

# INSPECTION REPORT

**ST BERNADETTE'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY  
SCHOOL**

Wombourne, Wolverhampton

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124372

Headteacher: Mrs R Malone

Reporting inspector: Mr P Mann  
23219

Dates of inspection: 16<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> June 2003

Inspection number: 259500

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: Voluntary aided

Age range of pupils: 4 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Lindale Drive  
Wombourne  
Wolverhampton

Postcode: WV5 8DZ

Telephone number: 01902 894787

Fax number: 01902 324114

Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr M Doran

Date of previous inspection: 9<sup>th</sup> June 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Phil Mann 23219	Registered inspector	Mathematics Science  Design and technology Information and communication technology Physical education Special educational needs	Standards - attainment and progress How good are curricular and other opportunities? Spiritual, moral, social and cultural and personal development Monitoring pupils' academic performance and personal development Educational and personal guidance - assessment
John Arscott 9468	Lay inspector		Standards - attitudes, behaviour, personal development Attendance Inclusion How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents? How well is the school led and managed? Efficiency of the school Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
Wendy Jenkins 23086	Team inspector	Children under five English Art and design Geography History Music	How well are pupils taught?

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Cheltenham  
GL53 7JX

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St Bernadette's Roman Catholic Primary School has 72 pupils on roll, aged 4 to 11, and the average class size is 18. The school is located in a residential area of Wombourne, Wolverhampton. The pupils come from the village and local area and their home backgrounds are average. The school was built in 1969 and is surrounded by a small playing field, garden and play areas. At the time of the inspection, there were 6 children under five in the reception class. The attainment of children at the start of school is average. Twenty-two pupils have been identified as having special educational needs of which four receive support from the local education authority. There are currently no pupils with a statement of special educational need. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is above the national average. A very small proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language.

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

Overall, this is a school which achieves a satisfactory level of effectiveness. It has some good features. It provides high levels of care within a supportive and caring Christian community. The headteacher and staff work hard to provide good learning opportunities for pupils. New initiatives and school improvement have been hampered over the last two years by changes to staffing and staff illness. The headteacher is now providing effective leadership after this difficult period and many improvements are now being put in place. Standards are average overall but inspection evidence confirms that the rate of pupils' progress is now increasing. This is especially so for more able pupils who respond well to ability grouping in English and mathematics. Taking into consideration the very high levels of expenditure for the small numbers of pupils, the standards being attained and pupils' home backgrounds, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- Pupils are achieving well in mathematics, science and geography and standards are above average at 11. Progress is good in dance and especially so in music, where standards at the end of the juniors are well above average.
- Attitudes, behaviour and relationships are all very good.
- The provision for spiritual, moral and social development is a strength of the school.
- Pastoral care and welfare of pupils are good.
- The headteacher leads the staff effectively and together they manage the work of the school well.

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

- The quality of overall curriculum planning to ensure the development of pupils' knowledge and skills in a systematic and coherent way across the school.
- The use of assessment information to ensure that all pupils make equal progress in lessons.
- The level of pupils' attendance.

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

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

Despite of a period of staffing difficulty, the school has made satisfactory progress on all the issues identified at the previous inspection. Standards in design and technology have improved. There is now a recognisable structure to the planning of all learning opportunities with appropriate schemes of work now in place. The higher attaining pupils are effectively catered for because teachers place a strong emphasis on opportunities for all pupils to investigate and solve problems during lessons. The good plan for school improvement is providing an effective focus for shaping the overall development of the school over the next two years. Its overall effectiveness is restricted by a lack of financial resources but this, however, is not limiting the school's capacity for further improvement, which is now good.

## 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	A	A	C	C
Mathematics	C	E	C	C
Science	D	C	C	C

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

The attainment of children when they start in the reception class is in line with that expected nationally for children of a similar age. Inspection findings confirm that standards attained by 11 year olds in the current Year 6 are average overall in English; they are above average in mathematics and science. These results are an improvement on those achieved in the 2002 national tests where standards in English, mathematics and science were average. When compared with schools of a similar context, the school's results were also average. The year groups are very small and fluctuate in size from year to year. These results therefore need to be treated with some caution when making these comparisons. An overall trend of steady improvement is evident, however, when all of these factors and the last three years' results are considered.

All pupils are making satisfactory progress overall as they move through the school with good achievement now evident in speaking and listening, reading, mathematics, science, geography, music and physical education. Achievement is good overall in English and mathematics because of good teaching, the teaching of junior pupils in ability groups and the effective use of assessment information in these subjects to plan learning opportunities matched to the needs of all pupils. The progress of all pupils in writing is satisfactory overall but low expectation by teachers for pupils' handwriting and presentation skills are hampering levels of overall achievement in English.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Most children love being at school. They are hungry for knowledge and appreciate the quiet calm of their learning environment. Pupils participate in lessons with enthusiasm. They relish the opportunity to show their work with pride.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils are remarkably well behaved and are delightfully courteous and respectful to adults and visitors. Teachers rarely need to bring the class to order because of the high level of self-discipline.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils are acutely aware of the way their actions impinge on others. Most are unusually caring, kind and tolerant. Relationships between pupils and teachers and with other pupils are a particular strength.
Attendance	Attendance itself is unsatisfactory but the situation is improving. Unauthorised absence is now in line with the national average. The number of children with 100% attendance records is also increasing.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching across the school is satisfactory overall with some good features. In over half the lessons observed during the inspection it was good or better with one in four being very good. This finding is similar to the previous inspection. The majority of this good or better teaching is in the infant and junior classes with some very high quality teaching attributable to a specialist teacher from the local secondary school. The quality of teaching for the reception class children is satisfactory or better, providing a good foundation for learning when these children start school.

Overall, teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and the level of challenge is high in most lessons. This is particularly so in the infant and junior classes in mathematics and science lessons. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well. Inspection evidence indicates, however, that expectations of pupils' handwriting and presentation of work are often unsatisfactory and that there is sometimes insufficient challenge for the reception children, especially in writing and personal development. Teachers manage pupils very well in lessons and their expectations of behaviour are high. All staff have established a positive rapport with the pupils and this results in a pleasant and friendly working atmosphere during lessons where humour is often evident.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is satisfactory overall and provides balance and an appropriately wide range to the planned learning experiences. There are now elements of cohesiveness to the curriculum but sometimes the quality of teachers' planning does not always ensure that all pupils make equal progress. There is a good emphasis, however, on the expressive arts, investigative work and a suitable programme of visits including residential trips. The provision for children in the reception class is appropriate and opportunities are planned for them to learn through play.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The school provides satisfactory levels of care and support for these pupils. All statutory requirements are fulfilled and procedures are well organised. As a result of this support, these pupils make satisfactory progress in relation to their classmates.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The school has attempted to use its own limited resources to provide support for the very small proportion of pupils for whom English is an additional language. Support was inappropriate in the past, but this has now been addressed by the school.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school is a spiritual sanctuary where very good spiritual experiences are part of everyday school life, in assemblies and in many lessons. The provision for moral and social development is also good. This helps pupils to work and learn together. The provision for understanding and appreciating purely British culture is good, but this is not matched by the provision for learning about other cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school has good procedures in place for ensuring pupils' welfare, including child protection procedures. There is a particularly strong pastoral element in daily discussions by the staff on pupils' progress. Procedures for assessing attainment and progress are satisfactory, but these assessments are not yet being used effectively to guide curriculum planning.

The school continues to work hard to develop and strengthen its relationship with parents. However, there are a small number of parents who do not fully support their children's learning at home.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher gives good, clear educational direction to the school, and is a good example to the staff in terms of commitment, management, teamwork and forward thinking. The staff provide good support for the headteacher in implementing a sweeping range of improvements and changes.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors carry out their responsibilities with thorough dignity and, through their unreserved support for the headteacher, are beginning to make a formidable team.
The school's evaluation of its performance	In some areas such as literacy, monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning is good. Other areas have good procedures in place but have yet to emulate the good practice in literacy.
The strategic use of resources	Specific grants have been used well to further improve opportunities for learning. The plan for school improvement clearly maps out further development for the future but this is hampered by insufficient funds. However, the leadership has a clear vision of how this can be resolved.

The school provides good accommodation for pupils. The quality and range of resources are satisfactory but there are insufficient books in the library and many are out of date. The match of teachers to the curriculum is good but the number of support staff is insufficient to meet all pupils' needs.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Thirteen parents attended the meeting and 39 per cent (28) returned the questionnaire.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school helps their child become mature and responsible.</li> <li>• The staff have high expectations of pupils.</li> <li>• Their child likes school.</li> <li>• Behaviour is good.</li> <li>• Teaching is good.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication with parents.</li> <li>• The leadership and management of the school.</li> <li>• The amount of homework set.</li> <li>• The range of activities outside lessons.</li> </ul>

The inspectors wholeheartedly endorse the positive views held by most parents, but could find no supporting evidence to justify the negative perception that some parents have about how well the school is led and managed. The inspectors consider the range of out-of-school activities is satisfactory but these are not always available for all pupils to take part in regularly from year to year. Homework is appropriately used to support pupils' learning at school.

## PART B: COMMENTARY

### HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

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

1. Assessments currently undertaken when children first come into the reception class confirm that the attainment of these children is in line with that expected nationally for children of a similar age. Inspection findings confirm that standards attained by 11 year olds in the current Year 6 are average overall in English; they are above average in mathematics and science. These results are an improvement on those achieved in the 2002 national tests where standards in English, mathematics and science were average. When compared with schools of a similar context, the school's results were average. When the last three years results are considered there is an overall trend of steady improvement. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall in the Foundation Stage and in the infants and juniors and standards are broadly similar to those of the previous inspection.
2. Inspection findings confirm that standards attained by seven year olds are rising and average in English and mathematics. Standards are above average in science and music. Standards attained by seven year olds in the 2002 national tests were average in reading but well below average in writing and mathematics.
3. The year groups are very small and fluctuate in size from year to year. These results, therefore, need to be treated with some caution when making these comparisons. There are no significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls and pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in relation to their prior attainment and targets set for English, mathematics and science have been achieved.
4. The table below shows attainment in English, mathematics and science judged by the inspection team and as achieved by pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 in the 2002 tests, compared to all schools nationally and measured by what is known as points scores. These scores take into account the performance of all pupils in the year group.

	<b>National Tests Year 2 2002</b>	<b>Inspection Judgements Year 2 2003</b>	<b>National tests Year 6 2002 [points scores]</b>	<b>Inspection judgements Year 6 2003</b>
<b>English</b>	<b>Reading</b> Average <b>Writing</b> Well below average	<b>Reading</b> Average <b>Writing</b> Average	Average	Average
<b>Mathematics</b>	Well below average	Average	Average	Above average
<b>Science</b>	<b>By teacher assessment</b> Well below average	Above average	Average	Above average

5. The following table shows standards in subjects other than English, mathematics and science.

	<b>By the age of seven</b>	<b>By the age of 11</b>
<b>Information and communication technology</b>	In line with that expected	In line with that expected
<b>Art and design</b>	In line with that expected	In line with that expected
<b>Design and technology</b>	In line with that expected	In line with that expected
<b>Geography</b>	In line with that expected	Above that expected
<b>History</b>	In line with that expected	In line with that expected
<b>Music</b>	Above that expected	Well above that expected
<b>Physical education</b>	In line with that expected	In line with that expected

6. Children under the age of five make steady progress from the time they join the school to the end of the reception year. All children are on course to achieve the expected early learning goals set out in the Foundation Stage curriculum in all areas of learning. The attainment is average when compared to children of similar ages on entry into compulsory schooling at the start of Year 1.
7. All pupils make satisfactory progress overall in the infants and juniors because teachers provide good levels of pastoral care, know their pupils well, possess good levels of subject expertise and plan a wide range of interesting and challenging learning experiences throughout the school year. A good emphasis is placed in providing opportunities for investigative work. As a result, more able pupils are given good opportunity to work with classmates of equal ability in a range of challenging activities; for example in mathematics and science. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection.
8. The school's programme of support for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. It is organised effectively to identify pupils who need additional support and work planned for them in class. The headteacher manages this support effectively. Detailed individual education plans are in place for pupils and used appropriately by teachers when planning learning opportunities. These pupils make satisfactory progress overall in relation to their prior attainment. Those infant pupils who are supported by a classroom assistant benefit greatly from this targeted support.
9. The implementation of the National Literacy Strategy has been undertaken methodically across the school. A good focus has been placed on the development of speaking and listening and the teaching of reading. Literacy skills related to writing are taught appropriately but teachers' expectations related to the quality of pupils' handwriting and the presentation of pupils' written work are not high enough. This has an adverse impact on the overall levels of pupils' achievements in writing where often unnecessary spelling mistakes and untidiness detracts from the overall quality and standard of their work. The implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has been more effective and basic skills in number work are taught well by teachers and support staff in all classes. As a result, standards are above average in mathematics by the time pupils leave school at the end of the juniors.
10. The teaching of junior pupils in two ability sets for literacy and numeracy is a recent initiative this year in an attempt to raise standards. Inspection findings judge this initiative to be a success because learning activities and tasks are more closely matched to the pupils' levels of ability. Assessment information is used well to ensure that all pupils achieve well in these areas of learning. This judgement is confirmed through discussions with more able pupils in Year 4 who say that they find work in these subjects both interesting and challenging.
11. The match of learning tasks to the ability of pupils in other subjects is not so well defined. For instance, pupils in the infant class work at different levels in their science lessons.

However, this is not always the case for junior pupils in subjects such as science and art where too often the younger pupils in the same lesson are doing the same things as pupils a year older in the same class. This is because teachers do not yet have an effective assessment system that is clearly linked to the structured teaching of knowledge and skills in these subjects. Teachers' planning is too reliant on a two year cycle of topics matched to nationally devised units of work instead of being effectively linked to the National Curriculum programmes of study and associated levels of attainment. As a result, progress is inconsistent across the junior classes in lessons other than in literacy and numeracy.

12. Attractive displays of pupils' work around the school, however, confirm the satisfactory standards of work being achieved in these subjects by the oldest junior pupils. A notable highlight is the quality of these pupils' work in geography. It is above average and includes a good range of both local work and studies made of the Isle of Wight whilst on a school journey and completed as homework.
13. The teaching of music and dance is a strength of the school. All pupils make good progress in these disciplines because teachers possess good levels of subject expertise and set very high expectations for what pupils can achieve. For instance, in a very good dance lesson for pupils in the infant class, the teacher provided very good opportunities for all pupils to use blue ribbons with expression and creativity to portray the movement of the sea. Very good demonstrations were provided for the pupils to mimic and these led to a wonderful series of individual dance phrases performed by these pupils. Standards of pupils' music making is also very high. Nearly all pupils in Year 6 can play an instrument confidently to accompany the school into assembly. The very tuneful singing in these assemblies confirms the attention to detail that teachers instil in lessons and the very high expectations they have for pupils' performance in music. The school also provides an exciting range of extra learning activities in partnership with its local secondary school which has creative arts status. For instance, pupils in the upper junior literacy set were treated to an excellent samba music-making lesson. This lesson was taught by the head of Year 7 at the secondary school as part of a local project to teach literacy skills through music and dance. All pupils thoroughly enjoyed taking part in this multicultural and spiritually uplifting experience.

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

14. Pupils' attitudes to the school have improved since the previous inspection and are now judged to be very good. The headteacher and staff have worked very hard to improve the 'culture' of the school and these efforts have had a significant impact on pupils' attitudes. Most pupils display genuine enthusiasm for the school, and are very keen to be involved in school activities. They play a full part in classroom discussions and some of the older pupils are particularly articulate. The vast majority, including those children in the reception class, are well motivated, and the overall response to teachers is very good. On the whole, pupils concentrate hard and work very well in lessons. Pupils clearly enjoy the planned opportunities for independent learning and take delight in shared learning. Currently there is no consistent handwriting style being encouraged throughout the school with the result that pupils' work is sometimes untidy and written work often contains unnecessary spelling mistakes.
15. The behaviour of pupils is now very good in most lessons and as a result they make good progress. The improvement in behaviour over the years is recognised and applauded by parents. The relatively high incidence of vandalism by outsiders was a constant reminder of the consequences of anti-social behaviour, but this problem has now been largely resolved. Most pupils demonstrate very high levels of self-discipline, such as the orderly way they enter the hall for assembly. Indeed, they were so well organised that teachers' attempts to 'tidy up' were counter productive. Some teachers are very quietly spoken and yet they can all be heard clearly. Teachers rarely need to bring the class to order. The

spontaneous way pupils hold doors open for adults and visitors is a good indication of respect and politeness. Oppressive behaviour, bullying, sexism and racism are almost unknown. There have been no exclusions in the current year.

16. The personal development of pupils is very good overall. Most pupils are very aware of the impact of their actions on others and exercise a high degree of self-control. Pupils can and do reflect on and discuss their behaviour, feelings and experiences, particularly during lessons devoted to developing pupils' personal, health, and social education. Pupils display great concern for those less fortunate than themselves and actively support charitable causes. Most of the pupils can talk about their own views and beliefs, and the majority are prepared to listen carefully to the views held by others. Pupils accept the responsibility of carrying out routine tasks, such as ringing the bell and taking registers to the office. Some of the older pupils act as reading listeners for the younger ones. There are more opportunities for pupils to show initiative and demonstrate responsibility during the residential trip to the Isle of Wight. Pupils, teachers and other adults within the school relate very well to one another, and this generates a particularly welcoming atmosphere. It is also very common to see pupils helping and supporting one another in the classroom.
17. Attendance is unsatisfactory. Although there have been several years of poor attendance the very latest figures show a marked improvement in the number of unauthorised absences, bringing the current figure in line with the national average. The level of authorised absences continues to lag behind the national average, although the number of pupils who achieve unbroken attendance for a full year has increased. With such a small roll, a significant period of absence by only one or two pupils can seriously affect the overall attendance. Typically, an extended visit to Southeast Asia by one family made a significant impact on the authorised absences. Procedures for registering pupils are good and meet statutory requirements. Lateness to school and for classes is infrequent.

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

18. The quality of teaching across the school is satisfactory overall with some good features. In over half the lessons observed it is good or better with one in four being very good. This judgement is similar to that of the previous inspection but some of this very high quality teaching is attributable to a specialist literacy teacher from the local secondary school. The majority of the good or better teaching is in the infant and junior classes.
19. The quality of teaching for the Foundation Stage children is satisfactory or better, providing a good foundation for learning when these children start school. Teachers have a sound understanding of the Early Years curriculum and clear planning identifies learning targets. Teachers give time for structured play and provide some opportunities for children to make choices although these opportunities need extending to help children become more independent in their learning. Teachers are often imaginative in the activities they offer children. For instance, in a music lesson, the teacher skilfully taught children to build up a sound story using percussion and in a language and literacy lesson good quality teacher-made booklets motivated children to concentrate hard and make good progress.
20. There are good assessment procedures for tracking the reception children's progress and the information gained is used appropriately to plan for the next step in children's learning. Support staff are deployed effectively with groups of children but are not encouraged in an active way to help specific children during the whole class aspect of the lesson. Parent helpers are welcomed in the classroom. They interact with both the nursery and reception children to improve skills in information and communication technology and role-play.
21. Teachers of the infant and junior classes have good knowledge and understanding especially in numeracy, science, physical education and design and technology. All teachers display technical competence in the teaching of basic skills, including the use of vocabulary specific to the subject. This was evident in a design and technology lesson

- when the teacher referred to winding mechanisms, axles and prototype and used probing questions to assess pupils' previous learning.
22. Planning is good overall and learning aims and objectives are appropriately identified in both medium and short term planning. These are usually displayed in the classroom and shared with the pupils at the beginning of the lesson. Teachers are beginning to review these at the end of lessons but this is sometimes perfunctory and given a low status with the result that there are missed opportunities to assess pupils' level of understanding. This is often the case in English where the plenary merely sums up what the lesson involved. In the best practice, teachers use pupils' own work from the lesson to assess what has been learned and the progress made. Good examples of this were seen in a numeracy lesson when the class interrogated data collected by two pupils and in an art lesson when the teacher used a pupil's computer-generated picture to show how changes in colour could affect mood and atmosphere. Teachers evaluate their lessons regularly and use this information appropriately to guide their day-to-day planning.
  23. Overall, teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and the level of challenge is high in most lessons. This is particularly so in the infant and junior classes in mathematics and science lessons. Inspection evidence indicates, however, that expectations of pupils' handwriting and presentation of work are unsatisfactory and that there is sometimes insufficient challenge for the reception children, especially in writing and personal development.
  24. Teaching methods are satisfactory across the school. Pupils are grouped by ability in literacy and numeracy in the junior classes and this enables most pupils to make satisfactory progress. However, some average and below average groups in the infant and junior classes are given work, which is either not matched to their ability or is dull in content. This is especially so in English where some pupils in the infant class, when left to work independently, were unable to think of words, which have the same spelling but different sounds. Pupils in another lesson were unsure what to do next when given an example of a recipe and a group of Year 5 boys lacked motivation because the task did not interest them. These groups of pupils did not make satisfactory progress until the teacher intervened and joined their groups. Where methods are interesting and matched well to pupils' needs, progress is often good. These include asking pupils to work co-operatively in pairs and groups, often using individual white boards. In a practical demonstration in a good numeracy lesson in the infants, the teacher organised the pupils into lines according to the letters in their name. This enabled all pupils to understand how best to organise a table of results.
  25. Teachers manage pupils very well in lessons and their expectations of behaviour are high. All staff have established a positive rapport with the pupils and this results in a pleasant and friendly working atmosphere during lessons where humour is often evident. All the pupils respond positively to this and as a result behaviour is very good overall. This caring approach is a major strength of the school and parents commented favourably about this at the meeting.
  26. Teachers use time satisfactorily in most lessons. However, sometimes they do not allocate enough time at the end of the lesson to review learning. The resources available such as whiteboards and information and communication technology are used appropriately to support teachers in many lessons. For example, in a numeracy lesson in the junior class, pupils in the higher ability set used control technology and a computer program to solve problems related to angles. Resources such as an overhead projector would contribute to a better use of resources as in a geography lesson when a map could have been displayed to provide a good visual aid for pupils' learning. Support staff are used appropriately, especially in numeracy in the infant class, but lessons in English are less effective because there is no routine support for this subject.

27. Satisfactory procedures have been put in place to help teachers monitor and assess the pupils' progress in English, mathematics and in all other subjects. The use of this information to ensure that all pupils make equal progress in lessons is unsatisfactory, especially in science, history and geography where work in books is often not differentiated by age or ability. The quality of curriculum planning does not ensure the development of pupils' knowledge and skills in a systematic way, which has an impact on assessment. The quality of marking is variable in both the infant and junior classes. Some of it is good but some is just a series of ticks and simple comments. In English and history, crossings out are not commented on, simple spellings are not corrected and grammatical mistakes such as 'their' and 'there' go uncorrected. This is a regression since the last inspection and progress on this aspect is unsatisfactory.
28. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall. Teachers identify this group and lower attainers in their planning, but work is not always matched appropriately to the needs of all pupils. They do not have targeted support during literacy lessons and this limits the progress they make. Less able pupils would benefit from support during the middle part of the lesson when pupils are engaged on group or individual tasks.
29. Teachers provide appropriate opportunities for homework and often use it well to support learning in class, such as finding nursery rhymes to use in the next day's literacy lesson. Arrangements for homework are satisfactory and similar to many other schools. However, it is not always formalised in a way to inform parents what is required and how they can help.

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

30. Overall, the quality and range of learning opportunities provided by the school are satisfactory with a good emphasis placed on personal development. The curriculum is wide-ranging, balanced and relevant, and this is a notable improvement since the last inspection when very few subjects had schemes of work. The range of planned learning experiences fully complies with legal requirements for infant and junior pupils. The curriculum for children in the reception class is satisfactory and reflects the government's guidance for children of this age. Overall, the provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory.
31. Well-written policies for all subjects provide effective guidance to teachers when planning schemes of work. A framework for the curriculum based on a two-year planning cycle provides an appropriate structure to assist teachers with their medium term planning. These planning structures are an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection when very few schemes of work existed and the overall curriculum lacked structure and balance. The time allocations for each subject are now entirely appropriate and the curriculum is relevant to the circumstances of the school and its pupils. There is now a stronger focus on independent learning and investigative work. This is particularly so in mathematics and science where teachers plan good opportunities for pupils to solve problems and work with a partner in practical activities. Pupils find this approach stimulating and those who are more able are fully stretched and often achieving well in lessons.
32. The school has implemented the National Literacy Strategy satisfactorily. It is now providing a good platform for the raising of pupils' standards in English. Basic skills are being taught well and teachers utilise opportunities to develop writing skills in other subjects. The grouping of junior pupils since the start of the spring term into two ability sets is ensuring that teachers' planning effectively matches pupils' needs. The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented effectively and this is having a significant effect on standards in mathematics. Numeracy skills are taught well and there is evidence of

considerable improvement in standards in some other subjects such as science because pupils are more confident with number work.

33. The school's arrangement for the support of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Procedures for the early identification of pupils are effective and the special needs co-ordinator prepares detailed individual education plans that include achievable targets for each of these pupils in both English and mathematics. However, extra support for these pupils is very limited due to the school's current budget position. The number of pupils who speak English as an additional language is very small. The school provides some support, but overall it is inadequate and not appropriately suited to individual needs of these pupils. This has been recognised by the school and appropriate arrangements have now been put in place.
34. The curriculum is socially inclusive and caters well for pupils' academic needs. This is particularly so in English and mathematics lessons in the juniors because all pupils are grouped according to their prior attainment and taught in ability sets for literacy and numeracy. The academic needs of pupils in the infant class are met well because work is effectively planned to their ability in all subjects. This is because tasks are planned according to their age and ability, either through well-matched tasks or extension activities. This is fully exemplified in the pupils' science books where Year 2 pupils can be seen to have undertaken more advanced tasks in the same lesson than those pupils in Year 1. This is not the case in the junior classes for subjects other than English and mathematics. In other subjects such as science or history, pupils in Years 3 and 4 or Years 5 and 6 have completed very similar work to pupils in the other year group in their class. This is because the two-year rolling programme of work, based on nationally recommended units of work, does not fully cater for the level of development between these year groups. As a result, progress between Years 3 to 6 is inconsistent in these subjects. There is currently no clear structure for the development of knowledge and skills in subjects other than English and mathematics for pupils in the junior mixed age classes. This is further compounded by inconsistent use of assessment information to plan lessons in these subjects.
35. Overall, the school works hard to provide for pupils' personal, social and health education. Lessons in personal, social and health education are good and the school works hard to prepare pupils for citizenship and adult life. The school regularly provides health education for pupils, and raising pupils' awareness about drugs misuse is appropriately covered. The governing body has reviewed the school's provision for sex education and current procedures are satisfactory.
36. The school has developed good links with the local community. A strong partnership has been built up with other small schools in the area and effective links are being established with the nearby secondary school that has been awarded creative arts status. These links provide very good opportunities for the enrichment of the pupils' learning through vibrant and exciting activities. For instance, during the inspection, a teacher from the creative arts school provided two outstanding lessons for the junior literacy set as part of a local initiative to teach literacy skills through music and dance. In one of these lessons, the pupils played Samba music on a wide range of percussion instruments. All the pupils used instruments confidently to accompany their chanting of associated words to the rhythms. This activity provided an exciting and interesting stimulus for the development of the pupils' literacy skills in preparation for a performance near the end of term.
37. The provision for extra-curricular activities is satisfactory overall. Some parents commented that the choice is limited but inspectors judge that the number is not dissimilar to those found in schools of similar size. These activities have varied in type and number but they have included football, netball, golf, computers, games, gymnastics and gardening. However, due to several changes in staffing, the school has not been able to maintain these clubs consistently over time. Consequently, pupils have been disappointed

- to find that a particular club is no longer available to them. The school tries hard to provide a satisfactory range of competitive games with other similar sized schools in the area. There is an appropriate number of visitors to the school and the annual residential trip to the Isle of Wight provides good enrichment opportunities for the oldest junior pupils.
38. The overall provision for spiritual development is very good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Spiritual moments occur frequently during most days, for example, during prayers at assembly, and the school is adept at recognising and exploiting these moments when they occur. This is particularly true in lessons such as a Year 6 lesson on dance and a Year 2 physical education lesson featuring the use of coloured ribbons to simulate the motion of the sea. Similarly, religious education lessons and personal, social and health education lessons are skilfully used to explore many themes, and most of the pupils display an awareness of and can discuss the faiths of others. Pupils are encouraged to discuss and reflect on their experiences, and this thinking enhances their spiritual development.
39. The school's provision for pupils' moral development is good. This provision is reinforced by the aims and positive ethos of the school. The school works very hard to promote a climate of honesty, fairness and tolerance. Most pupils understand the importance of being truthful, and they have a very clear understanding of what is right and what is wrong. For example, in a Year 3 period of circle time<sup>1</sup>, pupils were asked to give thanks for something that happened during the day. Typically, one pupil was thankful that her friend was not badly hurt by an accidental fall at lunchtime. Older pupils in particular have a good understanding of equal opportunities and personal rights. This can be seen in practically all lessons where teachers make sure that every pupil has the opportunity to participate in question and answer sessions. Teachers constantly strive to make pupils aware of moral issues whenever they occur in any area of study.
40. The provision for pupils' social development is good. Adults at the school provide very good role models for pupils. The reading listeners' scheme for older pupils, routine classroom tasks and the residential trip to the Isle of Wight all make a significant contribution towards developing pupils' social skills. The residential visit also provides pupils with good opportunities for them to demonstrate initiative and to take a measure of responsibility for their own actions. The way the behaviour policy is implemented promotes a high degree of self-discipline. Relationships within the school are very good and make a considerable contribution to the school's friendly and well-ordered atmosphere.
41. Overall, arrangements for developing pupils' cultural awareness are satisfactory, although some elements within this provision are good. For example, most pupils have a good understanding of their own cultural heritage through visits and local events. The school also works hard to provide pupils with opportunities to appreciate art, literature and music through specialist visitors to the school. Examples are the novel use of samba rhythms and musical technical vocabulary to extend pupils' experience of literacy. Except for music, the school's provision for multi-cultural experiences for pupils is under-developed. In art there is a surprising lack of displays featuring famous artists from around the world, although there are good examples of pupils' work in the style of some European artists.

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<sup>1</sup> During circle time pupils discuss a wide range of personal and general issues. It is agreed by all pupils that no interruptions should occur and only one person at a time will speak. Respect for other pupils' views will occur at all times and therefore pupils feel confident that they can talk with ease and free from any form of interference of interruption from other children.

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

42. The procedures for child protection, safety and welfare are good. There is a strong ethos of care about the school. Teachers know their pupils and their families very well and are quick to respond when needed. The pastoral care of pupils is a consistent feature at all staff meetings. Compliance with local authority child protection procedures is well established and there are well-tried routines for recognising and dealing with child abuse. The headteacher is the designated child protection co-ordinator. Staff awareness of and training in child protection procedures are very good. The school also helps children to protect themselves and others, for example, through training and safety initiatives organised by the local police.
43. The school provides a caring and supportive environment in which pupils with special educational needs are able to realise their full potential, both academically and socially. The special needs code of practice is fully implemented. Arrangements for the identification, early intervention and assessment of pupils' needs are good. Individual education plans are in place for all pupils requiring them. There is a good level of involvement of teachers in setting and monitoring targets, working closely with the co-ordinators and outside professionals. These pupils receive very good support from the educational psychologist. The school has good procedures for meeting the requirements of pupils with special educational needs and maintains a very good working relationship with a wide variety of outside agencies. This good provision has been maintained since the previous inspection.
44. The school promotes an awareness of health and safety very well. The health and safety policy is in place and is used effectively. The headteacher is the designated person responsible for health and safety and is supported by one of the governors. The headteacher carries out a meticulous daily assessment of any health and safety hazards. Safe working practices are regularly monitored and reviewed. Risk assessments are also reviewed regularly in conjunction with health and safety adviser from the local education authority. Arrangements for dealing with accidents are clearly set out. The school secretary is qualified to give first aid. Electrical and fire equipment inspections are all up to date.
45. The school's procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good. The school complies with the statutory recording and reporting of attendance. Attendance monitoring procedures have been improved since the previous inspection. Unauthorised absences are now followed up on the same day and as a result this element of attendance is in line with the national average. Improving attendance remains a very high priority. Authorised absences are still too high, despite appeals to parents not to condone time off from school. Typically, the school offers pupils high profile rewards for various periods of continuous attendance. The school has a very good working relationship with the education welfare officer.
46. The procedures for promoting and monitoring positive behaviour are very good. A comprehensive behaviour policy is firmly in place, coupled with very good strategies for putting these policies into practice. A central element in the way the school implements this policy is that all pupils should know what is expected of them and should know what the consequences are. Good behaviour is rewarded by house points, stickers, extra periods of play called 'Golden Time' and is celebrated at an assembly each week. In most classes there is a subtle blend of self-discipline by pupils and good management by teachers. The procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour and anger management are very effective. Anti-bullying strategies are also very well established and the school maintains very good records of incidents involving misbehaviour.
47. The arrangements for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are satisfactory. Informal assessments are made of pupils' response to personal, health and

social education lessons. Teachers know their pupils very well and know when remedial action is necessary. The end of year reports on pupils show that teachers monitor social skills and attitudes. Individual education plans for pupils identified as having special educational needs are of good quality and help the pupils to make good progress. The school works well with the school nurse, the educational psychologist and many other support agencies.

48. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory overall. Teachers of the reception class maintain effective records of the children in all areas of learning. Other teachers throughout the rest of the school maintain detailed and informative assessment records of all pupils' achievements in English and mathematics. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection which judged the absence of any coherent assessment system to be a key issue. Teachers have recently introduced a new structure for the assessment of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding in all other subjects. This is now being used to record the pupils' progress in these areas of learning in a manageable way. This data is being used effectively in the reception and infant classes to plan tasks and activities matched to these the pupils' individual needs. Teachers of pupils in the junior classes are not yet fully utilising this assessment information to plan effectively for the academic needs of all pupils in lessons other than for literacy and numeracy. There is currently no clear and coherent link between what is planned in these subjects and what is to be assessed either at the end of a lesson or at the completion of a unit of work.

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

49. The overall perception that parents have of the school is good. Approximately 40 per cent of the parents returned their questionnaires. In general, most parents are supportive of the school, but about one in five parents have concerns about homework, the way the school works with parents and the way the school is managed. Over half the parents expressed concerns about the range of activities outside lessons. In contrast, parents are particularly impressed with the caring attitude that prevails in the school, how it helps children become mature and responsible, the high expectations, the behaviour and the quality of teaching. The inspection team endorses the positive views held by most parents but could find no supporting evidence to justify the negative perceptions of some parents. In particular, the inspectors judge the range of out-of-school activities to be satisfactory but these are not always regularly available for all pupils to take part.
50. The effectiveness of the school's links with parents is good. The school works very hard to promote and re-establish productive links with parents but there are still many parents who remember the poor relationships of the past and fail to respond positively to the current initiatives. The induction procedures for new pupils coming into the school are detailed and the school makes comprehensive arrangements for transferring pupils to secondary schools. The quality of information provided for parents is good. The prospectus and governors' report both contain a wealth of useful information and both comply with statutory requirements. The school regularly informs parents about curriculum matters and what sort of topics pupils will be studying next. Pupils' annual reports show that teachers have very good knowledge of each pupil's learning, and include very detailed targets for pupils' improvement. These reports contain comments about attitudes and social skills.
51. A number of parents come into school to support assemblies and to help with visits, sports and extra-curricular activities but too many parents avoid getting directly involved with supporting their children to read, for example. The school recognises that this is not satisfactory and tries hard to get parents more involved in their children's learning but these efforts have not been particularly successful. Reading and homework diaries are not always well used. In the past, the involvement of many parents was limited to the parents' and friends' association (PFA), which tended to operate independently. The PFA

continues to flourish and makes significant contributions to school resources, but is now much more closely integrated with the school.

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

52. Overall, the quality of leadership is good. The headteacher, staff team and governors are quite clear about the direction to be taken by the school. The expectations of the performance of staff and pupils are high. The school is good at making sure that all staff are aware of the need to raise standards and there is a strong commitment to continuous improvement. The school has identified clear priorities for the future and the course of action proposed to achieve these improvement targets is detailed. The stated aims and values of the school are fully reflected in all its work.
53. The management of the school is efficient. Resources, grants and other forms of funding are usually well used and sound financial planning helps the school to meet its targets. The school's systems for financial administration are good and action recommended in the most recent auditor's report has been fully implemented. This is a well-run school where every penny is accounted for by tightly controlled bookkeeping procedures which are very efficiently administered by the school secretary. The governing body's finance committee regularly monitors all accounts with the assistance of technical advisers from the local authority. All subject co-ordinators now have areas of budget responsibility under the general direction of the headteacher. The school makes good use of new technology for both teaching and administration. Grants received for specific purposes, such as school improvement, are properly spent. The governors and senior management are kept informed about the school's finances, and the outcomes of budgetary decisions are well monitored. Overall, the school has made effective use of its available funding.
54. The school's provision for special educational needs is well managed and satisfactory overall. The special educational needs co-ordinator is effective and the governor responsible for overseeing the school's provision is clear about current issues that need to be addressed. The governor liaises well with the co-ordinator in monitoring the school's work. The school provides periodic reports to governors about the school's work in supporting its pupils who have special educational needs. The effectiveness of spending on special educational needs is satisfactorily monitored and the school makes good use of its funding for special educational needs.
55. The governing body has been successful in acting as a 'critical friend' to the school and governors try hard to ensure that all legal requirements are met. The governors' annual report to parents meets statutory requirements but the summary of the school accounts is not presented in an easy format for parents to understand. Governors' visits to the school are regular, and there is a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas that need further development. As a result, governors are becoming more effective in shaping the future direction of the school and issues for improvement highlighted in the previous inspection report have been addressed successfully. Some governors make frequent visits to the school but are not yet using these visits to monitor the school's work effectively. Relationships between the governors and the headteacher are good. Procedures for appraising the work of the headteacher are firmly in place and targets for the headteacher to achieve are of reasonable quality.
56. The monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance is satisfactory. The quality of monitoring of teaching and learning in lessons is satisfactory and, wherever particularly good teaching is observed, the features of these lessons are usually shared with colleagues. On occasions when weak teaching is observed, the causes are carefully analysed and, as a result, effective help and advice is often provided to improve practice. The headteacher is seeking the assistance of other similar schools in the local cluster group to provide lesson observers to improve the frequency and objectivity of monitoring. Procedures for the appraisal and performance management of teaching staff are well

established and teachers' targets for improvement are fully matched to the school's overall targets. The headteacher and senior staff are high quality role models and are good at motivating their colleagues. Relationships are good and staff work closely as a team. The delegation of management responsibilities to senior staff is hampered by the small number of staff and by their newness to the school. There is a well-developed programme of in-service training of staff. The school has very good induction and mentoring procedures for newly qualified teachers entering the school.

57. When spending decisions are made, the school applies the principles of 'best value' satisfactorily. It is effective in comparing its costs against those of other schools. Systems for ensuring that staff are consulted about major spending decisions are appropriate. Available resources are well used by staff. The purchase of an expensive security fence around the school is a typical example of prudent financial planning which has resulted in the virtual elimination of costly vandalism. Most items in the school budget are broadly in line with national levels, except for the higher than average expenditure on staffing. The school is aware that this level of expenditure is not sustainable and has appropriate plans to rectify the budget deficit this year.
58. The current high level of staffing is largely the result of a falling roll and the lack of appropriate forward planning in the past to recognise this problem. The school is aware of this imbalance and has appropriate plans to bring the pupil to teacher ratio more in line with the national average. This imbalance has also inhibited the school from employing more classroom assistants. Currently, the range of teachers' qualifications and experience is effective in meeting the demands of the curriculum. Strategies for recruiting teaching staff are satisfactory. Despite a complete change of staff over the past two years, there has been no significant disruption to the quality of pupils' learning by these changes. Dedicated non-teaching personnel serve the needs of the school very well. The quality of job descriptions is good, and the staff's understanding of what is expected of them is secure.
59. The quality of accommodation is good overall. There is more than enough classroom capacity for the number of pupils on the roll and the accommodation is suitable for the whole age range. Classrooms are bright and well decorated. The provision for indoor physical education is acceptable and the provision for outdoor activities is good. The play space for large equipment for the under fives is limited but grass areas are used to supplement this when weather prevails. There is, however, no provision for outdoor play for these children during inclement weather. Overall, the standard of cleaning and day-to-day maintenance is good. The site is spacious, and the grounds are managed well.
60. Overall, the books and equipment provided for pupils are satisfactory. Learning resources are of reasonable quality and equipment is accessible to staff and pupils. The books and equipment available meet the range of pupils' ages and needs reasonably well. The school is aware of the importance of ensuring that purchases appeal to both boys and girls and there is a commitment to reflect the cultural diversity of our society. Overall, the quality and range of books in the library are unsatisfactory. There is no policy for book renewal and many books are out of date. Some shelving in the library is too high, which restricts access for some pupils. There are two good quality computers per class. The school is efficient in ensuring that computers and other information and communication technology equipment are properly maintained. Resources for physical education and music are good.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

61. To develop further the effectiveness of the school and continue to raise standards, the governors, headteacher and staff should:
- improve the quality of overall curriculum planning to ensure the development of pupils' knowledge and skills in a systematic and coherent way across the school;  
*Paragraphs: 11, 27, 34, 99, 105, 108*
  - make better use of pupil assessment information in subjects other than English and mathematics;  
*Paragraphs: 11, 27, 34, 48, 96, 124, 133*
  - raise the level of pupils' attendance by:
    - making further efforts to discourage families from taking holidays in term time;
    - finding out, as early as possible, the pupils whose attendance is causing concern and working with their families to help those pupils enjoy their life at school and get the best from their education.*Paragraphs: 17, 45*

In addition to the key issues above, the following area for improvement should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- raise standards in handwriting and the pupils' presentation of work.  
*Paragraphs: 9, 23, 84*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	22
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	15

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	1	4	10	7	0	0	0
Percentage	4	18	46	32	0	0	0

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

### 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)	3	69
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	7

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	22

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	0

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.9
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.4
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	5	8	13

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Total	12	11	9
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (100)	85 (89)	69 (100)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Total	12	11	9
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (78)	85 (100)	69 (78)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	4	12	16

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Total	13	12	15
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81 (86)	75 (57)	94 (100)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Total	13	12	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81 (86)	75 (86)	88 (100)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year. As the school has fewer than 11 boys or girls in the year group, the table omits totals for boys and girls.

**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	65	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	2	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)	4.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18:1
Average class size	18

#### **Education support staff: YR– YR6**

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	22

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2002-3
	£
Total income	209,940
Total expenditure	213,820
Expenditure per pupil	3,026
Balance brought forward from previous year	2,860
Balance carried forward to next year	-3,880

**Results of the survey of parents and carers**

**Questionnaire return rate 39%**

Number of questionnaires sent out	72
Number of questionnaires returned	27

**Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	78	15	0	7	0
My child is making good progress in school.	63	30	7	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	74	22	4	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	52	26	19	4	0
The teaching is good.	63	33	7	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	52	33	7	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	70	22	7	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	70	30	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	52	22	19	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	59	22	19	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	74	19	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	15	26	37	15	0

## **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**

62. The school makes satisfactory provision for children in the Foundation Stage. Children enter the reception class in the term after their fourth birthday in line with the school's admission policy. There are 15 children in the Foundation Stage. Nine are full time and six nursery-age children come to school in the mornings.
63. Children enter the reception class with attainment that is broadly similar to that found nationally for those of similar age. From this satisfactory point, the children settle quickly into school routines and make sound progress overall in all areas of learning by the time they enter Year 1. All children are on course to achieve the expected early learning goals set out in the Foundation Stage curriculum in all areas of learning. The attainment is average when compared to children of similar ages on entry into compulsory schooling at the start of Year 1.
64. The staff team, led by the headteacher, has a strong commitment in continuing the improvement of the curriculum. The recently developed scheme of work ensures that the curriculum is cohesive and relevant for children. The current assessment procedures, including the use of the new Foundation Stage Profile, are good and are closely matched to the early learning goals. Procedures are in place to support those children with special educational needs. Parents are welcomed and given opportunities to become involved with the school and this helps to promote and support their children's learning.
65. Teaching and learning are always at least satisfactory and often good. Teachers use their secure knowledge and understanding of the curriculum to plan interesting activities for the children which link together well. A good example of this was seen in a music lesson which was based on a storybook about the jungle. Personal, social and emotional development are given a high priority but the children are not encouraged to be as independent as they could be. This has an adverse impact on several areas of the curriculum and prevents children from taking responsibility for their own learning and routines. Relationships between staff and children are very good and children are managed well through praise and encouragement. Support staff are used effectively in the middle of lessons but do not support individuals or groups effectively at the beginning of lessons when they sit at the back, too far away to help individual children with extra, quiet explanations. The recently refurbished room is well resourced and beautifully decorated with the children's work.

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

66. The children's attainment in personal and social development is satisfactory. All children are confident and enjoy coming to school. They interact well with the staff and each other, take turns, share fairly and behave well. They are developing awareness of and sensitivity to the needs and feelings of others. A good example of this was when the children identified the qualities of the classroom assistant in preparation for a card to honour her retirement. They recognised that she is kind, helpful and gives cuddles and one child spontaneously offered a prayer to praise her.
67. The staff have established appropriate classroom routines so that children know what is expected of them. These routines are sometimes too rigid and prevent children from making informed choices, developing preferences and increasing independence. For example, children do not always pour out the juice or hand out the fruit at snack time. They cannot use the outside area without specific permission and do not routinely select materials independently from a central source within the classroom.

## **Communication, language and literacy**

68. Children enjoy listening to stories. They join in with the repetitive lines in 'Dear Zoo' and pay close attention to the story, showing good concentration. They understand its structure and that the animals are hidden under the flaps. The nursery age children listen intently to the story on tape, using headphones. In other situations such as sharing news and events, most children speak clearly and without hesitation. Vocabulary is imaginative, as when they describe their three-dimensional snake they are making as 'scrunchy, soft, bumpy'. Speaking skills are strong for most children, including the nursery-aged children. Children's reading skills are average. They are aware that print carries meaning. The higher attaining older children read 'Dear Zoo' confidently and pick out words such as 'big, tall, jumpy, scary' in the correct context. They extend the story by choosing an animal of their own such as a puppy and hamster and make a good attempt to spell the words.
69. Children are making satisfactory progress in recalling and writing the letters but some average and lower attainers have difficulty in remembering the letter without a copy of the alphabet available. Not enough opportunity is given for independent writing. Some writing tasks are very worksheet based which prevent children from developing and practising the skills of writing, unaided. Handwriting is satisfactory. Most letters are correctly formed but do not have clear ascenders and descenders. Teaching is satisfactory.
70. The teacher plans well-structured lessons based on the literacy strategy. Shared reading of 'Big Books' is a strong feature of every lesson and this is followed by purposeful group work. The teachers and classroom assistants work well with children to improve their skills. A structured phonics programme, which takes account of all 44 sounds of the alphabet, would improve reading skills further. Activities such as writing their own book are challenging for children but other tasks are too repetitive and too much emphasis is made on colouring in. This prevents focusing on the learning intentions and moving children on.

## **Mathematical development**

71. Attainment in mathematical development is satisfactory. Children join in enthusiastically in chanting numbers to 20 and back and identify one more or one less on the number line. Most reception age children know positional words such as 'behind', 'on', 'under', 'next to' and 'in between'. Most recognise and write numbers below 10 accurately. The nursery age children are beginning to understand the function of coins and count out four pence accurately in the garden shop with the help of a parent. Teaching is good. The teacher plans well and makes the lesson interesting through using a puppet and building on the week's wild animal theme. The learning intentions are explained in child friendly language at the beginning of the lesson and reinforced at the end.

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

72. Children learn about the world around them through painting minibeasts such as snails and growing beans and sunflowers. Attainment is satisfactory. They name parts of the body and explore the properties of sand and water through spontaneous play. They use the computer confidently and develop good mouse control when using a paint program to draw a monkey and other animals. The reception age children made good progress in a lesson where they made three-dimensional structures such as snakes and caterpillars, choosing from the materials available. They carefully stuffed a sock with shredded paper, fabric or polystyrene pieces and experimented with different types of glue to secure buttons and sponge to represent eyes. Teaching is satisfactory overall because topics are well organised and teachers extend children's vocabulary.

## **Physical development**

73. Attainment in this area of learning is satisfactory. Children join construction material accurately to make and play with cars and other vehicles. They co-operate well and chat quietly, sharing and negotiating sensibly over pieces of equipment. They handle a range of tools like scissors and cutters competently. They enjoy riding the bikes and trikes in the outside area, using the restricted space with good control to avoid bumping into each other. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers provide appropriate opportunities for the children to extend their skills in handling scissors, pencils and the mouse. Some activities are too directed by the teachers and do not offer the children sufficient opportunity to explore. The outdoor play area is too small and is under-used as a resource for learning.

## **Creative development**

74. Children enjoy using the role-play area especially when an adult is available to enhance the learning. The shop has been well thought out and is a good stimulus for play involving numeracy activities. Children are often absorbed in construction and small world play. They make and decorate masks with finger paints, carefully placing the paint on the paper. They print leaf patterns by pressing paper on paint and show wonder and awe at the emerging design. All children demonstrate independence in putting on and taking off aprons and hang them up sensibly. Music making is a strong feature of the Foundation Stage curriculum and children attain well. Children showed evidence of good prior attainment in the way they handled the instruments carefully and confidently, especially the 'rain stick'. They named maracas, drums and bells and performed the sound effects of a jungle story with confidence and good control.
75. Teaching of creative skills is good. The teachers plan coherently to provide links between all areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Literacy permeates all learning and contributes appropriately to the curriculum overall.

## **ENGLISH**

76. Results in the national tests for seven and 11 year olds indicate that standards have fluctuated in the three years but are generally average in English at the age of 11. The overall trend is one of improvement. National tests in 2002 show that pupils at the end of Year 6 attained standards in line with national expectations and similar schools. When these pupils are compared with their prior attainment at the age of seven they made average progress. At the end of Year 6, reading is above average and writing is average.
77. Inspection evidence shows that standards by the end of Year 2 are average. Standards attained in the statutory assessments for seven year olds in 2002 were average in reading but well below average in writing. Compared with similar schools, attainment is below average in reading and well below average in writing. There is no significant difference between the attainment of girls or boys. Unconfirmed results in 2003 show that reading has improved. The school's target in reading of 70 per cent of pupils achieving at average levels was exceeded by 10 per cent. This is above national averages. The school's target of 50 per cent of pupils achieving at average levels in writing was achieved exactly. This target is below national averages. Attainment in reading and writing has declined to satisfactory since the last inspection when both were above average.
78. The number of pupils in each year group varies considerably from year to year which makes fair comparisons difficult. Pupils with special educational needs and lower attaining pupils work hard and achieve appropriately. Staff are sensitive to their needs and encourage them to concentrate and gain confidence.

79. Standards in speaking and listening are above those expected nationally throughout the school. This is an improvement on the last inspection when standards were average. Pupils are confident speakers and make good progress. These skills are developed well in Years 1 and 2, building on the good practice at the Foundation Stage of learning. Pupils speak clearly and openly and are eager to join in. Pupils in the infant class discuss their learning in pairs, listen attentively to each other, exchange ideas and wait their turn. At the lower end of the juniors, pupils enthusiastically offer suggestions when making up a poem about a recipe for a disastrous sports day. These include fifty bottles of sweat and nine mad teachers! In one lesson seen, three pupils performed the poem, 'Emma Hackett's News Book', with great aplomb. Their classmates listened with expressions of sheer delight on their faces and thoroughly enjoyed the humour. Other pupils in this class fed back their observations of an Indian village and spoke confidently about their findings to the rest of the class. At the end of the juniors, pupils sensitively acted out a drama based on a journey in a rain forest. Pupils always listen well and articulate their knowledge, thoughts and feelings in whole school, class and small group situations. All pupils respond to the spiritual ethos in the school by spontaneously offering prayers, reading religious texts to the school audience and listening reverently.
80. Pupils' attainment in reading is average for pupils at seven and above average for pupils at 11 years. Pupils in Year 1 understand the difference between the present and past tense and begin to extract information from non-fiction books. By the end of Year 2, all ability groups are attaining at the expected levels although some groups struggle when asked to identify words which have the same spelling but a different sound. The lack of a structured phonics programme limits progress to satisfactory. All pupils in Year 2 remember the characteristics of non-fiction books and identify the terms 'glossary', 'captions' and 'diagrams'. They understand the concept of contents and index pages. The higher attaining pupils use the high quality questions they have generated from the previous day to find information. They choose relevant books from the classroom and library and begin to use a computer program. Progress would be good if skills could be built up systematically.
81. Pupils enjoy reading and show how well they have understood by the quality of their responses. For instance, one pupil chuckled at the jokes in a Jacqueline Wilson book and was very knowledgeable about this author. By the end of Year 6, pupils are reading fluently, accurately and with expression. All ability groups justify their choices of books and discuss their opinions of authors and the stories they have read with authority and maturity. Most pupils in the school take books home, read for homework and belong to the local library. The range of books available for home reading has now been improved. Reading scheme books and other library books have now been integrated to provide a greater variety of texts for the infant and lower junior pupils to read. Pupils' library skills however, are not well developed because the library is not yet being used effectively to support learning. There is no defined scheme to promote library skills. Consequently, pupils of average ability throughout the school are unable to locate books in the library on specific subjects and have no understanding of the classification system. Although the library has been recently overhauled and refurbished, many fiction and non-fiction books are worn and out of date.
82. Pupils' standards in writing are average by the ages of seven and 11. By the age of seven, pupils have many opportunities to practise different styles such as writing instructions, comparing characters from different stories and writing reports. Pupils use basic grammar and punctuation, such as full stops and capital letters, but do not use exclamation marks, commas or speech marks consistently which would improve the quality of their writing and increase progress from satisfactory to good.
83. Higher attaining pupils in all year groups are challenged well both through the school's setting arrangements and ability grouping in classrooms. In a lesson seen in the lower juniors, pupils composed an account of their disastrous holiday on the computer in the

style of a poem they had read earlier. The ingredients for this holiday included two upset tummies, one missing purse and an uncontrollable aeroplane, demonstrating their understanding of the poem's structure well, with humour and empathy. By the end of Year 6, higher attainers are writing fluently and at greater length. For instance, they produce high quality accounts and descriptions of their visit to the Isle of Wight. They turn a list of events into a narrative in the first person as seen from afar. Pupils show involvement and sympathy in their writing in such phrases as, 'I watched with excitement', and use adverbs very appropriately.

84. Presentation and handwriting across the school are unsatisfactory. All ability groups routinely cross out work and the use of pen is inconsistent, especially for the older pupils. Higher attaining pupils make careless spelling mistakes which are not picked up in teachers' marking. Opportunities for sustained writing are missed. This prevents pupils from practising skills such as handwriting, spelling and more sophisticated punctuation and limits progress.
85. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall throughout the school. The satisfactory judgement reflects a lack of high quality teaching which will lead to good progress over time. What is to be learned is always shared with pupils at the beginning of lessons but the end of lessons are not always used effectively to establish what pupils have understood and gained from the lesson. Teachers sum up the lesson rather than draw from the pupils what the difficulties may have been, especially in the Infant class.
86. Pupils are well managed but planning of lessons does not always take into account the learning styles of lower attaining pupils who are often unsure of the task set. This group throughout the school does not make satisfactory progress unless the teacher intervenes to support them. The match of work for lower attaining pupils sometimes lacks interest especially at the upper end of the juniors, which results in pupils becoming demotivated. Overall, pupils' attitudes to English are good and they behave very well. They are keen to contribute to lessons. The good relationships between adults and pupils create a pleasant working environment for pupils to grow in confidence and develop their skills and understanding.
87. The subject is well led and managed. The co-ordinator has a clear vision of what needs to be done to raise standards further. Improvements already implemented include tracking pupil progress, organising resources and refurbishing the library. The school has implemented the National Literacy Strategy effectively. English is used well in other subjects such as maths, history and geography. Homework is used appropriately to consolidate learning but could be more formalised so that parents are aware of what is required. English makes a good contribution to pupils' personal and cultural development because of the opportunities for working together. Initiatives, such as the Year 6 transition project with the local college, greatly enhance the learning experiences of the pupils.

## **MATHEMATICS**

88. Standards in mathematics at the ages of seven and 11 were both judged to be in line with national expectations at the time of the previous inspection. Standards have fluctuated since then but are now above that expected for 11 year olds and average for those at seven. Effective monitoring of teaching and learning, the teaching of pupils in ability groups and the effective implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy have all contributed to this increase in standards.
89. Results in the 2002 national tests were in line with the national average at 11 but well below average at seven. When compared with schools of a similar context, the school's results were well below average at seven and average at 11. The year groups are very small and fluctuate in size from year to year. Therefore, these results need to be treated with some caution when making these comparisons. There are no significant differences

in the attainment of boys and girls and pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior attainment.

90. By the age of 11, the attainment of most pupils is above the national expectations for pupils of this age. They are competent with addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. The pupils' knowledge of the types of triangles and their properties is good and they can plot coordinates in the fourth quadrant. A good feature of the planned experiences is the provision for investigation and practical activity in lessons and this is carried through into other subjects. In a science topic, for instance, these Year 6 pupils were able to effectively use a data-handling package on the computer to interrogate and present the results of a traffic survey. Effective planning by teachers in the junior classes and the use of ability sets is ensuring that all pupils are suitably challenged, irrespective of their prior attainment or age.
91. By the age of seven, most pupils have developed a good understanding of place value with two digit numbers and standards in number work are above average. Many pupils in Year 2 calculate simple multiples of 2 and 5, use strategies such as doubling and halving and undertake simple division sums such as 20 divided by 5. They accurately identify the common two and three-dimensional shapes and solve simple problems using money. A good feature is their ability to solve problems by organising and sorting data from class surveys.
92. The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good across the school. Planning is detailed and consistent with the National Numeracy Strategy. The grouping of the junior pupils into two ability sets allows for carefully targeted work matched to the pupils' needs. This is greatly appreciated by pupils. For instance, those in Year 4 who are working in the set for Year 5 and 6 pupils find the work stimulating and challenging. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure. They use questions well to challenge pupils' thinking and this is particularly so for the more able. All teachers use subject specific vocabulary with confidence and good links are often made with other subjects such as information and communication technology. Lessons are well organised so that no time is wasted and activities move on with pace. Good use is made of resources to make lessons interesting and motivate pupils. For instance, in a very good lesson for Year 1 and 2 pupils, the teacher directed all the pupils to stand in 'table of data' on the classroom floor. This imaginative use of the floor space provided very good opportunities for practical activity and the consolidation of the pupils' understanding. Teachers have a good knowledge of their pupils and skilfully target their questioning to meet their different levels of ability. All lessons are very well managed and teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and achievement. As a result, pupils respond very well to numeracy lessons and they work hard on the tasks set for them. Appropriate use is made of homework in all classes to support the learning undertaken in class.
93. The curriculum is well planned and the National Numeracy Strategy has been effectively implemented. A good feature is the strong emphasis on practical activity and investigative work, both in numeracy lessons in other subjects such as science. Teachers make good use of information and communication technology to support work in mathematics such as simple surveys and using a floor robot to reinforce the teaching of angles to the older junior pupils. Leadership of the subject is good and the curriculum co-ordinator has monitored teaching effectively within the school. She has a clear view of what needs to be developed next and provides good support to staff. The subject is appropriately resourced.

## SCIENCE

94. Standards in science at the ages of seven and 11 were both judged to be in line with national expectations at the time of the previous inspection. Standards have fluctuated since then but are now above that expected for seven and 11 year olds and represent steady improvement overall. Judgements are based on the observation of some teaching, the analysis of pupils' work, scrutiny of teachers' plans, discussions with pupils and observations made of their work displayed around the school. Pupils with special educational needs are making satisfactory progress overall.
95. Results in the 2002 national tests were in line with the national average at 11. Teacher assessments for seven year olds judged standards to be well below average. When compared with schools of a similar context, the school's results were well below average at seven and average at 11. The year groups are very small and fluctuate in size from year to year. Therefore, these results need to be treated with some caution when making these comparisons. There are no significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls and pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior attainment.
96. Teachers place a strong emphasis on investigative work. All aspects of the subject are covered well. This is particularly so in the infant class where work is carefully matched to the ability and age of the pupils. Progress and the rate of pupil achievement are good in the infants. The match between planned work and the age or ability of the pupils is not as clear for junior pupils. For instance, pupils of different ages in the same class undertake the same work at the same level. Consequently, the rate of pupil progress in the juniors fluctuates but is satisfactory overall.
97. Pupils in Year 6 demonstrate a good level of understanding in all the aspects of science expected for this age group. Their books contain some good, recorded work on the seasonal relationship between the sun, moon and earth as part of their studies on light. They have developed a good understanding of reversible and irreversible change through investigations on substances that dissolve and the water cycle. Further investigations on the effect of exercise on the human heart, together with detailed work on solids, liquids and gases, confirm the above average standards achieved by these pupils. These pupils further consolidated their knowledge and understanding of simple electrical circuits in the one science lesson observed during the inspection. In this good lesson, the teacher provided good opportunities for pupils to investigate different types of switches in their own circuit designs. As a result of a good demonstration by the teacher at the start of the lesson, the pupils were fully able to record their circuit configurations, using the conventional signs for electrical components. All of these pupils responded well to this lesson, demonstrating very good attitudes to science as they quietly worked with a partner or independently to complete their investigations.
98. Standards in Year 2 are above average, representing very good improvement on the teacher assessment results of the previous year. In their work on plants, the teacher and classroom assistant use opportunities for investigation to develop and challenge the pupils' scientific thinking. For instance, pupils are developing very good skills of investigation through the maintenance of a diary recording the growth of a bean. Information and communication technology is used well to support this recorded work through the inclusion of images of the stages of bean growth within some word-processed text. As a consequence of these investigations and good teaching, many pupils have a good understanding of what constitutes a fair test. Analysis of pupils' work also clearly indicates that these pupils have a good understanding of materials and their properties and they are developing a good understanding of life and living processes through their topic on healthy eating.

99. Curriculum planning is satisfactory overall but there is a lack of coherence to the development of scientific knowledge and teaching of skills across the school. This is particularly so in the juniors where assessment information is not being used effectively to ensure work is carefully matched to the ability of pupils in the mixed age classes. The planned work is based on a two-year cycle of topics. Consequently, the youngest pupils in each junior class are completing the same tasks as the older ones in their class. There is, however, good provision for practical work in all classes and this is ensuring that more able pupils are suitably challenged through open-ended investigations. This ensures that pupils are given sufficient opportunity to show initiative and a sense of responsibility in undertaking this work. This represents good improvement on the findings of the previous inspection where it was found that these opportunities were limited.
100. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The part-time co-ordinator provides appropriate support for other members of staff and has a clear view of what needs to be developed further. The monitoring of teaching and learning is at an early stage of development. The quality and range of resources are satisfactory and effectively stored in the classrooms.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

101. Pupils' work in art by the age of seven is of a standard expected for their age. This is a decline since the last inspection when standards were above those expected. Standards at 11 are similar to those at the last inspection when they were in line with national expectations. Often pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as their peers. All pupils make steady progress and, in the lesson seen, progress was good in the junior classes.
102. No lessons were seen in the infant class because art does not feature this half term. Evidence from displays and pupils' work shows that pupils work with care in a variety of media. Pupils' observations of patterns from nature, drawing of plants and class fabric collage based on the work of William Morris show a developing awareness of techniques. The wide range of resources introduced by the teacher enhances this. These include opportunities for printing, using string and a collection of natural objects to stimulate pupils' understanding of texture, shape and form.
103. By the time they reach the age of 11, most pupils develop satisfactory skills in drawing and sketching. Sketchbooks are used throughout the juniors to promote drawing but the quality and quantity varies from unsatisfactory to good. They are used for some design and technology work which devalues their status as a tool to express art ideas and techniques. However, sketchbooks were used well to extend ideas in a lesson seen in the two junior classes. The majority of pupils made good progress in selecting and developing a picture from their sketchbooks as a background to observational drawings, using a viewfinder.
104. The quality of teaching and learning seen is satisfactory overall with some good teaching and learning evident in the juniors. Planning is good with enough information on how the lesson is to progress from the previous learning. The lesson seen was well organised so that pupils were motivated and persevered in their artwork, individually or in groups. Pupils were completely absorbed, for instance, when using their viewfinders outside. They sustained concentration back in the classroom when they developed their ideas. Teachers managed the pupils well during the lesson and the classrooms were calm, with a quiet hum of concentrated activity. Good use was made of the time at the end of the lesson when the teacher used a pupil's work on the computer to show how changing the background dramatically changed the mood of a painting. The teacher's skilful questioning and demonstration moved the pupils on in their learning as they listened and watched intently.

105. The management of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator is aware that the development of skills throughout the age groups is needed. Monitoring of the subject has started with planning being evaluated. Pupils' attainment is assessed using a commercial scheme. The work of artists such as Picasso and William Morris are represented but this aspect of art needs further development. The school should increase the range of artists, craft workers and designers and encompass more work outside the European tradition.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

106. Very little teaching was observed during the week of the inspection. Judgements are based on the analysis of pupils' work, scrutiny of teachers' plans and the observation of some teaching in the infant class. Standards are in line with national expectations for seven and 11 year-olds. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making satisfactory progress overall. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection when standards were judged to be below national expectations.
107. Analysis of work completed by the oldest junior pupils at the beginning of the term on making a picture frame confirms that the processes of designing, making and evaluation are firmly embedded within the lessons taught. These pupils have constructed a variety of colourful picture frames from a range of materials to display their own portraits. Displays of pupils' evaluations in the classroom reflect attention to detail and quality with all diagrams being clearly labelled to illustrate the materials and components used. This level of care and attention to detail is further exemplified by the attitudes exhibited by infant pupils during a good lesson when making a prototype of a winding mechanism for inclusion in a simple toy. The teacher's good subject knowledge and confident use of technical vocabulary and tools ensured all pupils achieved well during the lesson. For example, effective demonstrations of how to use a small hacksaw to cut a dowel rod held in a portable vice were provided for groups of pupils during the lesson, in readiness for work to come later in the term. The session at the end of the lesson to review learning provided very good opportunities for all pupils to assess and discuss the merits of techniques and materials used. This activity produced much discussion from the pupils on how they might design and make their own winding mechanism in the following lessons.
108. No overall judgement can be made on the quality of teaching. However, teachers' planning across the school confirms that there is sufficient coverage of all the components of design and technology as pupils progress through the school. Appropriate attention is given to the teaching and development of specific skills through national recognised units of work. There is, however, no clear structure to the teaching of these skills in a coherent and progressive programme across the school.
109. The co-ordinator who manages the subject is providing appropriate leadership, despite her part-time role within the school. The monitoring of teaching and learning in the recent past has been limited. However, the range of resources is satisfactory and there are sufficient tools available for both infant and junior pupils to use when making models. The Technology Day held earlier in the year proved to be a great success, enabling teachers and older pupils to develop their skills in control technology.

## **GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY**

110. It was only possible to observe one lesson in geography and none in history because of the two-year topic cycle which the school teaches. Judgements are based on the analysis of pupils' work, displays around the school and talking to staff. Attainment at the age of seven is in line with national expectations in both subjects and pupils make appropriate progress. Attainment at the age of 11 is satisfactory in history and good in geography. This is broadly the same as at the time of the previous inspection.

111. In history, at the age of seven, pupils have a growing awareness of time and how to place events on a timeline. They know about the changes in activities and fashions at the seaside over the last 100 years and have explored in depth customs such as bathing in Victorian times. They have learned about important Victorians such as Florence Nightingale and higher attaining pupils write eloquently about these figures.
112. In geography, pupils study the local area, make and use simple maps and conduct a traffic survey, the results of which they put on the computer in graph form. They consider environmental issues such as ways to make their area safer. In a wider geographical context, pupils identify seas on a map of the world and study a contrasting locality in Mexico. Much of the content of written work is of a high standard. Pupils write detailed facts and opinions but presentation, including handwriting, is poor.
113. In history, at the age of 11, pupils' attainment is similar to that found in other schools. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have studied Ancient Egypt and the life and times of Henry VIII. Year 6 pupils have produced good quality work, reasonably presented on the Victorians. They show empathy when describing the children at work with phrases such as, 'Life was hard and painful. They were beaten, hurt, bullied and frightened.' Interesting comparisons are made with school life in Victorian times with St Bernadette's at the present time.
114. In geography, junior pupils attain well and make good progress in every year group. Year 3 pupils study the school environment and complete work on settlements, using maps competently. In the one geography lesson, pupils made good progress in their understanding of the position of India in the world, how to get there and what life might be like in a small village in India. Pupils used prior knowledge from the topic of Egypt to work out how aspects of farming were managed.
115. Year 6 pupils work at a high level in their topic on the Cornish coast. Higher attaining pupils list 41 bullet points about Cornwall's coast and moorland. This work is above national expectations. They read and make maps, using sophisticated symbols and keys. They empathise in a mature manner to environmental change in the roles of a local resident, fisherman and holidaymaker.
116. Both history and geography are interwoven in the work produced on the recent educational journey to the Isle of Wight. The quality of geographical content in most of the topic books is good and two are of a very high standard. Topics books have a contents page and introduction. They contain maps, photos and drawings of geographical features such as 'The Needles' and 'Chines'. The history of the area is well documented and places such as Carisbrook Castle are described in detail. Independent research is evident in work on Osborne House.
117. It is not possible to make a judgement about standards of teaching and learning in history because no history lessons were seen during the inspection. The analysis of pupils' work suggests that while teaching and learning are satisfactory, to improve, the school should note the following:-
- teachers give the same tasks to all ability levels and both age groups in mixed age classes. This does not always meet the needs of the average and below average pupils, especially at ages seven and nine;
  - the quality of presentation in pupils' work at the age of seven is poor. There are many crossings out, common words are mis-spelt and teachers' marking does not comment on these errors.
118. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in geography at the age of seven and good at the age of 11. This judgement is based on the analysis of pupils' work and one lesson seen. Teachers plan well and show good subject knowledge by using technical vocabulary regularly. The methods seen in the lower junior lesson helped the pupils to find out facts

for themselves. Pupils were asked to discuss their impressions of an Indian village in groups, using photographs, recording and then reporting back. The teacher moved pupils' thinking forward by asking relevant questions, challenging assumptions and referring to previous learning. Pupils enjoyed the lesson because of the variety of activities, brisk pace and the opportunities to work in groups.

119. The management of history and geography is satisfactory. Both co-ordinators have clear action plans, which they are implementing to improve the subjects further. Teachers' planning is monitored regularly and schemes of work are under review.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

120. Standards of work are inline with national expectations for seven and 11 year olds. Judgements are based on the observation of some teaching, the analysis of pupils' work, scrutiny of teachers' plans, discussions with pupils and observations made of their work displayed around the school. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making satisfactory progress in a wide range information and communication technology skills. This represents good improvement overall on the findings of the previous inspection when standards at 11 were judged to be unsatisfactory.
121. No overall judgement can be made on the quality of teaching but teachers plan a wide range of interesting and relevant learning opportunities throughout the year for pupils in both the infant and junior classes. All pupils within the school respond very well to this good level of provision and work very well, either individually or in pairs at the computer. The planned activities range from Year 6 pupils typing text into a word processor and inserting and merging pictures, to Year 2 pupils using a graphics package to create pictures in the style of Mondrian. Teachers also make good links between other subjects such as mathematics and science when using data handling packages. For instance, the oldest juniors have entered traffic survey data under various fields, interpreted this data and represented the results in the form of bar graphs and pie charts.
122. Specially planned technology days provide good opportunities for the teaching of control technology skills with the help of specialist teachers. For instance, oldest pupils gain good experience in developing their control technology skills through the use of input and output switches to turn the lights of a model on and off in a specific sequence. These skills are further reinforced with good opportunities for pupils to control and program floor robots or a screen 'turtle'. For example, Year 5 and 6 pupils effectively demonstrated their level of competence in control technology by successfully programming the floor robot to draw a pre-determined course on a paper sheet in a mathematics lesson on angles.
123. Infant pupils are taught skills at an early age in Year 1. By the time they are in Year 2, they log on to the computer, locate their own file of work and open it up ready for use. More able pupils in this year group edit text about minibeasts which they previously copied from a commercial encyclopaedic CD. They edit and add their own words to this text and incorporate a suitable image of an insect to illustrate their work.
124. The teacher with specific responsibility is effectively developing this subject. Pupils' standards are being continually improved as a result of this good leadership and management. Procedures for assessing the attainment and progress of all pupils are satisfactory overall. However, information about pupils' individual progress is not yet being used effectively to ensure that skills are being taught in a systematic way within the context of mixed aged classes. Resources are satisfactory overall and the installation of a computer suite is clearly identified within the school's plan for improvement.

## MUSIC

125. No class lessons were seen during the inspection but evidence of music making and singing in all aspects of the life of the school confirms that standards in music are above expected levels at the age of seven and well above national expectations at the age of 11. This is an improvement from the last inspection when standards were in line with national expectations. All pupils make good progress, including those with special educational needs. The main elements of the music curriculum are singing as a regular collective activity and music making sessions with a specialist teacher.
126. Pupils sing tunefully and robustly at collective worship and in class assemblies with good articulation. Teachers lead pupils well and provide a good example by holding the tune, confidently unaccompanied. Singing was particularly good in a whole school assembly when the Lord's Prayer was sung with great feeling. The variation in dynamics in appropriate parts of the song added an extra spiritual dimension and created a beautiful sound for all in the school to hear. Music played by Year 6 pupils on the clarinet, recorder and violin, accompanied by the music specialist, enhanced the pupils' listening skills and their appreciation of ensemble playing by their schoolmates.
127. The lesson led by the teacher from Ounsdale Arts College as part of the transition project for Years 6 and 7 was outstanding. The pupils learned to move in time to different samba rhythms and were introduced to subject specific words such as tempo, timbre and texture. Pupils made very good progress because the teacher had high expectations, made the learning intentions clear at every stage so that the lesson moved at a dynamic pace. Pupils persevered when they had difficulty in keeping the rhythm and clapping at the same time. They evaluated their own performance, using vocabulary such as 'crisp', 'clear', 'ragged' and 'untidy'. The teacher ended the lesson with a rigorous recall of what the pupils had learned. The use of technical musical terms and their meaning made a significant impact on pupils' musical and literacy skills.
128. In another lesson seen as part of the same project, music was combined with drama and dance to explore the atmosphere of a rain forest. Pupils used instruments such as drums, rain sticks and guiro to replicate the sounds in the jungle. Progress by the end of the lesson was very good as pupils refined the sounds in their group to represent different aspects of the jungle and the animals within it. They concentrated very well throughout the lesson, co-operated with their group, shared ideas and refined them in response to each other's suggestions. The class teacher supported the lesson well by modelling the drama and using very atmospheric music as a background to the discussion and pupils' musical ideas. The project with the creative arts college is extremely effective because of the high level of planning, expertise and professionalism of all the staff involved.
129. The school provides pupils with a wide range of opportunities to make music both in school time and outside lessons. These vary from individual tuition to performing at regular concerts and shows. The local community especially appreciates the junior choir. The subject contributes significantly to the spiritual, social and cultural life of the pupils because of the very good provision the school achieves.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

130. Overall, standards are in line with national expectations for seven and 11 year olds. This is a decline since the previous inspection when standards were judged to be above average at 11. Several changes have been made to the staff in the school, affecting levels of subject expertise amongst the teachers. Newly appointed staff do, however, possess good levels of subject knowledge and understanding in dance. This aspect of the subject is taught very well to both infant and junior pupils. The rate of achievement in physical development and control is good for all pupils, including those with special educational needs.

131. The quality of teaching is good overall with the teaching of dance being very good. This is particularly so in the infants and for older junior pupils. All pupils respond well to the well-planned opportunities for physical activity and their attitudes to learning are good. Teachers dress very appropriately, providing good role models for the pupils to follow who dress smartly for lessons. All teachers demonstrate a good level of health and safety awareness by providing good opportunities for pupils to warm up and stretch muscles in preparation for physical activity. Good opportunities are also provided at the end of the lessons for pupils to cool down. This was particularly well demonstrated in a dance lesson for the older junior pupils as they danced individually as a slowly moving native American Indian to form a group tableau in the centre of the hall. This well planned activity at the end of a very good lesson exemplified very good development of the pupils' spiritual awareness and level of dance skill.
132. Overall, teachers demonstrate good levels of subject expertise and this is particularly so in dance lessons. For instance, in a lesson for pupils in the infant class, the teacher used subject specific vocabulary to illustrate what was required from the pupils as they interpreted well chosen music to create dance phrases with expression. Equally good knowledge was demonstrated in a dance lesson for pupils in the literacy set for pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 as part of a local project to link literacy skills with creative activity. In this lesson, the teacher demonstrated balances with a high degree of control to the pupils. As a result of these high expectations, the pupils responded well with some effective and imaginative balances.
133. Planning is good in lessons and there is a clear structure to each unit of work. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to assess their own learning through sessions at the end of lessons when performances are appraised in a sensitive way by other pupils in the class. Teachers use this information to record the pupils' progress as part of the school's assessment procedures. This information is yet to be used effectively to plan for the pupils' next steps in their learning and provide a clear progression of skills over all year groups. Time is used well in lessons and the pace of learning is quite brisk. When this is not always the case, as in an athletics lesson for a class of Year 3 and 4 pupils, there is insufficient time for the consolidation of new skills and the review of the pupils' work.
134. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory overall. The newly appointed co-ordinator is providing a clear structure for the future development of the subject but any monitoring of standards has been limited to informal observations and photographs of pupils in lessons. There is a good range of resources available and the provision for outdoor activity is satisfactory. Opportunities for swimming are provided at a local pool and nearly all pupils are able to swim 25 metres by the time they leave school at 11. The range of activities outside lessons is satisfactory overall for such a small school. Some parents expressed some disappointment that the organisation of clubs is inconsistent from term to term with the result that opportunities are not always available for their child to participate. However, an annual residential trip to the Isle of Wight for the oldest junior pupils provides good opportunities for adventurous and cross-curricular activity.