in conjunction with the Local Education Authority (LEA), targets for English and mathematics. These targets, which were particularly challenging, were not achieved in 2002. The 2003 targets are more realistic for the pupils.

8. The pupils identified as having special educational needs make good progress. They have well-produced individual education plans (IEPs) and are very effectively supported by the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) and the well-trained classroom assistants. All staff work very hard to meet the needs of these pupils with wide ranging difficulties.
9. The 76 pupils with English as an additional language are generally effectively supported. Those pupils who are at a more advanced stage in learning English often make good progress, and some make very good progress achieving high standards by the end of Year 6. A proportion of pupils with mother tongue other than English, receive specifically funded support which is used to appoint additional classroom assistants to meet their needs. These pupils are sensitively supported and participate in all aspects of the curriculum and school life. However, those few pupils at an early stage of learning English make less good progress. They are not sufficiently encouraged to rehearse and repeat what they are learning in their own speech.
10. The very few gifted and talented pupils make appropriate progress. They are appropriately challenged in the top sets in mathematics and extension work is often set for them.

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

11. Pupils have very good attitudes to the school. The oldest are particularly mature and hard working and well prepared to move on to secondary education. Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school and makes a strong contribution to pupils' learning. There have been no exclusions. Attendance levels are high, well above the national average and pupils arrive promptly at the start of the day.
12. Pupils are very positive about the work they do. Year 6 pupils are very mature. In 90 per cent of lessons observed in this year group pupils' attitudes to learning were very good or excellent and makes a significant contribution to their very good achievements. In a mathematics lesson for example, they worked very hard at measuring angles accurately because their teacher gave them a very good demonstration about how to do it and had high expectations of them. "I will be looking for accuracy to within one degree, otherwise your work will be marked wrong!" In other year groups pupils' attitudes to learning are equally good. In a Year 5 mathematics lesson pupils learning about symmetry were really keen. They concentrated and worked hard, helped by the good use their teacher made of time deadlines to motivate them. In a Year 3 English lesson pupils who were redrafting a piece of writing were very focused on their work and learning at a high rate because the lesson was extremely well prepared and teaching moved along at a brisk pace to hold their attention.
13. Pupils behave well and their relationships are very good. Parents feel that behaviour is good and know that children are familiar with and follow the school rules. Pupils are considerate and polite, regularly holding doors open for adults and each other. They are aware of the seriousness of bullying and racial harassment and know that the school will not tolerate either. Playground behaviour can be very lively when all of the older pupils are confined to the paved area. Although it has recently been enlarged, this area is still too small for the large number of pupils who use it. The school has firm plans to make a larger play area for them. Relationships between pupils and staff are very good. Pupils are very willing to take direction from their teachers and this helps them to make good progress in their lessons.

14. Pupils stick to the school rules and even try to help each other to behave properly. When two children from the reception class had delivered their register to the office, one started to run back to their classroom, but his friend very quickly grabbed his hand and said "Remember, we're not allowed to run!"
15. Pupils are good at taking initiative in their learning and handle their jobs around school responsibly. In many lessons their ability to organise their tasks and problem solve is very good and this is making a significant contribution to their personal development. This was shown in a Year 2 science lesson when pupils were making predictions, observations and recordings about how heat affects certain substances. Similarly in a Year 6 history lesson, the most able decided for themselves, how they would record and present information about changes that had happened in Luton in Victorian times. Pupils take their jobs around school seriously. They act as dinner monitors, classroom monitors and help in assembly and the dinner hall. The school councillors are highly motivated and pleased they are given an opportunity to have a say in what happens in school. The council is presently involved in planning future fundraising activities, having just organised a very successful bring and buy and cake sale to raise money for a Blue Peter appeal.
16. There are high levels of attendance and unauthorised absence is below the national average. Parents make sure their children get to school on time and this helps them to make a good start to their day. Pupils are very positive about the new arrival procedures, which allow them to come into their classrooms early enough to socialise and settle before registration.

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

17. The overall quality of teaching is good. During the inspection in 131 of the lessons teaching was satisfactory or better (98%) and in 109 lessons it was good or better (81%). It was very good or better in 45 lessons (36%). There were aspects of unsatisfactory teaching in only three lessons. Teaching is a strength in the school. The headteacher and staff have worked very hard to establish a consistency in the planning, organisation, expectations and delivery of teaching. This has been achieved through staff training and monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching and the setting of targets for improvement. This has had a very positive effect. The school has also successfully introduced effective strategies for the teaching of literacy and numeracy based on national guidelines. All teachers have a secure knowledge of both the frameworks for teaching.
18. What the pupils are intended to learn is explained at the start of a lesson, displayed and referred to throughout the lesson. The teacher also explains what he or she is looking for during the lesson. Consequently, children are clear about what they are learning and what they should do next. The clarity of explanation and the range of skilfully asked questions have a significant impact on pupils' progress. The start of a lesson will often find teachers reminding pupils of what they have learned previously. At the close learning is reviewed, and at times pupils evaluate the quality of what they have produced or achieved. The teacher then explains what the pupils will learn when they next do work in the subject. The very good relationships, high pupil interest and motivation make lessons enjoyable and productive. Homework is appropriate and set regularly in a variety of subjects.
19. There is a high proportion of good teaching in all year groups. The most consistently good teaching was seen for pupils in the nursery, reception, Years 2, 5 and 6. Good teaching was seen, at times, in all subjects. The highest proportions of very good teaching or excellent teaching were seen in science, music, RE, PE and

mathematics. The teachers carefully match work to pupils' needs and there is often plentiful and skilled additional support available in the classrooms. The learning support assistants are generally used effectively to support a particular group of pupils, as well as individuals. Most of the teachers and all of the teaching assistants are particularly skilled at developing the children's self-confidence and social relationships. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language are very effectively helped to be included in class activities.

20. The quality of teaching for children in the nursery and reception is good. The teachers are skilled in managing the behaviour and social development of the children. The activities are stimulating and children successfully encouraged to be independent and move smoothly between activities. Teaching is often well planned and matched to the needs of different groups so that children make good gains in their skills and understanding. Better use could be made of the outside area with the reception children to promote physical skills and co-operation.
21. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good and they make good progress. IEPs are of a good standard, are very precise, show small steps in learning and lead to good planning of activities. Teaching assistants engage in significant activities that lead to good progress for children with special educational needs. The SENCO, teachers and learning support assistants often work with pupils in small groups or with individuals. This work is very carefully and successfully focused on the specific needs of the pupils. The learning support assistants are skilled at building self-confidence and ensure all are enjoying school. They need further training to carefully develop the language skills of those few at a very early stage of learning English.
22. The pupils with English as an additional language are generally effectively supported. Those who are more advanced at speaking English make good, and often, very good progress. They are encouraged to fully participate in lessons. A few pupils who are at an early stage of acquiring English do not always receive sufficiently well planned, carefully matched activities which build the next steps in gaining fluency and confidence in the language.
23. The teachers have gained in confidence in their subject knowledge, particularly over the last two years. They are very positive in their attitudes to recent changes in ICT, and most are making good use of additional new resources. They are all enthusiastically focused on learning more about teaching and assessment and engage in significant training to improve their skills.
24. This overall ongoing commitment to improve the quality of the teaching is a strength of the school.

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

25. Provision for the curriculum is very good and the excellent range of extra-curricular opportunities is a strength of the school. The school provides a wide and varied curriculum and all the requirements of the National Curriculum are met. Music provision is particularly good and the new computer suites enhance learning in ICT. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and the school has taken full account of the requirements of the new Code of Practice. The school provides a satisfactory level of support for children who are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language, but there is a need to further develop expertise in this area.

26. Time is appropriately allocated to the different subject areas. The school has successfully developed personal, social and health education, and careful planning ensures that it is well embedded in a range of subject areas, such as history and science. The school has gained accreditation under the Healthy Schools initiative. Drugs education and the development of a healthy lifestyle are well promoted within the school. Sex education is effectively included in the curriculum.
27. The school has developed an appropriate curriculum for the children in the nursery and reception classes. However, the current arrangements for the use of the secure outdoor area need to be reviewed, to ensure that all children in the reception classes have regular opportunities to use this area.
28. Provision of extra-curricular activities is excellent. Staff provide highly motivating activities and a wide range of after school clubs. A fitness circuit and football, samba drums, orchestra, choir, science, art, cross-stitch, chess and cribbage clubs are among the activities on offer. Clubs are provided for pupils throughout the school. There are many educational visits and visitors into school to enhance learning. Annual residential trips to Norfolk and to Swanage take place for pupils in Years 5 and 6. Gifted and talented pupils are offered the opportunity to attend additional classes in the community. A residential weekend for able mathematicians in Years 5 and 6 is organised.
29. Links with the community are very good. The school links with the local church, Sikh Gurdwara, Hindu Mandir and Jewish Synagogue. Local industry employers have provided funding for the development of the school grounds. Very good links have been established with the local sports and arts colleges. This has led to the appointment of an artist in residence, and the use of the expertise of specialist sports staff. Links with the local playgroups are good. The school has considerable experience in initial teacher training and is used to train teachers under the fast track scheme.
30. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good and a strength of the school. Pupils are given particularly good opportunities to develop an understanding of right and wrong and how to get on with other children. They experience a wide variety of cultural traditions, enhanced by many outings and visitors to the school.
31. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. Teachers are generally very skilful at creating opportunities for pupils to reflect in lessons. In a Year 2 English lesson for example, pupils who were getting ready to write a story setting were asked to close their eyes for a moment to visualise what they were going to write and the mood they wanted to create. In assemblies, a candle is sometimes lit to create atmosphere and themes like 'I believe' help pupils to share and explore values. Year 6 pupils shared their religious beliefs with one another, and also how they had developed belief in themselves by hard work at school or in sporting activities. 'Thinking Boards' throughout the school encourage pupils to develop thinking skills by posing challenges such as, "Why does a snail have a shell and a slug does not?" RE makes a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual development, as do visits from the vicar and youth worker of Bushmead Church.
32. There are excellent opportunities for pupils to understand the difference between right and wrong. Clear and consistently applied rules give them a very good understanding of expectations and encourage them to respect themselves, others and property. Rules are displayed all around school to remind pupils of how they should be behaving at all times. Assemblies create a very positive ethos and make a significant contribution to pupil's understanding of moral issues such as, conservation, by

encouraging them to understand their role as caretakers of the planet or finding out about famous people who feel passionately about preserving wild life.

33. Pupils have excellent opportunities to learn how to get on with others. They are encouraged to help with the smooth day-to-day running of the school through initiatives such as the playground squad, making sure everyone has someone to play with. Peer mediation has been established and is considered as very successful for particular groups of children. Pupils are very enthusiastic about fundraising for others less fortunate than themselves and successfully worked towards providing clean drinking water for children in Uganda. The school council helps ensure that children take an active interest in working with each other to make their opinions known. Excellent provision for extra-curricular activities makes a strong contribution to pupils' social development. Clubs of all types give them the opportunity to enjoy activities with pupils of different ages, and sporting activities help them to learn to work as a team and develop a healthy sense of competition. There are very good systems for recognising and sharing achievement, by awarding merit badges and certificates in assembly, and house points encourage them all to work together for a common goal. PSHE provides very good opportunities for pupils to learn about how communities live and work together. In Year 6 they design, make and market products for profit on Industry Day, and Year 5 pupils learn about how to set up supportive and workable societies by imagining they have been marooned on a desert island. Residential visits for pupils provide very good opportunities for pupils to develop their independence and to live and work as a team.
34. The school works hard to give pupils access to a broad range of cultural experiences. Pupils have been visited by theatre groups such as the Young Shakespeare Company, have been on outings to the British School in Hitchin where they visited a Victorian classroom and to the British Museum to support work they were doing about the Greeks. Year 6 pupils made hats in design and technology supported by a local hat maker, to give them a taste of Luton's industrial past. In art they study the work of Constable, Lowry and Degas and have worked with a local artist in residence to make the mural, which is displayed in the playground for younger pupils. Pupils throughout the school are currently celebrating the Chinese New Year. Reception children made masks, instruments and dragon boxes and gasped in wonder and delight as the dragon appeared at the end of their story. Pupils in Year 2 are studying Mexico and learning about its culture, crafts, music and food. There has been a visit by Zulu nation dancers and pupils are currently being given the opportunity to learn to play Asian musical instruments. In music they listen to composers such as Grieg, Holst and Prokofiev. There is, however, scope to increase the range of multicultural literature and dual language books and exposure to more non-European artists.

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

35. Pupils are very well cared for. Teachers know them well and monitor their academic and personal development very carefully. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and their achievements are regularly assessed.
36. Teachers and other staff provide a very high level of care and pastoral support for pupils. Parents appreciate the easy access they have to teachers to discuss any problems and are pleased with how quickly the school responds. Attendance is given a very high priority. Parents are regularly reminded of how important good attendance is to their children's achievements and requested not to take them out of school for family holidays during weeks set aside for national tests. The headteacher is responsible for matters relating to Child Protection issues, and there is also a designated member of staff to ensure the academic and personal welfare of Looked

after Children. Teachers are vigilant about pupils' health and safety and the building is regularly checked to make sure they are working in a safe environment. The whole site is very clean and well maintained. A good many of the staff are qualified to deal with medical emergencies.

37. There are very good procedures to ensure that pupils behave themselves and treat each other with respect. Parents are very pleased with the positive attitudes the school promotes and the emphasis that is placed on developing kindness and honesty. Teachers and other staff are quick to praise good achievement or behaviour. This has a positive effect on the way children conduct themselves. Good work is shared in assembly. Merit badges and house points are used well to encourage pupils to have high expectations of themselves and to try really hard to always do their best.
38. Arrangements for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are very good overall. Extensive notes and records are kept for each child on progress made, from observations by teachers' and classroom assistants, marked work and tests. This systematic structure links effectively to teachers' planning.
39. Each class has a detailed assessment file containing a tracking system for each pupil as he or she moves through the school. This information is used effectively to set targets and guide curriculum planning. Procedures for assessment of the remaining subjects are diverse throughout the school. The majority of the teachers have manageable systems, including the use of target setting to track progress. The school's procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils are very good. Analysis of the national test results is carried out by the appropriate co-ordinator and school targets are then decided for numeracy and literacy. There are regular assessments in each year group: teachers meet to discuss and negotiate the work to be set for pupils. The very competent assessment co-ordinator oversees the process to ensure that targets are appropriate. This information is used to decide the grouping of pupils in each class. A closer scrutiny of the progress of a very few pupils with English as an additional language is required to ensure that the next steps in learning English are carefully identified.

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

40. Parents have high levels of confidence in the school. This is fully justified. They are encouraged to involve themselves in their children's education and provided with very good information about school life and particularly about what their children will be learning each term. There are however some inconsistencies in the quality of annual written reports on progress.
41. Parents are given regular, detailed information about what their children will be learning, how much homework they can expect and how they can help at home. Some are occasionally given additional tasks in areas they need to improve. Many children attend the homework club regularly and often complete their work at school. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are always invited to the review of their child's needs. The school has good access to interpreters in order to help any parents who need it.
42. Annual written reports on pupils' progress generally give parents a good idea about how well their children are doing but there is some inconsistency in this across the school. The best give them a clear idea about the progress their child has made and set precise targets to help them improve or move on to their next steps in learning. The governors' annual report and the school prospectus are very informative and give

parents a good view of school life. The governors' report is however missing some of the required information, such as the national comparatives for standardised tests.

43. Parents are highly supportive of the work of the school and their children's learning. Reading diaries show that they are very helpful in hearing their children practice their reading skills. A good many help in school on a regular basis, listening to children read or helping with crafts or cooking. Parents are regularly invited to school productions and warmly welcomed at class assemblies. They are also very keen to help whenever children go on outings. Workshops about literacy and numeracy have been well attended because parents are keen to find out how to support their children's work. The Friends of Bushmead School are very active and organise many fundraising and social activities such as the recent racing night. They always put on Christmas parties for the children and are currently raising funds to help pay for the playground expansion and establishment of a pond to support pupils' work in science.

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

44. The overall leadership and management by the headteacher are very good. He provides very clear educational direction and a clear vision for the continuing improvement of the school. In a relatively short time, he and the senior staff, have successfully formed an effective and cohesive primary school from two separate schools. The aims and objectives of the school are very well met and the pupils achieve well and grow confidence and self-esteem as they progress through the school.
45. The headteacher has successfully fostered a team spirit which engages all those who work in the school in a desire to seek improvement in all aspects of their work. Teamwork in the school is very good.
46. The headteacher and key staff are keenly aware of the standards attained and test results are carefully analysed, weaknesses are highlighted and teaching programmes put into place to raise standards. The national literacy and numeracy strategies have been implemented successfully and monitored. Effective monitoring of planning is undertaken by the English, mathematics and science co-ordinators. Teaching is monitored by the headteacher, and deputy heads and some subject co-ordinators. The range, rigour and frequency of monitoring has had a positive effect in raising the quality of teaching. The leadership of subjects and aspects is at least sound and is generally good. It is very good for English, mathematics, science, music, DT, the Foundation Stage, special educational needs and assessment. The management of the systems for tracking and supporting pupils with English as an additional language, whilst effective for the vast majority, requires greater rigour and effectiveness for the very few at the earliest stages of acquiring the language.
47. The governors fulfil their responsibilities effectively. The committee structure works successfully and the governing body has a good grasp of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Governors effectively monitor the school by visiting and having regular reports about progress from the subject co-ordinators. The governor with responsibility for special educational needs liaises closely with the co-ordinator. There is close and effective involvement of the governors in the creation of the school improvement plan and financial planning and control.
48. The school improvement plan is comprehensive and detailed and successfully provides identification of the key priorities for the school. It is based on a thorough analysis of the strengths and weaknesses. It is an efficient aid to school improvement. The subject co-ordinators produce useful action plans to develop their

subjects and these plans take full notice of the overall school developments. The financial allocations for each subject are very carefully managed and monitored by the school's finance officer. The strong commitment to continue to improve national test results is a unifying theme in much of the development activity.

49. The staff and governors try to ensure that the principles of obtaining best value from purchases and contracts are effectively applied. For example, the most advantageous prices were taken in equipping and staffing the ICT room. The effect of the investment on standards and progress is beginning to be efficiently monitored and evaluated by the governors. A current carry forward of ten per cent of the annual budget is appropriately identified to undertake further development of the new library and to improve a recently acquired tract of land as an outside environmental area. The very good support for pupils with special educational needs and the good progress of the vast majority of pupils with English as an additional language reflects the inclusive nature of the school. Teachers are deployed well. There is very good liaison between the learning support assistants and the teachers to provide for the needs of the pupils. The availability of the large number of skilled, enthusiastic and effective teaching assistants helps with maintaining high levels of behaviour, pupils' attention and good progress. The governors are very aware of the value of the increased expenditure on this classroom help. Although the skills of staff in supporting pupils who are at a very early stage of acquiring English require more development.
50. The quality and quantity of the accommodation are overall good. The school building is very well cared for by the diligent caretaking staff. Many of the classrooms are bright and attractive and offer adequate space for teaching the curriculum. The two school halls offer good spaces for PE and drama. The two ICT rooms enable the subject to be taught efficiently. The school has a newly developed library space but this is not yet being used to good effect to promote reading and research. The school has good access for disabled pupils with ramps in appropriate places.
51. The school is working hard to improve the outside spaces but the hard play area is barely adequate. However, the overall quality and range of resources to support the teaching and pupils' learning across the curriculum are sound.

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

### **(1) Improve the support for the very few pupils who are at an early stage of learning the English language by:**

- establishing precise targets for pupils for the next stage in learning English;
- improving the expertise of staff in supporting pupils who are at an early stage in learning English;
- very regularly monitoring and recording the progress of the pupils in acquiring English.

*(Paragraphs: 9, 22, 23, 39, 49, 79, 87, 94)*

The school may also want to consider as additional issues:

Making better use of the secure outside play area for the reception classes by planning for more regular use of the secure area and using it as an integral part of the children's learning experiences.

*(Paragraphs: 20, 27, 52, 55, 67)*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	134
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	26

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	3	42	64	22	3	0	0
Percentage	2	31	48	16	2	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching.

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	20	654
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	-	28

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	8
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	57

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	76

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	12
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	35

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.2
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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	52	40	92

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	49	51	51
	Girls	37	39	37
	Total	86	90	88
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (93)	98 (96)	96 (99)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	50	51	50
	Girls	39	38	39
	Total	89	89	89
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (90)	97 (91)	97 (100)
	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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	46	48	94

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	41	39	45
	Girls	44	37	47
	Total	85	76	92
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	90 (85)	81 (82)	98 (95)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	39	37	42
	Girls	45	38	47
	Total	84	75	89
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	89 (82)	80 (85)	95 (87)
	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	464	0	0
White – Irish	11	0	0
White – any other White background	8	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	23	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	26	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	10	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	54	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	23	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	7	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	6	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	14	0	0
Black or Black British – African	5	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	5	0	0
Chinese	8	0	0
Any other ethnic group	5	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)	30.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.9
Average class size	27.4

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

Total number of education support staff	27
Total aggregate hours worked per week	598

### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	35

Number of pupils per FTE adult	10
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## **Financial information**

Financial year	2001/02
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	£
Total income	1,612,069
Total expenditure	1,560,549
Expenditure per pupil	2,189
Balance brought forward from previous year	110,044
Balance carried forward to next year	161,564

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	624
Number of questionnaires returned	286

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	57	39	2	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	45	51	3	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	45	50	3	1	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	28	56	11	1	4
The teaching is good.	55	42	2	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	26	56	15	3	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	53	36	8	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	53	41	2	1	4
The school works closely with parents.	27	53	13	3	3
The school is well led and managed.	44	44	7	2	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	48	44	5	1	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	50	36	7	1	6

## **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**

52. The school has successfully introduced an appropriate curriculum for children in the early years of their schooling in the nursery and reception classes. The co-ordinator has very good leadership and management skills and planning is detailed and thorough across the classes. Assessment arrangements are very good and consistent across the classes. Relationships between staff are very good and teamwork is strong. The nursery nurses and classroom assistants make a most valuable contribution to children's learning. The two nursery nurses provide a welcoming, secure and familiar routine for the children in the nursery class. Children in the nursery have daily opportunities to undertake well planned activities in the outdoor area where they are effectively supported by the two nursery nurses. However, current arrangements for the use of the outdoor area by children in the reception classes are haphazard. They are not given enough regular learning experiences.
53. Children make good progress overall in the nursery and reception classes and the majority is likely to reach the expected early learning goals set for this age by the end of the reception year in all areas of their learning. Children with special educational needs receive very good support and as a result make good progress towards their individual targets. Children who are new to English receive satisfactory additional support and make sound progress.

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

54. Children make good progress in this area. Staff ensure that children learn the difference between right and wrong behaviour from the start. The very positive relationships and polite manner in which staff interact with children and adults sets a good example. One girl comforted her tearful friend, in just the way she had observed the adults around her reassure a child earlier that morning. The nursery and reception children showed remarkable self control when celebrating the Chinese New Year in the hall, as the teacher leading the session had very high expectations for good behaviour and all staff encouraged the children to take turns in presenting their contributions. The children gain from the positive emphasis made on developing their awareness of cultural, religious and language diversity within multi-racial Britain.
55. Staff encourage the children to be independent learners and to make choices about their own activities. Classrooms are attractively set up to encourage practical learning. Children learn good self-help skills when changing for hall time and are willing helpers when staff encourage them to help in clearing up. Good emphasis is placed on healthy eating and children enjoy eating fruit together and drinking milk. Children behave well during large group shared activities with their teachers and when they work in small groups with adults. However, in some lessons, children become rather boisterous during self-chosen activities and noise levels rise inappropriately. There is scope to further monitor children's self-chosen tasks and involve children more fully in planning and reviewing the learning outcomes. More systematic use of the outdoor area is needed in order to provide all children in the reception classes with regular experiences of collaborative problem-solving, and the shared use of outdoor equipment.

## **Communication, language and literacy**

56. Children make good progress in this area as teaching is good overall, and sometimes very good. Nursery staff talk constantly with the children alongside their activities when they arrive in school. Teachers pose thought provoking questions which encourage the children to think and to formulate their own ideas. Children are eager to talk about the interesting first-hand activities provided, but the quality of talk is enhanced when adults join in with the play or activity. In a very good lesson in a reception class, the teacher made very explicit links between speaking and listening, reading and writing. She explored new vocabulary such as author, illustrator and phoneme meaningfully, and, in pairs, the children were challenged to recall the correct sequence of events of the story of the 'Bear Hunt'.
57. Children learn to retell stories with expression, and early reading skills are taught in a consistent way. From the nursery onwards, children have opportunities to share books with interested adults, and books are taken home on a regular basis. Parents make a valuable contribution to reading records, and some come in on a regular basis to support reading. One group of reception children engaged in 'library' play. Using a clipboard provided by the teacher, they ticked off names and books and showed enthusiastic early library skills. The children build up knowledge of words which they recognise on sight and they learn to recognise individual letters by sound and name. Higher attaining children read simple or more advanced reading books with confidence, and all children enjoy handling books and retelling stories.
58. Children also make good progress in developing their early writing skills. They are provided with many opportunities to record their discoveries in their play. For example, they write down orders in the Chinese Restaurants set up in the classrooms and write cards to one another. Children learn to write their names with increasing accuracy and teachers demonstrate ways in which writing is undertaken well. They scribe lists together with the children about the 'Bear Hunt' story. Children use their growing knowledge of individual letter sounds when attempting independent writing, and are eager to 'read' what they have written.

## **Mathematical development**

59. Children make good progress in developing early mathematical knowledge and understanding, as a strong emphasis is made on building up mathematical vocabulary and staff take opportunities to exploit everyday situations. For example, the children are invited to work out how many children are present or absent during registration. Children with more advanced mathematical knowledge and understanding are recognised and teachers pose more challenging questions using larger numbers.
60. Teachers take good account of the mental and practical activities outlined in the numeracy strategy. Children learn to use numbers in everyday contexts and count up to ten items and beyond, with increasing accuracy. Children in the nursery particularly enjoy number rhymes and action songs. A group of reception children were well motivated to find matching sets of pictures and numerals up to thirteen hidden around the outside area. Children in the reception find out about pattern, shape and measurement. Well planned activities take into account the full range of different learning needs. After comparing the difference between ribbons of different lengths, children use language such as 'longer than' and 'shorter than'. Higher attaining children learn how to use simple units of measurement to make a strip of a given length. Children learn the importance of starting from a similar baseline when comparing the lengths of two or more items, as this is well demonstrated by the

teachers. Little evidence of recorded mathematical work was seen during the week, but children are taught to form numerals with accuracy and are encouraged to record their mathematical discoveries. Higher attaining children could be further challenged to record their work at an earlier stage.

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

61. Children make good progress in this area and teaching is good overall and at times very good or better. Children in the nursery and reception classes celebrated the Chinese New Year together in a spectacular celebration complete with a weaving dragon dance. Some children played clashing cymbals, bells and drums whilst others waved coloured streamers in a circle or acted out the role of animal characters wearing home made masks.
62. Good use is made of ICT to extend children's learning. Children in the nursery enjoy using matching games on the computer and the reception children benefit from the use of the school suite. They learn to use the mouse to drag and drop colours to make Chinese New Year pictures and develop early keyboard skills as they write their names. A programmable toy is well used to explore direction commands linked to the story of the 'Bear Hunt'.
63. Staff provide good support to children to encourage exploration and investigation. A good focus on growth is provided when the children grow mung beans and observe the development of shoots. The children enjoy exploring displays where vegetables are set out for close observation with magnifying glasses. They are curious to discover what they can feel, see and smell in a three-dimensional wall display. The children have good opportunities for designing and making. For example, they use large boxes to construct dragon heads and small construction materials to design houses and items of transport. Children make red Chinese 'Lai See' envelopes and have to solve the problem of how paper money or coins can be stored within their designs.
64. Good use is made of the local environment through walks and visits to enhance knowledge and understanding of the world. The children are fascinated by the wild birds who come to feed on the peanuts they have hung outside. However, fuller use of the outdoor play area by reception children is needed to ensure that all have the same regular opportunities for outdoor investigations.

### **Physical development**

65. Teaching in this area is good overall and the majority of children is likely to achieve the expected early learning goals by the end of the reception year. The children in both the nursery and reception classes have good opportunities to use small equipment during indoor hall times and they really enjoy this. Behaviour is good overall and the children show a developing awareness of space as they move around the large hall. They move imaginatively using fast and slow movements and show increasing control over their movements as they learn to throw and catch beanbags. They learn to warm up and cool down as a necessary part of keeping fit.
66. Children in both the nursery and the reception classes use scissors and other tools with increasingly accurate control, as they are given good opportunities to develop cutting skills and to handle tools. They learn about the safe use of tools.
67. Children in the nursery have daily opportunities to use a good range of outdoor equipment in the secure outdoor play area. This includes some fixed apparatus

where they climb, slide and travel across spaces. The nursery children are well supervised by staff outdoors and good quality interactions take place between the adults and children which supports their physical development. However, the current organisation of the timetable for the use of the outdoor area does not provide all reception children with regular opportunities to use this equipment in the same way. Staff have rightly identified this as an area for further development in order to improve overall physical development provision and ensure equality of opportunity.

### **Creative development**

68. Good teaching ensures that children have consistently good opportunities for their creative development. A specialist music teacher has high expectations for music making and the children make very good progress in learning to use a range of untuned percussion instruments and to maintain a steady beat. From the nursery through to the reception classes the children enjoy singing a range of rhymes and songs. They participated with enthusiasm in the Chinese New Year dragon dance celebration and enjoyed acting out the Chinese New Year story using animal masks and simple props.
69. Good role play provision ensures that the children undertake imaginative play with confidence. For example, children in both the reception and the nursery classes enjoy playing in the well resourced Chinese restaurant areas and take on roles as customers and chefs. They particularly like handling noodles and stir fry vegetables with chopsticks and taking orders for food. Learning is extended when the adults allocate time to join in with the play or talk with the children alongside their activities.
70. Staff encourage the children to experiment with a range of different materials, such as paint and collage. One child in a reception class was entranced by a tray of runny cornflour and spent a considerable time exploring the texture and feel of this.

### **ENGLISH**

71. Standards in English are above average for pupils by the end of Year 6. Standards are average by the end of Year 2. Standards for pupils in Years 1 and 2 are rising now that more pupils are having the opportunity for a longer period in the reception classes. Current Year 1 pupils are showing good signs that they are developing the necessary skills to achieve above average results when they reach the end of Year 2.
72. When pupils enter Year 1, they show confidence in speaking, talking clearly and showing that they are aware of the need to speak differently according to the audience they are addressing. In Years 1 and 2 they develop good listening skills, taking turns in discussion and attending carefully to what their peers or their teacher has to say. Careful attention is paid to pupils with special educational needs for whom language skills are a priority. They have the opportunity to work in small groups or with teaching assistants and teachers who are skilled in developing vocabulary or sentence structure.
73. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 acquire good levels of vocabulary specific to the subjects they are learning, and are therefore able to discuss technicalities and processes with ease and confidence. They also use language effectively to negotiate and organise themselves, for example when they work independently in Year 6 history lessons. The use of drama helps to encourage pupils to speak out clearly and take part in acting out poetry or dialogue.

74. Standards in reading are sound at Year 2 and good in Year 6. In Year 2, pupils are developing sound skills in interpreting print. The majority responds well to the systematic work done on learning common words and mastering letter sounds. They are less confident, however, in searching for meaning in what they read, or remembering to refer back to their book when asked a question about a character or the plot. They enjoy stories, particularly traditional stories or those of Roald Dahl, and begin to be aware of how a story develops with a beginning, middle and end.
75. In Years 3 to 6 pupils develop fluency and accuracy in their reading and by age eleven, the majority are able to find hidden meanings and discuss plots, settings and characters in their reading books with interest and enthusiasm. However, they are much less confident in using the library to find information, and are not clear about the cataloguing system or about how fiction books are stored. Classrooms contain good libraries of modern and classic fiction, but very few pupils have developed strong preferences for particular authors and could only name the most obvious ones such as Jacqueline Wilson or J.K. Rowling.
76. In Years 1 and 2 writing develops well and overall standards are sound. An above average number of pupils work at a high level. Systematic teaching in terms of spelling, punctuation and handwriting pays off, and more able children in Year 2 write at increasing length, showing awareness of how planning a story can make it more interesting and checking their own work for errors before writing a final version. Other pupils are not lacking in confidence in trying to get their ideas down on paper, but they make more mistakes, especially in spelling and punctuation. All pupils use writing skills effectively across the curriculum, with the recording of experiments in science being a particularly good example.
77. Writing standards are good by the time pupils leave the school. By Year 6 pupils write confidently in all subjects, showing the benefit of having been taught how to manage a wide range of styles, from letters to poetry. Higher attaining pupils use a wide and imaginative range of vocabulary, experimenting with words to create effect or suspense, as a group did when they were writing kenning poems. Nearly all pupils know how to manipulate language according to the audience they are writing for, although finished products are stronger on accuracy than atmosphere.
78. Teaching is almost uniformly good and much of it is very good. This enables pupils to reach the good standards they achieve by the age of eleven. In all classes and year groups, planning is very thorough, resources are good and pupils benefit from the high level of support given by teaching assistants and additional teachers. In Years 1 and 2 teachers are very good at using language in a way that both engages pupils' attention and increases their vocabulary, as in a Year 2 lesson where pupils were considering a traditional Chinese story. Pupils were quick to show that they had fully understood what a traditional story might contain, and how a setting in different culture could make a story more exotic and interesting. In a Year 6 spelling lesson, pupils who were already good spellers were encouraged to develop their vocabulary by using a thesaurus. In a Year 4 class, carefully devised and purposeful tasks for guided reading groups helped to maximise learning opportunities for all pupils, not just those working with an adult. Teachers start lessons with a clear exposition of what they want pupils to learn, and return to their objectives at the end when they assess how far pupils have got in their understanding. Teachers' expectations of what they want pupils to achieve are high, both in terms of academic standards and behaviour. They encourage independence well, often setting pupils to consult in pairs or groups, and this strategy helps pupils to develop maturity and collaboration.

79. A good feature of the subject is that pupils with special educational needs generally follow the same curriculum as their peers, even when they are withdrawn from a lesson to work in a small group. When they work in classrooms along with their peers they are helped by skilled support assistants who help them understand and remain on task, support their reading or writing skills and ensure that they make progress towards IEP targets. Because teachers know pupils well, they constantly adjust their questioning to involve all learners and this ensures the involvement of all children. The vast majority of pupils who have English as an additional language make good progress in English. However, provision for the few pupils who are at an early stage of learning English is not always effective. The work is not always sufficiently carefully matched to need. Vocabulary is not always sufficiently carefully rehearsed and used.
80. The management of the subject is very good. The co-ordinator has been instrumental in seeing that the national literacy strategy is implemented throughout the school. Training for this has brought about greater uniformity in teaching. Although she herself has not had much opportunity to monitor teaching in classrooms, there has been effective monitoring by the Local Authority's consultant and by members of the senior management team. The co-ordinator keeps a watchful eye on standards through examining pupils' work and test scores and this enables her to prioritise areas for development, which quickly find their place in the school's development plan. Good use is made of ICT when pupils word-process their work or use the Internet for independent research. The curriculum is enriched by a series of visits from drama companies, trips to theatres, book weeks, book fairs and pupil participation in performances for assemblies and end of term celebrations.

## **MATHEMATICS**

81. Pupils in Year 2 reach above average standards and in Year 6 pupils' standards are well above average. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language make good progress and achieve well.
82. By the end of Year 2 pupils have a good understanding of number and place value. Pupils know a variety of mental methods for addition and subtraction, for example adding 9 by adding 10 and subtracting 1. Nearly all calculate confidently with numbers up to 100 or more and use their skills to solve simple problems. Pupils describe two and three-dimensional shapes and they measure in metres and centimetres, grams and kilograms. Pupils develop a good understanding of how to use decimals in money and measures. For instance, some pupils know that there are 1000 grams in 1 kilogram and use this to explain why a 2.5kg bag of potatoes is much heavier than a 420g tin of beans.
83. By the end of Year 6 many pupils calculate accurately with whole numbers, fractions and decimals in their heads and on paper. However, lower attaining pupils find problem solving activities difficult. Higher attaining pupils have well-developed investigational skills using formulae to explain mathematical patterns. Pupils have a good knowledge of shape. They find areas and perimeters of complex shapes, they use protractors to measure and draw angles and know for example that angles in a triangle add up to 180 degrees.
84. Pupils make good progress and reach high standards because teaching is good throughout the school. The teaching in many lessons was good or very good. Teachers teach basic number skills very well. Most lessons start with lively whole-class mental and oral sessions where quick-fire questions make pupils think. Starting from what pupils already know, these sessions provide good opportunities to extend

basic number skills, such as working out 8 times 15 or finding pairs of numbers that total 50. Teachers use simple resources very effectively and explain new topics well. For example, a lesson on co-ordinates with a lower attaining group was successful because the teacher used a grid with the pupils' own names on. This caught their interest well and ensured that they all wanted to join in the discussion. Careful explanation of the correct way to describe position on the grid and further opportunities to practise for themselves, ensured that all pupils learned the new technique quickly.

85. The three-part lesson structure of the national numeracy strategy is firmly established. Most lessons run to time but occasionally discussions and explanations take too long. This restricts the time pupils have for their own work and sometimes prevents teachers from covering all that they had planned. Not all teachers spend sufficient time at the end of each lesson reviewing what has been taught or assessing what pupils have understood. Consequently, pupils are less clear than they could be about what they have achieved.
86. Teachers test pupils regularly to assess their attainment and keep very good records of progress. Grouping pupils of similar ability into teaching sets works very well because teachers use assessment information effectively to match the level of work to the needs and aptitudes of the pupils in each group. Where teaching is very good this is often because teachers have very high expectations of what pupils can achieve.
87. Pupils with special educational needs are supported effectively in lessons, ensuring that they learn well and achieve appropriate standards for their ability. Most pupils with English as an additional language make good progress because they are generally well supported in lessons. Occasionally teachers and support staff do not, however, encourage them sufficiently to join in discussions and use mathematical language.
88. Mathematics contributes well to pupils' social and personal development. Relationships between all adults and pupils are very good and as a result pupils want to do well. Most pupils behave very well, although in a very small number of classes they are too noisy and slow to respond to teachers' instructions. This slows the lesson down. Many pupils have very good work habits. They sustain good levels of concentration and help each other effectively. "Is that right?" "No – yes! Look! It goes in 25's" was just part of a lengthy exchange between two pupils who were exploring how to calculate fractional parts of a kilogram in grams.
89. The co-ordinator and other senior staff lead development in the subject very well. Effective monitoring of lessons and planning, and detailed analysis of assessment data analysis all contribute well to the high quality of teaching. These activities develop teachers' awareness of what is going well and where there are particular areas that could be better. Clear targets for further improvement are set out in the school improvement plan. The school is well placed to maintain the high standards that it has achieved in recent years.

## SCIENCE

90. Standards in science are well above average in Years 2 and 6. The very high standards are a consequence of consistently good teaching and a well-planned curriculum.
91. Year 1 pupils are developing good understanding of forces explaining how pushing and pulling makes things move. They found out that there are other ways for forces to work through squeezing and bending play dough. They were effectively assisted by a teaching assistant to use this vocabulary as they played a turn taking game. Year 2 pupils make simple predictions about change, collaborating well in groups independently of adults to discuss the chocolate, pop-corn and bread that are to be heated. They talk confidently about reversible and irreversible changes in the substances they observe and write what they find in a grid. Pupils make consistently good progress and by age eleven pupils have acquired good knowledge about life sciences, materials and physical processes. The majority are confident applying scientific method to their studies. For example, pupils are able to decide which approach to take to testing how different sugars dissolve. They are clear about the process and know how to set up a fair test and which variables must remain constant. They select methods, equipment and make predictions to test. They record accurately and can adapt their plans if necessary.
92. Teaching is good overall and there is also much very good and some excellent teaching. Teachers use their good subject knowledge well to introduce pupils to new ideas ensuring that science vocabulary is learned and understood in practical contexts. Different aspects of the curriculum are well integrated so that pupils learn, for example, about physical processes through investigation and experimentation. Pupils who have different levels of skills in writing up experiments are effectively supported and tasks adjusted to provide more challenge for higher attainers. Expectations of achievement are high and from an early age teachers ensure that pupils develop a scientific approach, predicting, testing then recording what they find.
93. Resources are very good and planned to give pupils plenty of 'hands on' experience. Lessons are very stimulating and hugely enjoyed by pupils. In several lessons resources were presented as a carousel so that pupils moved around the activities getting experience of different substances or materials to reinforce their understanding. When, for safety purposes, demonstration forms a major part of the lesson the organisation of the activities is very good and still ensures that pupils get to touch and feel substances so that their interest is maintained.
94. Teachers ask skilful questions to encourage pupils to think about the processes and to explain and give reasons for their thinking. For example, in a Year 1 lesson questions led pupils to speculate on the reasons why objects on a computer programme floated or sank. Teachers listen very carefully to pupils and are effective in getting them to expand on their reasoning. As a result of this approach a pupil in a Year 2 class was able to explain reversible and irreversible changes in terms of liquids and solids, clearly understanding and expressing cause and effect. As pupils get older they are encouraged to take more responsibility and devise their own methods for testing and recording experiments. All pupils are included in all aspects of learning. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. In some lessons there is not enough encouragement of pupils who are at an early stage of learning English to use new vocabulary to promote their language development.

95. Management of the subject is very good. Monitoring is thorough and effective action is taken to improve standards. The co-ordinator has a clear view of the direction for the subject and the skills to bring about change.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

96. By the end of Year 2 standards are above expectations while for Years 3 to 6 standards are in line with what is normally found. There is particularly effective teaching of art for pupils in Years 2 and 5. There is considerable enrichment of the art curriculum by use of a resident artist from the nearby specialist secondary school, the art club and visits to museums and galleries.
97. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good progress. They draw and paint well and have an understanding of simple perspective. They paint bright, vibrant landscapes showing careful and sensitive use of colour. They talked knowledgeably about the seascape or rainforest they were making. They confidently produced bright colour washes, collages of waves, and also trees, cutting, pasting and painting with skill and enjoyment. They are aware of the ways in which the artists show different moods through colour and movement. They mixed colours with skill and remain focused on tasks for considerable lengths of time. Children of all abilities were absorbed in this and worked well with good concentration. They start to keep a very useful sketch book which includes drawings in pencil and chalk of plants, fruits and bulbs as well as simple block printing. Teaching is good for pupils in Years 1 and 2. Classrooms are well prepared with a wide range of materials from which pupils are given the opportunity to select. Lessons are well planned, explanations and directions are very clear. Class management is very good and teachers enjoy working with and advising the children about the work in progress.
98. Older pupils develop a good knowledge of different artists including Monet and Degas and Mondrian. They experience a good range of materials and techniques. In a very good Year 5 lesson pupils were making pinched and coiled pots. They had looked at a collection of Clarice Cliff's pottery, pottery from Asia, visited the British Museum to look at Greek pots and the work of Anthony Gormley and had produced designs for their own pots. They had written creatively and sensitively about special things they would keep in the pot. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language were industriously and enjoyably involved.
99. The quality of teaching is, however, more variable for pupils aged seven to eleven. Most lessons are well planned and resourced, expectations are high and classes effectively managed. At times, however, the range and number of resources restrict the pupils in the pace of work and spread of ideas that they can use. The pupils are not always kept fully on task. The skills of the teachers in teaching art also vary according to their own subject knowledge. Whilst designing and making skills are generally well developed, the use of evaluation skills are not always sufficiently employed.
100. Throughout the school, there are good links with other subjects such as history, geography and literacy. The teachers encourage group work and co-operation and this makes a good contribution to pupils' social development. The use of a visiting artist to extend skills and to develop school murals and mosaics with the pupils supports their social and cultural development. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils', spiritual development when, for example, they are asked to consider the colours and content of Monet's garden at Giverny.

101. The subject is effectively co-ordinated. The policy and scheme of work are helpful and the subject manager has a good view of how to support the teachers in developing the subject further. The school has used outside visits and experts well. There is a good range of art materials in the school and a useful collection of artists' work, although the work of non-European artists is under-represented around the school. Art is displayed well in the school, particularly batiks produced in the art club, and these result in a bright and lively environment.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY ( DT)**

102. Standards are as expected for pupils by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The school has worked hard to improve the pupils' skills. Pupils make good progress.
103. By the age of seven, pupils design and make a range of products such as wheeled vehicles and fruit salad kebabs. Pupils follow a simple design process that starts with an evaluation of existing products such as model cars to generate ideas for their own work. They produce drawings to show what they intend to make, showing details of construction. Model tractors, ice-cream vans and other vehicles are well made and attractively decorated. Pupils evaluate their work well, saying why they like it or making suggestions for improvements.
104. In Year 3 to Year 6 pupils make products as diverse as photograph frames, sandwiches, torches and model fairground rides. By the age of eleven, pupils have a good understanding of the design, make, test and evaluate cycle. They know that products must meet the criteria set out in a design brief. However, design drawings could be improved, to show better, for example, how mechanisms are to work. Pupils know how the materials used affect the finished product, for example explaining that "I had to change the way it (a model fairground ride) went round because I had two cotton reels with an elastic band, but it was too heavy so I had to change it to one reel".
105. Only two lessons were seen but these together with pupils' work shows that teaching and learning in design and technology are good. Teachers expect pupils to work to the best of their ability and support them effectively. In Year 4 evaluations of work on torches were good because higher attaining pupils are given free rein in their writing, while teachers gave lower attaining pupils a structured template in which to record their work.
106. Classrooms are well organised and equipped for practical food and construction work. Good explanations enabled pupils to get on well. Pupils have good opportunities to use their initiative in design activities. For example, tuna, sweetcorn and strawberry sandwiches were unusual, but showed well how pupils had thought carefully about healthy eating and the need to achieve a 'balance' between the different ingredients. Teachers and classroom assistants support practical tasks well, ensuring that all pupils are fully involved in activities and that they work safely.
107. A well-qualified co-ordinator was appointed a short time ago and has led developments very well. New assessment systems ensure that teachers are very clear about what is expected in each unit of work. Practical training sessions allow teachers to try out for themselves the work they expect pupils to do. Visitors to the school work with pupils on design and technology/science tasks, for example to develop their understanding of levers and mechanisms.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

108. Standards are above average across the school.
109. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 show a keen interest in the subject and Year 2 pupils talk with confidence and enthusiasm about their current study of Mexico and their school and local environments. Pupils empathise with the life of the Mexican family in Tocuaro and identify the similarities and differences between the lives of the children and their own. By Year 6 pupils can record in detail their previous studies and field trips. They talk enthusiastically about their studies of St Lucia, the traffic survey carried out in Year 4, the river study in Year 5 and their recent field trip to Swanage. Pupils give details about the rock formations, the Old Harry Rocks and the limestone cliffs. They are able to discuss the differences and similarities between Luton and Swanage and the ways in which different populations have changed these environments.
110. The quality of teaching is good overall. There is detailed planning for the subject with useful support materials for those pupils with special educational needs. In Years 1 and 2 staff use creative ideas and 'hot seating' to engage and motivate the pupils. Teachers went into role and became members of the Mexican family to enable the pupils to ask questions. In the Years 3 to 6 classes, however, some exercise books reflect inconsistent presentation and an over-emphasis on worksheet based activities.
111. The school has an experienced subject co-ordinator and staff follow a combination of the national recommended guidance for geography and school-based themes for the subject. Assessment and monitoring are clearly in place for the older pupils but the subject manager is still developing assessment opportunities for the school as an all through primary school and taking account of the pupils' previous learning.
112. Resources are generally good and well used. There is also good use of ICT in the subject. Year 2 pupils were exploring the Internet to find out about life in Mexico. Year 4 pupils were able to construct their graphs on the computer and then use them to discuss their findings of the traffic survey.
113. The school offers a wide range of valuable field trips and these are often successfully linked to a range of subject areas. The Year 6 visit to Swanage offers good provision for pupils' in social, cultural and spiritual development as well as in geography, history, physical activity and English.

## **HISTORY**

114. Because of timetable arrangements only a small amount of teaching was seen in Years 1 and 2. However, pupils' work and the lesson seen confirm that standards are in line with what might be expected of seven year olds. For pupils in Years 3 to 6 standards are as would be expected for eleven year olds.
115. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 show a developing sense of chronology. The younger pupils are developing a clear idea of how they can differentiate between old and new objects and give reasons for their judgements. Year 2 pupils show sound historical knowledge of events such as the Great Fire of London, and of famous people like Samuel Pepys. They successfully draw their own conclusions from evidence such as paintings and contemporary accounts.

116. By age eleven pupils are confidently doing their own research on the history of Luton by comparing maps of different periods and observing how events like the coming of the railway made an important difference to the size of the population. Most are able to give good reasons why the amount of agricultural land declined. Pupils in one lesson studying this topic, organised their own groups in a way that was very mature and sensible and showed clearly how well the study of history contributes to their personal and social development.
117. Teaching is always at least sound and often good because teachers have an awareness of the importance of teaching historical skills such as observation, organisation and communication rather than historical facts. This work is nearly always based on the use of real sources such as artefacts, documents or first-hand accounts. A good example of the use of contemporary accounts was a Year 3's use of Cassius Dio's description of Boudicca from which pupils managed to draw a picture. Pupils are motivated by the investigative approach. They work hard and enjoy their lessons thoroughly. The Year 6 classes had produced independent research projects on aspects of Victorian life, using a range of reference materials, particularly the Internet, to find out information. The work ties in well with the use of English skills and gives many opportunities for extended writing.
118. The subject is led by an enthusiastic co-ordinator who supports colleagues well and is developing interesting ideas on how to assess standards through individual discussions with pupils. The library and individual classrooms contain a good range of suitable books and resources are further enhanced by artefacts, photographs, maps, videos and computer programmes.

#### **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY ( ICT)**

119. Pupils reach the expected standards for their age by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Many pupils reach higher standards in text and graphic work and their use of the Internet for research. All pupils achieve well. Standards are rising and pupils make good progress. Teachers' confidence and the quality of teaching have improved as a result of training; the school has also updated its computer resources and the quality and range of learning opportunities have improved recently.
120. By Year 2 pupils have good computer operating skills. They load and run programs with little adult support and use the mouse confidently to select items from onscreen menus. They write about topics such as the Great Fire of London, adding suitable illustrations, and produce posters, for instance, to warn about the dangers of fireworks. Work is edited well to remove typing errors and is attractively presented. The best work in this strand of the subject is above expectations. Pupils control a programmable screen turtle, tracing out shapes such as a square or pentagon. They use computer reference sources to find information, and use data handling programs to follow simple lines of enquiry, for example about different animals.
121. By Year 6, pupils are very confident and independent computer users. They produce high-quality multi-media presentations on their trip to Swanage and they write on many topics, for instance, producing lengthy play scripts. Pupils use the Internet effectively, for example, to search for information on the Brontë sisters, and explain well how to narrow down the search to find manageable amounts of information. Much of this work is above the standard expected for eleven year olds.
122. Standards in other aspects of ICT are in line with expectations. Pupils understand the principles of mathematical modelling using spreadsheets, and write short control programs to regulate the flow of traffic over a single track bridge using traffic lights.

They have not yet used sensors to monitor, for example, temperature change in science investigations, but they know that sensors are used in everyday applications such as automatic doors.

123. The quality of teaching is good. Recent training and a high level of personal commitment to develop their own subject knowledge have improved teachers' expertise. They demonstrate new skills well. For instance, a very good discussion with a Year 3 class on setting up a database drew well on what pupils already knew and introduced them to the new techniques they would need in the rest of the lesson. Lessons are generally well planned. Links with other subjects are satisfactory and developing quickly. Pupils now have good opportunities to use their text, graphics and Internet skills in other subjects, which contribute well to the high standards achieved in this branch of ICT. However, teaching does not develop to the same standard the use of modelling, control and monitoring strands of ICT, in subjects such as mathematics, science and geography. Teaching is less effective when too many technical demands are made of pupils in and they do not meet with success. They can then lose concentration and do not make sufficient progress.
124. Lessons are organised effectively to support pupils with special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language. Pupils work in pairs with frequent, good support from classroom assistants and teachers. They are fully active in lessons and make good progress. Pupils' positive attitudes add much to the quality of learning. Lessons move on briskly.
125. The school has better than average computer provision and other equipment to support learning. The regular lessons in the two computer suites contribute well to the rising standards. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and supports colleagues well; training teachers and support staff to use new equipment and helping with planning. Appropriate priorities, such as the introduction of a scheme to assess standards and record pupils' progress, are set out in development plans for the subject. The school is well placed to continue the recent improvements in standards and the quality of provision.

## **MUSIC**

126. Standards are above average across the school with well above average attainment by the end of Year 6. Pupils are encouraged from an early age to use the correct technical language for music and this is having a clear impact on standards as pupils move through the school.
127. By the beginning of Year 1, pupils have a keen appreciation of music. They sing in tune, use words such as 'piano' and 'forte' correctly. They identify a wide range of percussion instruments such as the guiro, maracas and castanets and demonstrate how these instruments are used. By the end of Year 2 pupils have acquired and use accurately a vocabulary of musical terms such as crescendo, diminuendo and pianissimo. They enjoy music and sing in tune.
128. By Year 6 pupils have a rich knowledge and understanding of different composers and their music. Year 6 pupils are able to use their knowledge and understanding of music to identify pieces by Tchaikovsky such as The Nutcracker and Swan Lake. They recognise individual instruments in Peter and the Wolf and give thoughtful responses as to why Prokofiev chose these. The pupils have become confident in using musical terms and have an extensive musical vocabulary.

129. The quality of teaching is very good across the school. The two music specialists ensure that the pupils make very good progress. Both teachers have high expectations of attainment and behaviour and this has a significant impact on standards. Learning in music is designed to be enjoyable and the use of ICT with the older pupils is effective. All teachers across the school encourage pupils to listen to music and it is often played during quiet times of working or registration. For example, during the week of the inspection Chinese music was played in the reception year to celebrate Chinese New Year. Music is planned carefully and links into other themes and topics that the pupils study. An example is the study of Tudor music and Smetana's *Va Vlast* in Year 5. There are also clear links made between the pieces that the pupils are studying in music and the music provided for collective worship and assembly.
130. Music is co-ordinated by a talented and creative professional. There are detailed planning and assessment opportunities and all staff are aware of those pupils who are gifted and talented musicians. Throughout the school pupils are introduced to a range of music including a wide range of instruments from different cultures. There is a wide range of peripatetic music and after-school clubs.
131. The school also provides a wide selection of after school clubs including a choir of over fifty pupils who were rehearsing for a production of 'Oliver' and the lively and enthusiastic 'Samba Club' who are rehearsing for a performance in the Luton Carnival.
132. Music provision is both rich and multicultural and there is a good range of tuned and un-tuned instruments. The school has a music room in a temporary classroom and staff work hard in an attempt create a good learning environment.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION ( PE)**

133. Standards are above average in Years 2 and 6 and skills in games are well above average by Year 6. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of fitness and health is also well above average. Pupils benefit from close links with the local secondary school, which provides some of the teaching, and from the skills of the specialist physical education teaching assistant. The quality of teaching by class teachers also makes a strong contribution to the good standards.
134. From the earliest age pupils learn about how their bodies work, which limbs and muscles are involved so that by the time they are eleven they have very good knowledge and vocabulary about muscles and their application in PE. Pupils generally make good progress in dance. They follow a sequence of moves and create some of their own, either individually or in groups. They respond well to music and are able to express themes or story through dance. Year 1 pupils' penguin movements were particularly expressive keeping in character as they waddled and dived and swam.
135. Good progress is made in gymnastics. Year 5 pupils devised sequences that include balancing on beams, forward rolls and bridges. They improved their skills in holding positions and neat landing positions. In Year 6 these sequences are increased in complexity as pupils learn to work in unison or in a cannon. Three girls were skilful in performing a three-way bucket roll. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are well provided for due to individual support and explanations linked to clear demonstration.

136. Games skills are very good. Year 3 pupils co-operate well to throw and catch balls and their skills are good. Due to effective coaching pupils improve their techniques and a few have very good shooting skills in basketball. Pupils are very enthusiastic about games and are fully involved even in very cold weather. Boys and girls play well together. By Year 6 their skills, team work and ability to play by the rules of tag rugby are very good. In addition to improving their skills in passing and tackling they respond well to pupil referees who use correct terminology to explain their actions.
137. Teaching is consistently good in providing warm up and cool down exercises with clear explanations about the importance of these. Throughout the quality of language development is good. Teaching is effective in getting pupils to co-operate whether this is dance, gymnastics or games. Teachers provide good feedback on techniques thereby improving skills. Critical evaluation is usually planned into the lesson so that pupils are encouraged to assess the performance of others and thereby improve their own. Expectations are high and pupils rise to the challenges set. There is very good management of pupils who for whatever reason are not taking part in the physical activity. They come to the lesson with notebooks fully prepared to take a role evaluating, coaching and monitoring the proceedings. Consequently they continue to make progress in their learning. In most lessons there is good demonstration of skills by teachers and some of this is very good indeed. Pupils are often used very well for this purpose. Planning is good. There is usually a good balance of activities and plenty of opportunity for pupils to have sustained exercise. There is a tendency for dance to be weighted towards teacher led sequences and this sometimes limits the creativity of pupils.
138. The subject is effectively managed and the school provides a high level of expertise. The specialist teaching assistant and secondary school teacher are very well deployed so pupils get maximum impact from their expertise. There are a large number of clubs, very well attended, that contribute considerably to the good standards and fitness of the pupils.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION ( RE)**

139. By the end of Years 2 and 6 pupils' standards are above average.
140. By Year 2 pupils have a good understanding of the world in which they live. They are aware of other people's beliefs and cultures and are able to talk with confidence about the differences between the two local churches visited. They can talk about the objects in a church, and give reasons why, for example, the font is often found near the door.
141. By Year 6 the pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of the six major world faiths studied and they are also able to relate these studies to the faith traditions of their own friends and families. The pupils talk with confidence about the various leaders of different faiths including Guru Nanak, Jesus and Muhammad. They have a good knowledge and understanding of key beliefs and practices of Sikhism, Christianity and Islam. The Year 6 pupils are also able to discuss their studies of Islam and relate these to current world events.
142. The quality of teaching is generally good across the school. The teachers have continued to make progress in their own knowledge and understanding of other faith traditions and this is having a significant impact on standards. In most lessons teachers have high expectations of work and behaviour. They use the correct religious language with confidence and the tasks set offer rigour and challenge. Teachers also give the pupils the opportunity to talk about their own beliefs and

cultures. For example, one Muslim boy was able to lead a Year 6 lesson on the Five Pillars of Islam.

143. Where teaching is less secure there are lower expectations, low productivity during lessons and the tasks set do not motivate or challenge the pupils. The standards of work accepted in the pupils' exercise books does not reflect their true ability. Although there is detailed planning in place, in some lessons interpretation of this planning requires a sharper focus to challenge the higher attaining pupils.
144. The quality of the pupils' learning across the school is generally good. Pupils have positive attitudes to the subject and are eager to learn about each other's faith and practice. The subject makes an excellent contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are encouraged to reflect and to explore and appreciate the cultural diversity within the faith traditions represented in the school. For example, one pupil commented, "I enjoy studying other religions. We studied Judaism last term and now we are looking at Islam. I am a Hindu but my friend is a Muslim she goes to the mosque to pray".
145. The headteacher and senior management have worked hard to improve the quality of the RE provision. This has had a clear impact on standards through staff training and encouraging good quality planning. There is now a new subject co-ordinator who also has a clear vision for the subject. She has worked hard to ensure that assessment opportunities are in place for pupils in Years 3 to 6 . Assessment for pupils in Years 1 and 2 is still being developed.
146. Resources and accommodation for RE are generally good. New books have been purchased for the study of Islam and Christianity and the school has an adequate supply of artefacts for the study of different faith traditions. There is now good use of ICT in RE. For example, the Year 6 pupils were engrossed in producing a Powerpoint presentation on the life of Muhammad. There are very good links with the local churches and other faith communities.